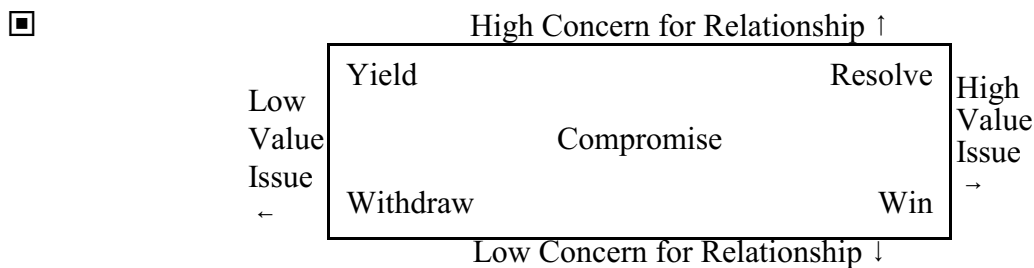


Marriage: Communication Skills - 5: Causes of Conflict, B
Character Issues - Selected Scriptures

Review

We will continue this morning examining the topic of communication and specifically the underlying causes of conflict. Good communication skills are important in all relationships and critical to God's design for marriage. Tragically, most marriages, including those between professing Christians, do not follow God's design for marriage because they either are unaware of God's design or they reject it in favor of following their own sinful desires. The purpose of this series of sermons has been to help you understand God's wonderful design for marriage and receive its blessings.

Since good, clear communication is so important to relationships be sure to do the work necessary to make sure what you communicate is understood by the other person and that you understand what the other person is communicating to you. Take the time and ask questions as needed to make sure that is happening. That will go a long way in avoiding unnecessary conflict caused by misunderstandings. For the last few sermons I have been speaking about how to respond to conflict.



I am again showing this diagram adapted from the workbook for *"Before you say, 'I Do,'"* by Norm Wright that describes the ways in which you respond to conflict in terms of the value you place on the relationship compared to the value you place on the particular issue. Resolution occurs when a high value is placed on both the relationship and the issue. Withdrawal is the exact opposite of placing a low value on both the relationship and the issue. Yielding occurs when the relationship is much more important than the issue. Winning occurs when the issue in the conflict is much more important than the relationship. Most conflicts will be somewhere between these extremes in the area of compromise. Neither party to the conflict will be completely satisfied, but the compromise will be within the range of acceptability to both.

How you respond to a conflict will depend on what you value and your priorities. The better you know the Lord, His revealed will and your sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, the better your values and priorities will match His. The greater your maturity in walking with the Lord, the more godly will be your manner and attitude in handling conflict.

We have already covered sin as the root cause of all conflict and the foolishness it brings to life for it is contrary to God's will and design for man. We have covered pride as the original sin, one of the three major areas in which we can be tempted, and which aggravates conflict whenever it is present. The solution to pride is humility which is also a necessary element in the solution to sin which is repentance to believe on the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ and to follow Him. (LINK)

Last week I focused on issues related to knowledge that are often foundations for conflict. These include being naive, receiving foolish counsel and pursuing foolishness. The solution to the foolishness that can arise from lack of knowledge and the naivete that will often accompany it is to gain knowledge

of the truth and follow it. The solution to foolish counsel is also to gain knowledge of the truth so that you can recognize and reject the foolishness, but also to develop close and intimate friendships with godly people who are wise to be your confidants, counselors and encouragers. The solution to the dangers of those who pursue foolishness is the same as the solution to foolish counsel plus withdrawing from them. Stay away from them or you will become like them. Proverbs 13:20 explains, *"He who walks with wise men will be wise, But the companion of fools will suffer harm."* Those who walk in the counsel of the ungodly will find themselves influenced by them to stand in the way of sinners and then sitting in the seat of the scoffers (Psalm 1). It is a decent downward into being nabal (naw-bawl'), a person with closed mind that is insensible to God and morality. These are those with depraved minds described in Romans 1:28. The blessed man delights in the word of God and will meditate on it day and night. The truth of God sets him free from the bondage to sin and the foolishness of this world to be able to joyfully live a righteous life. (LINK)

My focus this morning will be exposing and providing solutions to conflicts caused by character issues such as being selfish, self-righteous, stubborn, critical, quarrelsome and wicked.

