

CONNECTED

WEEK FOUR: HEALTHY CONFLICT

CONNECT

What people are willing to say online that they wouldn't say face-to-face has destroyed many relationships. Why do people feel so free to say things they wouldn't normally say? In this final week of our series we'll look at the how to turn the "Freedom" of what is said online into **Healthy Conflict**.

"If two people agree on everything, one of them is unnecessary." Ruth Bell Graham

- What do you tend to repeatedly disagree on with your spouse/best friend?

DISCOVER

Read Matthew 18:15-17

¹⁵"If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back. ¹⁶But if you are unsuccessful, take one or two others with you and go back again, so that everything you say may be confirmed by two or three witnesses. ¹⁷If the person still refuses to listen, take your case to the church. Then if he or she won't accept the church's decision, treat that person as a pagan or a corrupt tax collector.

Read James 1:19-20

¹⁹Understand this, my dear brothers and sisters: You must all be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. ²⁰Human anger does not produce the righteousness God desires.

Romans 14:12-13

¹²Yes, each of us will give a personal account to God. ¹³So let's stop condemning each other. Decide instead to live in such a way that you will not cause another believer to stumble and fall.

- What are the steps for when a believer sins against you? Why do you think there are no instructions for when a non-believer sins against you?
- What is meant by "take it to the church"? How does this apply to the online community, like the online campus, or the church Facebook page?
- What does it mean that we should be, "Quick to listen"? How can you "listen" better to what someone writes online? How can we be "slow to speak" and "slow to get angry" especially online when someone says something hurtful?
- What does "Being slow to get angry" have to do with producing, "Righteousness God desires"?

- How should Paul's reminder and warning that, "Each of us will give a personal account to God" so we need to, "stop condemning each other" impact how we communicate with one another, including with people online who we don't know?

GROW

- How has the way people interact online impacted you? Have other Christians responded to you better, worse, or the same as non-believers in similar situations?
- Is there someone specific you need to go to one on one and apply Matthew 18 to the relationship to rather than having a public struggle online? How has the online culture impacted that conflict?
- Have you said things online that you wouldn't normally say to someone in a face to face conversation? If so, can you share what made you feel the freedom to do so (You don't need to take time to get into details of the situation)?
- Which of the three traits that James lists do you have the most difficulty with, and why, being: "Quick to listen, slow to speak, and (or) slow to get angry"? Is your self-control over these traits different online than face-to-face? If so, how?
- Are there things you feel safe saying online that you would never say in public? Why do you think that is? How do those things impact your relationships with Christ and others?

NEXT STEPS

- Pray for one another that the Holy Spirit would help you take a step in the area you struggle with most: being quick to listen, slow to speak, or slow to get angry.
- Pray also for the growth and finances of the church. We trust, if we each do what God calls us to do, and we lead others to him, God will take care of the rest.