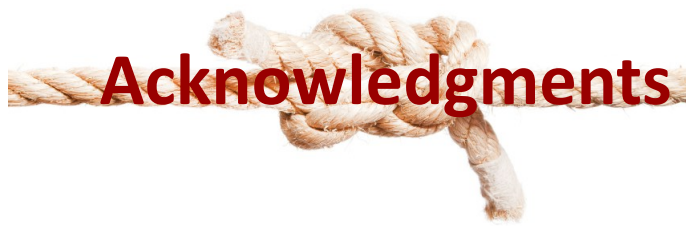




Resolving Conflict

Instructor's Guide

Vibrant Church Renewal
USA/Canada Evangelism Ministries
Church of the Nazarene, International



Acknowledgments

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Evangelism Resources

USA/Canada Mission/Evangelism Department

International Church of the Nazarene

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Rewrite– Finding our Mission Achieving Potential Resolving Conflict 2011

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I. Module Introduction

Section	Time	Page	Brief Description
I. Module Introduction	5 Mins.		Introduce module, objectives, outline.
II. Lecture	25 Mins.		Facilitator presents information that will foster a climate in which church leadership can deal appropriately with conflict.
III. Small Group	20 Mins.		Participants work in teams to evaluate a case study and make recommendations on how to handle a conflict.
IV. Discussion	5 Mins.		<p>Participants share thoughts about the information presented and insights about how the information will assist in their leadership.</p> <p>Two possible questions to start the discussion in addition to the questions answered during the exercise are:</p> <p>What new ideas or thoughts did God reveal to you?</p> <p>What new techniques will you begin using as you think about others in your church.</p>
V. Action Planning/ Reporting	15 Mins.		<p>Participants begin preparing for their homework assignment: Identify a recent conflict where you were a key participant in resolving the conflict. Based on the information presented in the lecture, evaluate which approach you used, what actions were positive for resolving the conflict, and what you will do differently when faced with a similar situation.</p> <p>Participants will report the results of the activities at the next workshop.</p>
VI. Module Wrap-up	5 Mins		Close the module with your final comments regarding the topics.

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Preparation Checklist

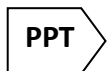
The following information will help you prepare to instruct this module.

- ◇ Review the material and make notes of specific areas for special emphasis.
 - ◇ Check to insure the following materials are available:
 - ◇ PowerPoint presentations/transparencies (transparency masters can be produced from the PowerPoint slides)
 - ◇ Participant booklet (copy as needed)
 - ◇ Gather the following materials:
 - ◇ Transparency markers
 - ◇ Pens and/or pencils
 - ◇ Other material you want to use
 - ◇ Make copies of the following material (one for each participant):
 - ◇ Participant booklet
 - ◇ Handouts (if used with this module)
 - ◇ Check the classroom for:
 - ◇ TV/VCR (if necessary)
 - ◇ Overhead projector
 - ◇ Chalkboard or flip chart
 - ◇ Sufficient number of tables and chairs for the participants
- ⇒ Arrange the room so that each church team sits around an individual table and you have ample room to move among the teams.

Your instructor's material contains the following icons:



Time suggestions



PowerPoint Presentation with its corresponding number



Special instructions or suggestions

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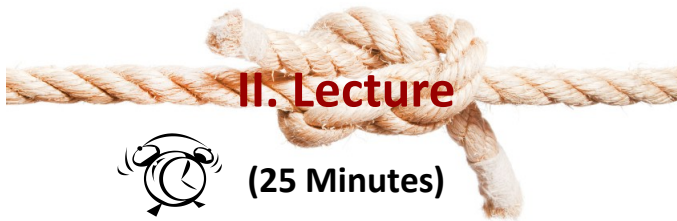


Let the participants know the material is theirs to keep and encourage them to take notes. The participant material includes:


- Purpose
- Objectives
- “Fill in the blanks” for the lecture
- Application exercises

The purpose of this module is to:
Create a climate in which church leadership can deal appropriately with conflict.

- The objectives for this module are:**
- Identify the sources of church conflict.
 - Develop processes by which to address issues present in a local church.
 - Suggest skills profitable for conflict reduction.



