

WHEN LOVE HURTS

October 18, 2009

Pastor Cynthia L. Hale

Philippians 4:2-3

One of the greatest joys in life is being in a loving relationship with someone else. Some of us are blessed to go to bed at night and wake up with our best friend; someone with whom we can share our joyous times as well as difficult times. Some of us live in a house with others with whom we can share life's difficulties. Even those who live alone are not without intimate relationships. We were created to be in relationship. We are first to be in relationship with God.

Relationships aren't meant to cause you pain. God wants us to have relationships that bring out the best in us. They are to be loving and gratifying. When they are not, they cause us pain. That is when love hurts.

Conflict is a normal part of life especially in relationships. Anytime two or more people come together and go after the same goal, conflict is going to happen. **Intrapersonal** conflict is conflict we have going on inside ourselves. As Christians, we have a war going on between our flesh and Spirit. **Galatians 5:17** Saved and unsaved people experience intrapersonal conflict: desires competing within themselves. People go after what they want, will not stop until they get it, and will stop anyone who gets in their way. It is obvious that some people experience intrapersonal conflict. Why would someone intimidate, abuse, and/or kill someone else. **James 4:1** Domestic violence is a result of intrapersonal conflict people are having within themselves.

The second kind of conflict we experience is **interpersonal** conflict, which is personality conflict. People are going to disagree. Conflict is inevitable; but it is not the problem. It is how we react to it that is the problem. **Proverbs 15:1** You don't have to blow up when someone says something you don't like. Get quiet and talk it out. Some people just get quiet and hold it in. That is not the answer because the problem escalates and causes more problems. You have lived with conflict in your relationships for years acting as though it is not there. That man hits you and talks bad to you but you don't do anything because you feel responsible. Love is not supposed to hurt. You don't get used to each other by "duking" it out. We keep acting like it's cool for men to dominate women and make inappropriate comments. We act as if it is okay to put others down. Some of the demons in our houses are killing us and we have to get them out. It is time for us to tell the truth.

Paul gives us solutions to live with conflict. You get angry and people push you to the limit. However, you should not react in a way that is not Christ-like. **Philippians 2:1-4** Paul wrote that what we should do is live in unity. The way to live in harmony is to be patient, loving, and long-suffering with one another. Long-suffering means you have made a commitment and though you may not get it right all the time you are still knit together. Today's society is about entitlement. You owe me and I owe you. Yes, but we need to not be so concerned with our own needs and desires. That causes conflict.

When you are in a conflict, you need to be open about it. It doesn't just go away. If it is stress or distress, you need to talk about it so that it does not cause harm to your health or your relationships. Pray. Prayer is

being honest and open with God. Take the interpersonal conflict and the person with whom you are in conflict to God in prayer. Understand that it is never just their fault; consider their point of view. Communicate and iron out your differences. Anger is a healthy emotion when it is expressed in the right way. When it is held inside, it becomes unhealthy bitterness. **Ephesians 5:25** Emotionally healthy people don't hold grudges. They tell you just how they feel. Let people know how they have made you feel but speak in love.

Don't dwell on the incident. Forgive. That means that when it comes up in your mind you give it to God. It means you won't remind that person or talk about it with someone else. Forgiving means letting it go and treating that person as if it never happened. If you keep the grudge, you will have a collection. How long have you been married, on that job, or coming to this church? What's your collection like? Forgive and let it go. It is not easy but the Holy Spirit will help you if you ask Him to. However, you have to turn it over completely to Him. We have to dump the junk daily.

Paul was enlisting all of the resources of the church. This means the church can help those who are struggling with conflict. This must be a safe haven where people can be emotionally naked and unashamed when asking for help. There is a bad pattern of the oppressed oppressing others. That's not right. We need to stand up to say this cannot be and it will not be tolerated. God can change your situation. Don't be ashamed to come to the altar to get your healing, peace, and/or deliverance. You are trying to handle it all by yourself and it is falling apart. Go to God.

Peace.

The full transcript of this message and others is available on cassette, CD and DVD
at
www.RayofHope.org