

## CONFLICT: OUR CONSTANT OPPORTUNITY

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Watermark Community Church is committed to resolving conflict in a way that glorifies the Lord, edifies the body of Christ, and reflects the principles laid out in Scripture. Since all relationships—including those among believers—will be faced with disagreements at different times, all Watermark Members, as followers of Christ, commit to the following biblical principles as a guide for resolving these issues. We trust that the following information will serve as a continual resource for you as you strive to serve others, grow personally and glorify the Lord in the context of conflict.

Scriptures to read and remember when considering how you are going to handle conflict: *Prov. 6:16–19, Prov. 17:14, Prov. 20:3, Matt. 5:23–24, 1 Peter 5:5–7, Eph. 4:1–3, Prov. 18:19.*

### **Watermark’s Commitment to Biblical Conflict Resolution**

As people reconciled to God by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we believe we are called to respond to conflict in a way that is remarkably different from the way the world deals with conflict. We also believe conflict provides opportunities to glorify God, serve other people, and grow to be like Christ. Therefore, in response to God’s love and in reliance on His grace, we commit ourselves to respond to conflict according to the following principles:

#### **Glorify God**

Instead of focusing on our own desires or dwelling on what others may do, we will seek to please and honor God—by depending on His wisdom, power and love; by faithfully obeying His commands; and by seeking to maintain a loving, merciful and forgiving attitude.

#### **Get the log out of your own eye**

Instead of attacking others or dwelling on their wrongs, we will take responsibility for our own contribution to conflicts—confessing our sins, asking God to help us change any attitudes and habits that lead to conflict and seeking to repair any harm we have caused.

#### **Go and show your brother his fault**

Instead of pretending that conflict doesn’t exist or talking about others behind their backs, we will choose to overlook minor offenses, or we will talk directly and graciously with those whose offenses seem too serious to overlook. When a conflict with another Christian cannot be resolved in private, we will ask others in the body of Christ to help us settle the matter in a biblical manner.

#### **Go and be reconciled**

Instead of accepting premature compromise or allowing relationships to wither, we will actively pursue genuine peace and reconciliation—forgiving others as God, for Christ’s sake, has forgiven us, and seeking just and mutually beneficial solutions to our differences.

By God’s grace, we will apply these principles as a matter of stewardship, realizing that conflict is an opportunity, not an accident. We will remember that success, in God’s eyes, is not a matter of specific results but of faithful, dependent obedience. And we will pray that our service as peacemakers brings praise to our Lord and leads others to know His infinite love. These principles are so simple that they can be used to resolve the most basic conflicts of daily life. But they are so powerful that they have been used to mediate and arbitrate bitter divorce and child custody actions, embezzlement situations, church divisions, multi-million dollar business disputes, malpractice lawsuits and terrible sexual abuse cases. These principles are briefly discussed below.

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For a more detailed explanation, please see *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, by Ken Sande (Baker Books, 2nd ed. 1997).