

“We Had A Fight...Now What?”

“In The Ring” Series- Part 3

Connect (If you dare?):

Many couples usually argue over similar topics. These are called “triggers”. This might be when the woman shops, the man watches TV, somebody doesn’t pick up after him or herself, etc. Take a moment and have 2-3 willing small group members share the “triggers” that have been “pulled” in their relationships (marital and non-marital). Did they find a mutually effective way to deal with the trigger? How?

Hook:

Conflict is part of our human nature. After Adam sinned in the Garden, conflicts quickly came about with the first family. When God asked Adam if he had eaten of the forbidden tree, he did not simply say, “Yes.” He said, “The woman you gave me, gave me the fruit and I did eat.” He indirectly blamed God and directly blamed the woman. The woman then blamed the serpent. When sin entered the world, so did conflict. In fact, God said that one of the results of sin would be conflict between the man and the woman. The wife would desire to control the husband and the husband would try to dominate the woman by force (Genesis 3:16)

Book & Look:

What should a person or a couple do when a disagreement has caused a conflict in the relationship? Gregory Brown, a pastor and chaplain, is the author of: *Bible Teacher's Guide: Building Foundations For A Godly Marriage: A Pre-Marriage, Marriage Counseling Study.* (An excellent read!)_ In his series of lessons, he states that there are certain steps that can be taken to help with conflict resolution. Below are a few of these action steps for discussion:

1. Have the right attitude toward conflict.

Conflict, as with all trials, is meant to test our faith, reveal sin in our hearts, develop character, and draw us closer to God. Read Romans 5:3-4. How might these verses apply to marital or non-marital conflicts?

2. Talking to our spouse first before talking with others.

Read Matthew 18:15. Does this verse apply to offenses caused by our spouses? Why is it good to go to our spouses privately, FIRST, rather than to others?

3. Seek to resolve conflict immediately...do not delay!

"In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold." Ephesians 4:26-27

Based on your experience, what happens when conflicts are not dealt with quickly?

4. Care less for your rights and care more for the desires of your spouse.

Read Philippians 2:1-5. This is how we are to treat one another...what would this same command look like in our marriages if we are obedient?

5. Sow good seeds to produce the right results.

In conflict, we must do the opposite of what our nature desires. We may have a desire to raise our voice, and/or to hurt the other person, but these seeds will only produce negative fruits and potential destruction in the marriage. To resolve conflict, we must always sow the right seeds.

Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. Romans 12:19-21

In the above verse, what are all of the implications for us as it relates to getting a desired result?

Took:

Write down all the common triggers for arguments in your relationship. Why do you think these triggers commonly cause you or your mate to get angry? How can you bring resolution to these triggers?

We talked about the necessity of not sowing negative seeds, but positive seeds. Which negative seeds do you typically sow when in conflict (i.e. withdrawal, criticizing, complaining, seeking revenge, seeking to win arguments, etc.)?

What about your spouse?

How have you seen these negative seeds produce negative fruit?

How can you sow positive seeds instead to reap positive fruit?