

What isn't Conflict?

We are not in an average, ordinary active conflict with another person or group of people when the issue is of a moral nature, or life threatening nature, or when we are being threatened with physical violence, or are being asked to do something or approve of something that is contrary to God's commands, or of a nature which threatens the safety of the community, or something that threatens the purity of the Church – such as the overt practice of known sin.

We are not in conflict when we are being persecuted for righteousness sake – be our persecutors unbelievers or people from the religious community

Old Testament Teaching – The Law

**Deuteronomy 13:5** . . . But that prophet or that dreamer of dreams shall be put to death, because he has counseled rebellion against the LORD your God who brought you from the land of Egypt and redeemed you from the house of slavery, to seduce you from the way in which the LORD your God commanded you to walk. So you shall **purge the evil** from among you.

**Deuteronomy 17:2-7** . . . If there is found in your midst, in any of your towns, which the LORD your God is giving you, a man or a woman who does what is evil in the sight of the LORD your God, by transgressing His covenant, [3] and has gone and served other gods and worshiped them, or the sun or the moon or any of the heavenly host, which I have not commanded, [4] and if it is told you and you have heard of it, then you shall inquire thoroughly. Behold, if it is true and the thing certain that this detestable thing has been done in Israel, [5] then you shall bring out that man or that woman who has done this evil deed to your gates, that is, the man or the woman, and you shall stone them to death. [6] On the evidence of two witnesses or three witnesses, he who is to die shall be put to death; he shall not be put to death on the evidence of one witness. [7] The hand of the witnesses shall be first against him to put him to death, and afterward the hand of all the people. So you shall **purge the evil** from your midst.

**Deuteronomy 17:9-12** . . . So you shall come to the Levitical priest or the judge who is in office in those days, and you shall inquire of them and they will declare to you the verdict in the case. [10] You shall do according to the terms of the verdict which they declare to you from that place which the LORD chooses; and you shall be careful to observe according to all that they teach you. [11] According to the terms of the law which they teach you, and according to the verdict which they tell you, you shall do; you shall not turn aside from the word which they declare to you, to the right or the left. [12] The man who acts presumptuously by not listening to the priest who stands there to serve the LORD your God, nor to the judge, that man shall die; thus you shall **purge the evil** from Israel.

**Deuteronomy 19:15-21** . . . A single witness shall not rise up against a man on account of any iniquity or any sin which he has committed; on the evidence of two or three witnesses a matter shall be confirmed. [16] If a malicious witness rises up against a man to accuse him of wrongdoing, [17] then both the men who have the dispute shall stand before the LORD, before the priests and the judges who will be in office in those days. [18] The judges shall investigate thoroughly, and if the witness is a false witness and he has accused his brother falsely, [19] then you shall do to him just as he had intended to do to his brother. Thus you shall **purge the evil** from among you. [20] The rest will hear and be afraid, and will never again do such an evil thing among you. [21] Thus you shall not show pity: life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth, hand for hand, foot for foot.

**Deuteronomy 21:18-21** . . . If any man has a stubborn and rebellious son who will not obey his father or his mother, and when they chastise him, he will not even listen to them, [19] then his father and mother shall seize him, and bring him out to the elders of his city at the gateway of his hometown. [20] They shall say to the elders of his city, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, he will not

obey us, he is a glutton and a drunkard.' [21] Then all the men of his city shall stone him to death; so you shall **remove the evil** from your midst, and all Israel will hear of it and fear.

**Deuteronomy 22:20-22** . . . But if this charge is true, that the girl was not found a virgin, [21] then they shall bring out the girl to the doorway of her father's house, and the men of her city shall stone her to death because she has committed an act of folly in Israel by playing the harlot in her father's house; thus you shall **purge the evil** from among you. [22] If a man is found lying with a married woman, then both of them shall die, the man who lay with the woman, and the woman; thus you shall **purge the evil** from Israel.

**Deuteronomy 22:23-24** . . . If there is a girl who is a virgin engaged to a man, and another man finds her in the city and lies with her, [24] then you shall bring them both out to the gate of that city and you shall stone them to death; the girl, because she did not cry out in the city, and the man, because he has violated his neighbor's wife. Thus you shall **purge the evil** from among you.

**Deuteronomy 24:7** . . . If a man is caught kidnapping any of his countrymen of the sons of Israel, and he deals with him violently or sells him, then that thief shall die; so you shall **purge the evil** from among you.

New Testament Scriptures – Church Life

**I Corinthians 5:9-13** . . . I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people; [10] I did not at all mean with the immoral people of this world, or with the covetous and swindlers, or with idolaters, for then you would have to go out of the world. [11] But actually, I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother if he is an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, or a drunkard, or a swindler—not even to eat with such a one. [12] For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? [13] But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from among yourselves.

**Romans 16:17** . . . Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them.

**II Thessalonians 3:6** . . . Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you keep away from every brother who leads an unruly life and not according to the tradition which you received from us.

**II Thessalonians 3:14-15** . . . If anyone does not obey our instruction in this letter, take special note of that person and do not associate with him, so that he will be put to shame. [15] Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but admonish him as a brother.

**Titus 3:10-11** . . . Reject a factious man after a first and second warning, [11] knowing that such a man is perverted and is sinning, being self-condemned.

**II John 1:9-11** . . . Anyone who goes too far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son. [10] If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house, and do not give him a greeting; [11] for the one who gives him a greeting participates in his evil deeds.

The point here is that there is a difference between ordinary conflicts and those situations that are to be dealt with in a that is more like a parent with a child or a judge with a criminal or the community with those who threaten the safety of the community. This is an important distinction, because in our study of **James 4:1-10**, we will be dealing with ordinary conflicts, not this second kind of trouble.

**In Relation To Conflict,  
Who / What Rules Over Your Heart / Methods?**  
*(This is not either/or, but who/what is on top)*

God	Self (self-rule)
Righteousness	Flesh, World, Devil
Love	Selfishness
Heavenly Wisdom	Worldly Wisdom

**What Are The Results?**

Making a sincere effort to work with rather than against, listen long enough to understand the other side, speak clearly and specifically, and seek a mutually agreeable solution. Telling the truth, but always with love and respect. Inviting rather than forcing or threatening. If stronger, serve, if weaker, become fearless, because God is your security and the eternal is more valuable than the temporal.	<p>Arguments, Quarreling, Attacking, Fighting, Hostility, Resort to controlling methods, Verbal abuse, Maybe even physical abuse.</p> <p>Quiet resistance, Trying to appease or in some other way end the discomfort of the resolution process without resolving the conflict, Feeling mostly innocent, or unjustly attacked, or unfairly condemned, Pull away emotionally, Live in denial,</p>
Forgiveness, restoration, and peace if the conflict is resolved in a mutually agreeable way. Disappointment or sadness if not, while telling the truth about how this will effect the relationship, but always with love and respect.	Ongoing anger or hurt, Resentment, Unforgiveness, Bitterness, Feeling like a victim, Focusing on how unloved you are even though you also are failing to love as you ought, Withholding love or affection as punishment, Continuing to harass or nag.
Reconciliation, Healing of the damaged relationship. Restored trust and deeper love.	Damaged relationships, Emotional distance, Loss of trust and love, Broken relationships.