II. Lecture

 (25 Minutes)

Notes



The underlined text represents the blanks in the participant booklet.



Before beginning the lecture, direct the participants to the Action Planning/Report section of their material. Ask them to briefly describe a recent (last six months) conflict where they played a key role in the resolution. Ask them to describe the background, the behavior of the parties involved, and their own behavior/emotions. Limit the time for this activity to four minutes or less.

I. Scriptural Examples of Conflict

A. Acts 15

Do Gentiles have to become Jews before they become Christians?

B. Acts 6

Will the Greek-speaking widows be neglected in the welfare distribution?

C. Acts 15:36-41

Paul and Barnabas separate over differing leadership assessment

D. Galatians 2:11



Paul goes toe to toe with Peter

Ask participants to work in groups of three or four (or church teams) to look up scripture and fill in the blanks. Assign each group two or three scriptures.



II. Scriptural Support of Conflict Resolution

- A. "If a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of **GENTLENESS**" (Galatians 6:1)
- B. "We have renounced disgraceful underhanded ways; we **RE-FUSE** to practice cunning" (II Corinthians 4:2).
- C. "The weapons for our warfare are not **WORLDLY**" (II Corinthians 10:4).
- D. "Be subject to one another out of reverence for **CHRIST**" (Ephesians 5:21)
- E. "Then let us no more pass **JUDGMENT** on one another...let us then pursue what makes for peace and mutual up building" (Romans 14:13,19).
- F. "If anyone **REFUSES** to obey what we say in this letter, note that man and have nothing to do with him, that he may be ashamed"(II Thessalonians 3:14).
- G. "Do not look on him as an enemy, but **WARN** him as a brother" (II Thessalonians 3:15)
- H. "Finally, brethren, farewell. Mend your ways, heed my appeal, **AGREE** with one another, live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you" (II Corinthians 13:11).
- I. "Do not **REBUKE** an older man, but exhort him as you would a father, treat younger men like brothers, older women like mothers, younger women like sisters, in all purity" (I Timothy 5:1-2).



II. Lecture

Notes

The scripture makes clear that we are to do everything we can to keep conflict down, but we are not to **AVOID** confrontation if it is principle-oriented. The problem is : we can find scripture to support our position if we are being **ATTACKED** or wanting to do the attacking.

A healthy emotional person and an objective leader will accurately **DETERMINE** what scripture applies when. In the next few minutes together, let's clarify as to how we distinguish Christian conflict from carnal combat.

III. Constants About Conflict

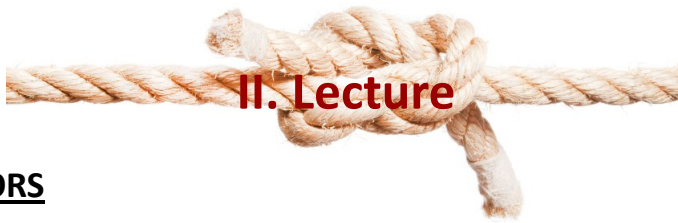
- A. Conflict isn't always bad or **HARMFUL**.
- B. Conflict **HAPPENS** even if you have no interest in what the other party wants.
- C. Conflict can start from **MINOR** issues and become a major issue.
- D. Conflict may be **INHERENT** in your job description as a leader.
- E. Conflict may occur with someone you **LIKE** or dislike.

If we do not deal with conflict within twenty-four hours, there is only a two percent chance the conflict will ever be dealt with successfully.

IV. Five Traditional Approaches to Handling Conflict

A. **WITHDRAWER**

Takes the **LEAVE/LOSE** approach. A withdrawer believes in "walk away power". He/She will avoid conflict even though they may lose something important.



B. **DOMINATORS**

Take the **WIN/LOSE** approach. Dominators operate as though they have the right and the power on their side.

C. **PLACATORS**

Take the **YIELD/LOSE** approach. A placators will do about anything to maintain the relationship.

D. **COMPROMISERS**

Take the **MINI-WIN/MINI-LOSE** approach. Compromisers believe both parties have something to give and something to take. Compromisers are convinced that both individuals are partially right.