Selfish

Selfishness is expressed in many ways and is an inherent evil which arises out of pride. In the NASB, Proverbs 23:6 uses the term *"selfish"* to translate the Hebrew term (ra' / rah) which normally is translated as evil or wicked. ⁶ *Do not eat the bread of a selfish man, Or desire his delicacies;* ⁷ *For as he thinks within himself, so he is. He says to you, "Eat and drink!" But his heart is not with you.* ⁸ *You will vomit up the morsel you have eaten, And waste your compliments.* James 3:14-17 describes selfish ambition as wisdom that is *"earthly, natural, and demonic"* and then further explains that where it exists *"there is disorder and every evil thing."* It is then contrasted with the wisdom from God above which is *"first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy."*

To be selfish is to be primarily concerned with your own personal profit and pleasure with little or no consideration of others. It goes hand in hand with pride, and it is utterly contrary to the nature of God and what He has commanded of His people. It is natural for sinful man to be selfish, in fact, Jesus uses that fact in explaining the second great commandment, *"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."* Paul points this out in Ephesians 5:28-29 when he commands husbands to love their wives as they do their own bodies that *"for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it . . ."* Those who teach that you have to love yourself before you can love others are absurd. Not only do you already love yourself, one of man's basic problems is that he is selfish and loves himself too much.

Selfishness strikes at the heart of a home for it breaks up the unity of the family and sets each member in competition with the others. God's design for marriage is that it is a relationship in which you learn to love, be unselfish and give sacrificially for the best interest of the spouse. When marriage becomes a relationship in which each is looking to get their selfish desires fulfilled by the other, it will degenerate into a competitive partnership that will last only as long as both parties still perceive their benefit is greater than the cost. I like Larry Crabb's description of selfish people in marriage as a tick looking for a dog, and marriage problems arise because both the husband and the wife turn out to be ticks and there is no dog. The solution then to selfishness is to learn to be a dog.

Since selfish people value getting what they want over the relationship with the other person, they can quickly degenerate into someone who demands, nags, is critical, manipulative and unfair in actions. The attitude can degenerate into being temperamental, contentious, harsh, angry and even hateful. If they still cannot get what they want, they can become neglectful and indifferent.

Again, the solution to selfishness is to become like the dog that can be happy and wag its tail even if there is tick attached. Believers are commanded to be humble and sacrificially giving toward one another in Philippians 2:3-4, ³ *Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind let each*

of you regard one another as more important than himself; ⁴ do not [merely] look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.” The passage then goes on to use Jesus as the example we are to follow. If He set aside the glories of Heaven to become a man and then die in our place on the cross, then certainly we can learn to be unselfish and sacrificially give of ourselves to one another and especially to our spouse whom we are supposed to love anyway. Conflict diminishes when you learn to be a dog, not a tick.

Self-righteous

The next home wrecker is self-righteousness and it is related to pride, foolishness and stubbornness. The self-righteous are blinded by their own pride so that they cannot see the log in their own eye though they seem to have great acuity to see the speck in the eye of anyone else. For the self-righteous, it is always the other person’s fault and so they become stubborn in their own position. And don’t think that only other people can be self-righteous. It may be more obvious in some rather than others, but it is a danger to us all. Proverbs 21:2 warns, *“Every man’s way is right in his own eyes, But the Lord weighs the hearts.”* Proverbs 16:2 is a parallel verse, *“All the ways of a man are clean in his own sight, But the Lord weighs the motives.”* That blindness can be so great that it falls into the category of Proverbs 30:12, *“There is a kind who is pure in his own eyes, Yet is not washed from his filthiness.”*

