

# Christ-Centered Conflict

*Michelle Myers*

**All quotes are from Michelle Myers unless otherwise noted.**

There is a lot going on in our world, and God is still bigger.

Nothing is too big for Him to handle.

Jesus allows us to see and feel hurt and yet still have hope.

## **Proverbs 19:11**

Not all offenses need to be overlooked.

## **Philippians 1:15-18**

People were preaching the gospel out of selfish ambition, and Paul chose not to care because the gospel was being preached.

No offense feels minor in the moment.

When we focus on minor things, major things get missed.

Major = loving God and loving others.

Not all conflict is avoidable, but most conflict is the result of selfishness.

## **Romans 12:9-21**

***Let love be without hypocrisy.***

God created us to need Him and He created us to need each other.

In order to make the gospel louder than anything else, it's important how we interact with each other.

Genuine love goes beyond being polite or pretending.

Pretend is a child's game.

Pretend love isn't love. Pretend love will create conflict.

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***Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.***

Culture complicates, and Christ simplifies.

It's culture speaking when the internal monologue inside of you says: It's more comfortable to be silent.

Devotion doesn't happen automatically; it requires effort.

Devoted means I'm looking for others who need love + I don't stop until they get it.

***10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love,***

How I live the gospel vertically between me and Jesus is that He is over everything. How I live the gospel horizontally is by putting you before me.

***give preference to one another in honor;***

Give preference more than you give a defense.

Defense is an effort to protect myself from pain.

Preference protects you from more pain.

***11 not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord;***

Honoring others is serving the Lord. It's not about you or me, but about Him.

***12 rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation,***

If our hope is in the world getting it right, we would be disappointed.

We know how this ends. We don't have to look around for our confidence and for our hope. We get to look up!

***devoted to prayer***

Just as it can't be pretend love, it can't be pretend prayer either. It's not just thinking about prayer, it is getting on your face and praying as if it all depends on Jesus – because it does.

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We have to talk to Him. If we want to have a heart like His, we have to talk to Him.

**13 contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality.**

Contribute to the needs around you. "See a need, meet a need." - South Shore Church

We have weakened hospitality today to entertaining. Hospitality is not entertaining.

Entertaining is about the host. Hospitality is about the guest.

Hospitality is opening your home to someone in need and loving them.

**14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse.**

Escalated emotions are much more likely to escalate to actions we regret than words of blessing.

**15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.**

This is a really tangible way for us to check our gospel temperature, because celebration and compassion are both love in action.

How well and how genuinely do you celebrate others?

How quickly are you moved to compassion?

**16 Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation.**

Christ is the only One who has a position above us. We're all sinners in need of a Savior, and He is that Savior. Any other hierarchy has no place in the Kingdom.

**17 Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men.**

Evil is never justified. Never.

**18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.**

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You cannot control how others respond, but you can: Minor issues: (which most are!) -- get good at overlooking them Major issues: pursue PEACE with loving action Pursue peace, not being right.

Spend 10 minutes in prayer for every 1 minute of criticism. – Pat Cooper Marriage Clause

If we are not praying about it, it is not a major issue that we should be addressing.

Prayer is what allows God to work on me.

Major issues with non-believers: the goal is salvation.

We behave how we believe.

Your goal is not to address their behavior, but to love them in a way that makes them question and hopefully change their beliefs.

Major issues with believers – Matthew 18:15-17

Step 1: Address 1:1 privately – goal is restoration, not shame

If he listens + repents, forgive and move on.

Step 2: Take another believer or two with you + address again, confirming your facts with others. (Every FACT – bring your facts to this conversation, not simply your feelings.)

Conflict is not a matter of dislike, but disagreement

Conflict is not a matter of dislike, but to disagree. Dislike is a matter of taste. But to disagree must be proven.

Step 3: Take it before the church – again with the goal of restoration and unity – repentance + forgiveness.

Restoration requires repentance.

Step 4: If none of the above works, release yourself from the relationship – forgiving, but realizing restoration requires repentance.

In Jesus, you have been released from the debt you owe. Learn to release others from the debt they owe you.

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Have you forgiven: can you think of someone who has wronged you and wish God's best for them?

**19 Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.**

Leave room for God's wrath reminds us that He will take care of it.

God sees every offense, even if it feels like He doesn't. God will judge, so we don't have to.

**20 "But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head."**

We can't allow the size of the problem paralyze us from doing the small steps we absolutely can do.

It's natural to treat others how they treat us; it's supernatural to treat others how God treats us.

**21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**

Overcome- implies an action, it's not passive.

Choosing to overlook a minor offense sets you free from the bondage of bitterness so you can continue to pursue what is good - which is how we overcome evil.

Overlook minor offenses. Forgive. Feed. Give a drink. See a need and meet a need. Don't address major issues. Show hospitality. Remove revenge. Treat others how God has treated you, regardless of how they treat you.

That's Chris-centered conflict. Doesn't mean it the conflict doesn't exist, but it's how Christ rises to the front in the face of conflict. And there's nothing too big for Him to handle, and He's the only One who can handle it.

God wins! That's the hope we have in Him.