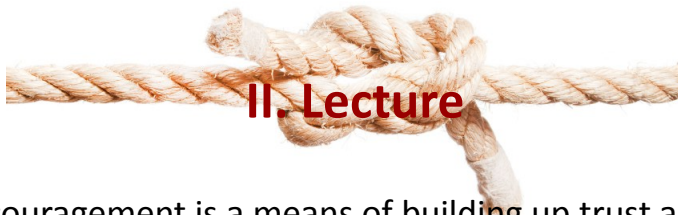
E. **COLLABORATORS**

Take the **WIN/WIN** approach. Collaborators do whatever it takes to get the job done and maintain relationships at the same time.

V. Keys to Conflict Reduction

A. **BUILD** Trust

1. Conflict will **SUBSIDE** in direct relationship to the amount of trust built.
2. **AFFIRMING** one another within the church is a means of building trust.
3. Trust is needed in the church second only to what is needed in the home.
4. Where people genuinely **LOVE** each other, trust flourishes.
5. **ACCEPTANCE** of each other promotes trust, too.
6. When we **ADMIT** to our humanness, people are more apt to generate confidence in us.



II. Lecture

Notes

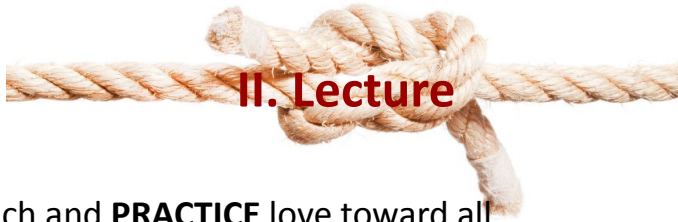
7. Encouragement is a means of building up trust as well. "You were there when I needed you," (pastoral care) **HEIGHTENS** the trust factor.
8. Integrity of life **GENERATES** trust.
9. Broken confidence **DESTROYS** trust.
10. Ridicule **LOWERS** the trust level.
11. **BROKEN** promises wipe out the confidence factor.
12. Conflict does not divide us, but **LACK** of trust does.

B. **GIVE** Grace

The following is from *Conflict and Caring* by Keith Huttenlocker:

Ethics, as well as grace, suggest to pastors that they do any or all of the following during conflict.

1. Calmly **ACCEPT** the chastisement of the people.
2. **PROFIT** wisely from all warranted criticism, regardless of its origin or manner of presentation.
3. Openly **REPENT** of any wrong or foolishness.
4. Freely **FORGIVE** those who have trespassed against the pastor and treat them as forgiven.
5. **VOLUNTARILY** make the requested changes that are not unscriptural or otherwise irresponsible (i.e. harmful to others).



II. Lecture

Notes

6. Preach and **PRACTICE** love toward all
7. Remain an example of **COMPOSURE** and integrity in all situations.
8. Speak and write **POSITIVELY** when addressing the congregation and the outside community.
9. **DEEPEN** a personal walk with Jesus Christ.
10. **LIMIT** authority to that granted by the church bylaws, resisting all temptations to invoke “marshal law.”

If we do not deal with conflict within twenty-four hours, there is only a two percent chance the conflict will ever be dealt with successfully.



III. Small Group Exercise



(20 Minutes)

Notes

The small group exercise portion of the module provides an opportunity for the teams to discuss the information presented and how it applies to their church.

Turn to the Small Group Exercise portion of your participant handout. In this section you will read a case study. I will then ask some questions to encourage your thoughts about the dynamics at work in the situation and you will discuss your recommendations for resolving the conflict. You will have 3-4 minutes to read the case study.



Case Study When the Leaders Leave

Ron Taylor, district superintendent for 83 churches in the state of Washington, winced as he explained to his wife, Sue, his frustration with Bremerton New Life Church. He saw signs of an impending split. Angry members, who were also strong leaders in the local church, were phoning weekly.

The pastor of Bremerton New Life Church was Chuck Parsons, a minister Ron had recommended to the congregation four years earlier. Ron's and Chuck's friendship had been cemented by annual deep-sea fishing trips together. Ron hated even the thought of suggesting Chuck look for another pastoral assignment, but he dared not lose the one church he found in his denomination that possessed the brightest future in Bremerton, a city of 173,000.