These proverbs express two basic kinds of self-righteousness. The first are those who think they are righteous because they are doing what they think is right even though their motives are wrong. This is the more common type of self-righteousness. A list of right and wrong behaviors is developed, whether written or unwritten, by which righteousness is then defined. This may be developed by an organized religious system or something the individual comes up with himself, though it is more often a mixture of both to some degree with the religious organizations standards adjusted by the individual to his personal thoughts and desires. Righteousness is then based on the ability to adhere to the list of proscribed and prohibited behaviors instead of God’s commands which include motivations. Jesus exposed the self-righteous legalism of the Scribes and Pharisees in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 5-7. They had twisted God’s commands into things they thought they could do. Jesus exposed their hypocrisy warning *“that unless your righteousness surpasses [that] of the scribes and Pharisees, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.”* God looks at the motives, not just the actions.

In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus teaches that: God judges for hatred, not just murder. Adultery is committed in the heart before it occurs physically. Unrighteous divorce only increases adultery. Vows are a matter of personal integrity. Revenge is not required, but gentleness and compassion are marks of godliness. Love is extended to enemies as well as neighbors you like. Alms, prayer and fasting are not for public display for they are matters between you and God.

Pharisaical self-righteousness is still around today and it destroys relationships because it judges everything by human standards. As long as the right action was taken in their own mind, then stubbornness is justified. This is seen in the person who says, *“I’m sorry,”* but the tone of voice cries out that there is no repentance and no regret other than getting caught. Presents are purchased and cards given more to fulfill the obligation or appease than to express thoughtfulness and love. Objections to sinful conduct are rejected out of hand because their personal list does not categorize the behavior in that way. The relationship is evaluated according to the list, not the closeness of the friendship, depth of intimacy or success in fulfilling God’s actual commands. These are all obvious sources of conflict.

The second type of self-righteous are those who believe that they have right motives, therefore, their actions are excused even when they are actually wrong. This type of self-righteousness is more common among those affected by liberal political and religious philosophy. Good intentions and effort are sufficient justification for any action taken regardless of the consequences. It is even used as justification for violating a command, instruction or a mutual agreement. Such people believe themselves to be pure even though they are in truth unclean.

Those are also obvious sources of conflict and they are detrimental to the home in two ways. First is the direct unintended but negative consequences of the actions. Second, it obstructs correction and repentance leaving the person to repeat the same folly. Proverbs 26:18-19 is an example of this. ¹⁸ *Like a madman who throws Firebrands, arrows and death, ¹⁹ So is the man who deceives his neighbor, And says, " Was I not joking ?"* The proverb uses the extreme case of a practical joke that ended up being very dangerous to make the case. The jokester self-righteously defends himself by appealing to his motive that it was all done in fun. The actual danger and harm caused are excused in his mind because his intention was only to bring some laughter. He remains pure in his own eyes though his actual actions show he is not yet washed from his filth. He does not love his neighbor as himself. He does not consider others more important. He does not even consider their welfare or safety, only his motive to have some fun.

The same is true for all sorts of things that people do with good intentions, but bad consequences. While that can happen to any of us, the difference that marks the self-righteous is their defensiveness and using their motivations as the excuse. The godly will explain their intentions, but will also quickly apologize for whatever happened, seek forgiveness for the unintended consequences and even repair things and make restitution as needed (Exodus 22:6, 14).

What is the solution for self-righteousness? Humility, the righteousness that is found only in the Lord Jesus Christ, and godly counsel. I put humility before righteousness in Christ only because without humility a person will not come to faith in Jesus Christ. Pride and self-righteousness prevents people from admitting they are sinners in need of a savior. They will not repent until they humble themselves before God and agree that He is right, they are wrong, and they cannot become righteous by their own efforts. A human can only become righteous before God when He imputes it to them on the basis of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Philippians 3:9). Third, Proverbs 12:15 tells us that *"The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But a wise man is he who listens to counsel."* Godly counselors will both expose our self-righteous standards and attitudes and help us learn to replace them with God's standards and a teachable attitude.

Stubborn

One of the characteristics of foolishness is an increasing obstinacy toward the things of God. This is manifested in the home as stubbornness, a defensiveness and unwillingness to learn. All of these arise out of pride which thinks it already knows enough and has it all together. None of us do, for on this side of heaven every one of us will still have areas in which we fail and need to improve, but we like to think that we do and so can be blind to the truth. Proverbs 4:19 states, *"The way of the wicked is like darkness; They do not know over what they stumble."* I don't think anyone here would purposely want to stumble like this, yet we are prone to it if we let pride lead us into being stubborn. Like a man stumbling around in the dark because he refuses to turn on a light, so is the stubborn man in life. The problems and pains he causes himself and others is unnecessary because the solution to the problem is easily available, yet he continues to try to do things his own way.

As pride rises, so does stubbornness so that there is a refusal to consider the point of view of others, or even worse, to acknowledge it even when it is recognized. Proverbs 27:22 addresses this kind of foolishness. *"Though you pound a fool in a mortar with a pestle along with crushed grain, [Yet] his folly will not depart from him."* When a person becomes this stubborn, they are resistant to change even when great effort is expended trying to teach him and the lesson to be learned is hard on him.

Sometimes people will be stubborn in public or in the midst of the argument in order to save face, but then will reconsider the issue, take the lesson to heart and not repeat the error. They may or may not acknowledge the lesson learned publically, but at least they cease repeating the same folly. There is some hope in that even if the lack of communication leaves the matter somewhat unresolved for everyone else. However, as stubbornness increases so does the deepness of the folly so that it is repeated over and over

again. Proverbs 26:11-12 describes this, *“¹¹ Like a dog that returns to its vomit Is a fool who repeats his folly. ¹² Do you see a man wise in his own eyes? There is more hope for a fool than for him.”*

What do you do if you have to interact with, or even worse, are married to such a stubborn fool? First, examine yourself and make sure that the repeated folly is not due to your own stubbornness. The other person or your spouse may be repeating the same folly, but you may be doing the same in provoking it, aggravating it or solidifying it. Second, you may need to confess your own foolishness to God in marrying such a fool. Such foolish stubbornness is usually quite evident before a man and wife exchange vows, yet you went ahead anyway. That is a warning to singles to be very careful about to whom you commit your life. Third, pursue humility including looking carefully at the role and response God requires of you.

Men, Ephesians 5:25-33 commands you to love your wife as Christ loved the church, and He did that when we were still sinners. You are to do the same. This is not referring to fond feelings of affection, but sacrifice of your own interests for her best interests. Not for what she may want, but for what God says is best for her in becoming a godly woman. Yes, that may be very difficult, but God will enable you to do so as you walk with Him and you learn to live your life first and foremost to please the Lord. You are also to cherish her as you do your own body just as Christ cherishes the church. The issue is how well you are living as a reflection of Jesus Christ. The same principles apply in other relationships. Are you being stubborn in your selfishness and pride or humble, loving and selfless in the pursuit of godliness yourself and helping others do the same?

Ladies, Ephesians 5:22-24, 33 commands you to subject yourself to your husband in the same way that the church is to subject itself to Christ. You are to show him respect. No, that may not be easy, yet it is the manner in which God wants you to reflect the relationship of Christ and His church. 1 Peter 3:1-6 explains the depth of this commitment in more detail saying, *“¹ In the same way, you wives, be submissive to your own husbands so that even if any [of them] are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, ² as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior.”* This passage removes the excuse that because he is stubborn in his sin you do not have to be chaste and respectful toward him. You are God’s means to change him, but that change only comes by doing it God’s way. Your life is not dependent upon your husband. It is dependent on God. The more you live for Christ, the better you will be able to not only carry out these commands, but also live with an inner peace and security regardless of the circumstances. That same principle applies to all of your other relationships too.

The solution to stubbornness is righteousness, humility and selflessness. With the humble is wisdom (Proverbs 11:2), and humility precedes honor. Being humble with other people begins with humbling yourself before the Lord.