(cont.)

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Case Study (cont.)

Notes

Under the previous pastor, a quiet and cultured man with an earned doctorate, Bremerton New Life assimilated able lay leaders of some wealth. These newcomers eagerly assumed responsibilities on the district and generously supported the district superintendent's programs. These contractors, bankers, real estate agents, and management types also involved themselves in key roles in the local church, such as Sunday school superintendent, finance committee, and church board members.

Chuck's predecessor, Neal Gray, told his district superintendent, "I've taken the church as far as I can. The church needs a personable and dynamic leader if it is going to reach its potential." Neal prepared the congregation to accept their new pastor. Members and regular attenders reported genuine enthusiasm with Chuck's arrival. His humor, interpersonal skills, and warm personality raised expectations. Chuck had grown up as a son of a single parent. He had received affirmation from his local church. This acceptance contrasted with the feelings of inferiority that were reinforced by students who called him "Chubby" and "Fatso." As he laughed with them, he discovered that his light-hearted spirit endeared him to others.

Chuck had once told Ron that when he graduated from seminary in his thirties, he felt good about his achievement. His call to ministry was affirmed by the body of Christ. Although he admitted to his district superintendent that he hid himself from others in his humor, Chuck felt God was good to him.

Since Chuck had come to serve Bremerton New Life four years ago, attendance had edged up each year until an average of 143 people worshipped each Sunday. The new members were migrating from the other and usually smaller churches that were in crisis. Meanwhile other churches in town of his denomination were averaging less than 50 in attendance

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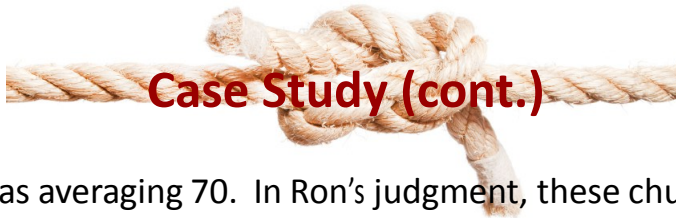
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Case Study (cont.)

Notes

except one which was averaging 70. In Ron's judgment, these churches were poorly located, invariably needed new pastors, and tended to attract dysfunctional people in need of care, but unable to give care to others. Chuck phoned Ron one day to be the first to let him know two families, stable and capable, had left Bremerton New Life to worship at an independent church. Ron soon had reports that six or seven more families were leaving if Pastor Chuck stayed.

Jim, one of the leading members of the church, a businessman and former preacher's son, told Ron, "I have always supported my pastor, but this guy keeps embarrassing me. He appears unprepared for the worship services and his jokes are inappropriate. I won't invite my friends to church -- I haven't for a year and a half. He can't manage himself -- his time or his mouth. He'd be bankrupt if it weren't for his wife who has the business sense. He only fellowships with the down and out. I need a pastor."

Ron wrestled with his options. 1) He could declare this church in crisis and personally intervene. This new ruling by the General Assembly had not been used by him or any other district superintendent he was aware of. 2) He could reverse his advice to Jim and go along with the local leadership's discontent with their pastor. Chuck might feel the pressure and decide to leave on his own. 3) Ron could empower Chuck by openly endorsing Chuck as the pastor. But if forced, Ron had to acknowledge that Chuck did not seem to possess all the tools necessary to please the New Life congregation.

Ron decided to approach Chuck about taking another church. Chuck expressed concern about whether he could do as well elsewhere. After all he was 53 years old and every church might not accept a pastor



Case Study (cont)

Notes

his age. He enjoyed living in a seaport city and pastoring this particular fellowship. His wife had just received a job promotion. His youngest daughter was a junior in high school. Now was not a good time to make a change. Chuck, concerned that these church leaders were withdrawing, expressed optimism nevertheless. He hadn't received any complaints or lost members in over three months.

Ron smiled wryly at Sue, "Chuck has misread the climate. I got the leadership to back off a few months ago and now Chuck thinks everyone is happy. Honey, 80% of the members support him, but I think he is losing his leadership and their finances and he doesn't know it."

- End -



III. Small Group Exercise (cont)

When everyone has had a chance to read the case study, discuss the following questions.