Critical & Quarrelsome

The traits of being critical and quarrelsome are often intermixed and both are tied to pride and selfishness often with a mix of self-righteousness. They are all common causes of contention. The proud consider their way as the better or only proper way and self-righteousness makes that worse because they justify themselves according to their religious standard. The selfish just want their way regardless.

A person with these traits becomes critical and quick to quarrel. All it actually shows is their foolishness. As Proverbs 20:3 points out, *“Keeping away from strife is an honor for a man, But any fool will quarrel.”* Such quarreling drives wedges between relationships and can break apart families due to the resulting strife. Most people prefer to avoid such contention. Proverbs 17:1 warns, *“Better is a dry morsel and quietness with it Than a house full of feasting with strife.”* A crust of dry bread and water with peace are preferable to having a banquet with a battle.

People understand and practice this to one degree or another. We are told in Romans 12:18 that *“If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men,”* but there cannot be peace with those

that are consistently critical and like to pick fights so over time you learn to avoid them and might even skip events to do so. The conflict that rises in talking with them is not worth it. This can affect families as adult children become estranged due to avoiding the contentious nature of other family members. Marriages crumble as one spouse avoids the other in the effort to try to avoid conflict. Overtime work, hobbies, sports, social and service clubs become excuses to stay away resulting in increasing distance in the relationship and a disintegrating marriage.

Pride alone is sufficient to stoke the fires of criticism and quarreling, and self-righteousness adds a blower to it. Such people view others and their ideas as inferior. They also tend toward perfectionism. Sometimes that is called OCD, obsessive-compulsive disorder, but people with OCD do not always complain. They often just take on the responsibility and do it themselves. That may be irritating if they redo what you just did, but unless they are complaining about it, what difference does it really make to you?

For example, you clean up the kitchen and your spouse comes in later and cleans it again. If he does not complain about it, why would that irritate you? If he wants it cleaner and is willing to clean it without complaint, then rejoice. You get a cleaner kitchen and can concentrate on something more important to you. Perhaps the irritation is caused by your own pride that your housekeeping does not meet the standard he wants? If you cared about him, you would at a minimum thank him for it instead of complaining about it yourself, and perhaps you would ask him what he wants and work together to fulfill his desires.

At the other end of the spectrum are critical people that complain and demand that others meet their standards. They may even demand that the process is also done their way. Such people are miserable to work for, and even more miserable to live with for nothing will ever really satisfy them. When you finally get one thing right, they will find something else wrong to complain about. In such cases, marriage is the world's most expensive way of discovering your faults. To paraphrase Proverbs 14:1, *"The wise build their home, But the foolish tear it down with their own hands."*

If you tend toward perfectionism, then ask yourself why your standards have to be met and why others must do it your way? Each of us are responsible to do things God's way to achieve His standards and everything else is relatively unimportant. Paul's commands in Romans 14:7-10 have application here. ⁷ *"For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; ⁸ for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived [again], that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living. ¹⁰ But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God."* Verse 19 adds, *"So then let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another."*

Is it not enough that each of you will have to give an account of yourself to God? Are you pursuing that which promotes peace or quarreling? Does your pride blind you to the fact that the other person may not only have legitimate reason for doing things differently than you, but their way could even be superior - at least for them? And even if your way and standard are better - so what? How important is the issue anyway that you would pick a fight over it? Are you responding to the conflict in a godly manner with values that reflect those of God? Whom are you trying to please? God? Your spouse? Your friend or co-worker? Or yourself?

The solution to being critical and quarrelsome is to humble yourself to lower your expectations of others and be realistic. Set your standards according to what God has said instead of what man demands. Follow Jesus' example who welcomed sinners and was known as their friend though He called them to repent and pursue righteousness. Learn to put into practice 1 Thessalonians 5:14, *"We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone."*

Wicked

Wicked is a general term that like foolish can be used in reference to a lot of specific character traits and actions that are wrecking balls to a home. Proverbs 3:33 - *"The curse of the Lord is on the house of the wicked, But He blesses the dwelling of the righteous."* Wicked (rāshā' /raw-shaw') is the opposite of righteousness as seen in this proverb and the many others that contrast the two. It is used in parallel with almost every Hebrew word for sin, evil, and iniquity. It can refer to attitude and intention, but more often it speaks of the actions and conduct which characterize the individual. The Lord stands against wickedness because it is contrary to His nature. Proverbs 15:9, *"The way of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, But He loves him who pursues righteousness."* The level of wickedness is set by its contrast with the character and attitude of God. A synonym for wicked then would be ungodly.

It is easy to understand that wicked actions and attitudes will damage our relationships, homes and society. Proverbs 15:6, *"Much wealth is [in] the house of the righteous, But trouble is in the income of the wicked."* God created man to be a reflection of His own character and it is wicked to live to fulfill your own selfish desires according to your own wisdom which brings serious consequences. Proverbs 14:32, *"The wicked is thrust down by his wrongdoing, But the righteous has a refuge when he dies."*

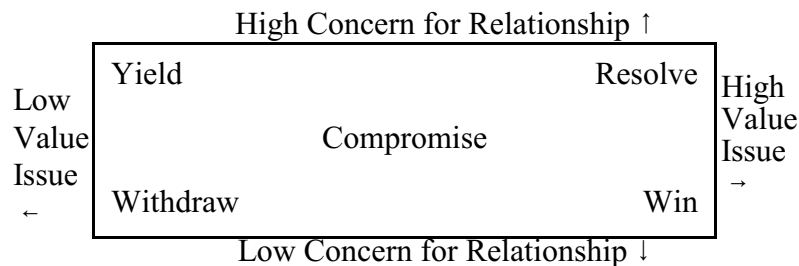
The good news is that though we were born dead in trespasses and sin and therefore with a strong bent toward wickedness, no one has to continue to live that way. God hears and answers the prayers of those who seek Him with repentance and confession. That is the great hope given to us in Jesus Christ. Because He has paid the price of our sin in His sacrificial atonement on Calvary, we can be forgiven our sins. Because He conquered death, the penalty of sin can be removed and we can be given eternal life. Because Jesus has ascended to the right hand of the Father where He makes intercession for us and has sent us the Holy Spirit to indwell us, we can become new creatures who are being changed into His image in holiness and righteousness. The Christian is to no longer be wicked because all those things are true of him. The non-Christian does not have to remain in wickedness if he will be honest and turn from it. Proverbs 28:13 explains, *"He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, But he who confesses and forsakes [them] will find compassion."* Isaiah 55:7 explains more fully, *"Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; And let him return to the Lord, And He will have compassion on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon."*

The solution to wickedness is the righteous imputed when you humble yourself to repent from sin and place your faith in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ and then develop that righteousness in daily life by being His disciple. That is also the solution that will keep you from being the cause of unrighteous conflict and eliminate or reduce conflict with other believers. Put into practice 1 Timothy 6:11, *"But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness."*

Sermon Notes - August 18, 2024
Marriage: Communication Skills Part 5 - Causes of Conflict B

Review

Good _____ skills are important in all relationships and critical to God's design for marriage



How you _____ to a conflict will depend on what you value and your priorities

Sin is the root _____ of all conflict & the foolishness it brings to life for it is contrary to God's will & design

Pride is the original sin and one of the three major areas in which we can be _____

The solution to pride is _____, and the solution to sin is salvation by faith in Jesus Christ

The solution to foolishness & conflict from ignorance & naivete is gaining knowledge of the _____

The solution to foolish counsel is learning truth to reject foolishness and gaining _____ counsel

The solution to the dangers of those that pursue foolishness is to _____ from them (Prov. 13:20)

Selfish

James 3:14-17 - Selfish ambition is "earthly, natural, & demonic" and it brings _____ & every evil thing

Selfishness is primarily concerned with _____ profit & pleasure with little consideration of others

Selfishness is _____ to man - Eph. 5:29

Selfishness breaks up the unity of a family by setting its members in _____ with one another

Selfishness quickly _____ into being demanding, nagging, critical, manipulative, and unfair

The solution to selfishness is _____ - Philippians 2:3-4. Be a dog instead of a tick

Self-righteous

Self-righteousness is related to _____, foolishness & stubbornness. It is blind to itself - Prov. 16:2, 21:2

Some self-righteous think they are doing what is right even though their motives are _____

The self-righteous judge according to _____ standards. Example: Scribes & Pharisees in Matthew 5-7

Legalistic self-righteousness is still common today as people judge according to _____ standards

Some self-righteous think that as long as they believe their motives were good the results are _____

Self-righteousness causes conflict by unintended but _____ consequences and obstructing correction

The self-righteous are _____ when their good intentions result in bad consequences

The solution to self-righteousness is _____, the righteousness found in Christ, and godly counsel

Stubborn - An increasing _____ toward the things of God - a proud defensiveness & unwillingness to learn

Like a man stumbling around in the _____ because he refuses to turn on a light, so is the stubborn man in life

The stubborn _____ to consider the point of view of others or acknowledge it even when recognized

As stubbornness increases so does the deepness of the _____ so that it is continually repeated (Prov 26:11-12)

Dealing with the stubborn: Don't be stubborn yourself; consider & confess your own _____; pursue humility

Men, fulfill your God given responsibilities and _____ as men, husbands, fathers

Women, fulfill your _____ given responsibilities and roles as women, wives, mothers

The solution to stubbornness is righteousness, _____ and selflessness

Critical & Quarrelsome

Being critical and quarrelsome are often intermixed and tied to _____, selfishness & often self-righteousness

Proverbs 20:3 - those who quarrel & cause strife show themselves to be _____ to be avoided (Prov. 17:1)

Romans 12:18 - we are to strive to be at _____ with all men, but that is not possible with the quarrelsome

Avoiding the critical & quarrelsome causes families to be _____ and marriages to disintegrate

Pride alone is sufficient to stoke the fires of criticism & quarreling, & self-righteousness adds a _____ to it

If someone who is OCD takes responsibility and _____ complain, then why complain yourself?

Those who complain & demand others meet their standards cause others to be _____ or leave

The perfectionist needs to apply Romans 14:7-10 - we are to live for the _____, not ourselves

The solution to being critical & quarrelsome is to _____ lower expectations & be realistic - 1 Thess. 5:14

Wicked

Wicked is the _____ of righteousness and is used in reference to many character traits and actions

The Lord stands against wickedness because it is _____ to His nature - Proverbs 15:9

Wicked actions & attitudes will _____ our relationships, homes and society - Proverbs 15:6

The _____ provides hope for the wicked to be forgiven and changed to become righteous

The solution for wickedness is _____, confession and pursuing the gospel of Jesus Christ

Conflict is eliminated or _____ as you put into practice 1 Tim. 6:11

KIDS KORNER

Parents, you are responsible to apply God's Word to your children's lives. Here is some help. Young Children - draw a picture about something you hear during the sermon. Explain your picture(s) to your parents at lunch. Older Children - Do one or more of the following: 1) Write down all the verses mentioned in the sermon and look them up later. 2) Count how many times the word "conflict" is mentioned in the sermon. Talk with your parents about how you can keep from being selfish, self-righteous, stubborn, critical, quarrelsome or wicked.

THINK ABOUT IT!

Questions to consider in discussing the sermon with others. What factors determine your response to conflict? What is the root of selfishness, what damage does it cause to relationships and how can it be overcome? What are the two basic forms of self-righteousness? How does each cause conflict? How can each be overcome? What is stubbornness and its cause? How does it cause conflict & damage relationships? What is the solution to it? What underlies being critical & quarrelsome? How does perfectionism aggravate them? How are they resolved instead of just being avoided? What is wickedness? What consequences will the wicked bear? How can the wicked be changed to be made righteous? How have you improved in your own response to conflict?