Chose one of the following issues and the implications related to those issues (on page 16) to spark the participants' thoughts about the different dynamics. Watch the time so that you do not spend all your time on the questions and you allow enough time for the participants to make their recommendations.



III. Small Group Exercise

When the Leaders Leave

Notes

Issues:

1. Personal vs. Organization Goals
2. Care-givers and Care-consumers
3. Use of power by church hierarchy
4. The role of class and economics in American churches
5. Mismatch between pastor and congregation (conflict)
6. Pioneers vs. Settlers
7. Homogenous vs. Heterogeneous Groups

Implications:

1. Personal vs. Organization Goals:
 - a. What were the agendas of Pastor Chuck; Ron, the district superintendent; and Jim, the leader member?
 - b. Whose goals hold the greater importance in your mind?
 - c. How could collaboration make an improvement among the principals?
 - d. On what issues would you suggest compromise?
 - e. How would you advise Ron, the district superintendent?
2. Care-givers and Care-consumers
 - a. Compare the new people to the longer tenured members of New Life.

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III. Small Group Exercise

Notes

- b. What happens when the number of needy people over-extends the ability of leadership to minister?
 - c. What kinds of people are most open to the Church's ministry?
 - d. How should the church respond to a large influx of people with problems?
 - e. How do you feel when individuals you know customarily take, rather than give?
3. Use of power by church hierarchy
- a. How do you feel about people in authority?
 - b. What are some of the abuses of power observed in the church?
 - c. How does one come to possess power?
 - d. In what ways might Ron have helped the New Life Church?
 - e. How did Ron, the district superintendent, use his power?
4. The role of class and economics in American churches
- a. What was the role of wealth in this scenario?
 - b. Were you uncomfortable about any of the reference to finances?
 - c. Was the district superintendent concerned about money?
 - d. Was the district superintendent's judgment clouded because of the fiscal benefits to him?



III. Small Group Exercise

Notes

- e. How did the different economic brackets figure in?
- 5. Mismatch between pastor and congregation (conflict)
- 6. Pioneers vs. Settlers
 - a. What were the problems between the pastor and some of his members?
 - b. Why did the congregation continue to grow?
 - c. Why were problems so long in developing?
 - d. What can Chuck do to reduce conflict?
 - e. What avenues are available to discontent members if they are going to remain in their church?
 - f. Describe the pioneer vs. settler conflict and assess the impact upon New Life church.
- 7. Homogenous vs. Heterogeneous Groups
 - a. What, if any, role does class have in American society? And in the New Life church?
 - b. What are some examples of people gathering together with people unlike themselves?
 - c. Do you agree or disagree with the observation that churches tend to grow fastest when they attract people similar to themselves? Why or why not?
 - d. How do you feel about the church working across cultural or ethnic distinctives?
 - e. How was class an issue in this case study?



III. Small Group Exercise

Notes

- f. Describe the distinctive classes in the New Life church?
- g. What are your feelings about different social status?

Closing Questions:

What are the best steps to take to solve this case?

What criteria would influence your decision making?

Addendum (Optional)

The option that possessed the most potential in Ron's mind was to suggest New Life plant a new church. The upper class members could form the nucleus. They would certainly be able to marshal the resources needed. Ron wanted, as a matter of practice, to start new churches; Bremerton could use another church plant. But Ron pondered, "Would such a decision leave New Life with little hope?"

Following a brief discussion of some of the questions, instruct the participants to work as teams to respond to the questions in their material (closing questions).

Remain available during the exercise time to answer questions.

Announce to the group when five minutes remain. Again announce to the group when two minutes remain.



IV. Discussion



(5 Minutes)

The discussion portion of the module provides an opportunity for people to share their thoughts about resolving conflict.



If you're ahead of schedule, the discussion can go a few extra minutes. However, It's easy to lose track of time so watch the clock.

Open the floor for discussion. If the group is hesitant to discuss, start with one of the questions they discussed during the exercise.



V. Module Wrap-Up



(5 Minutes)

This section provides an opportunity to close the module.

Ask participants to share their thoughts about the module.

Answer any questions and provide encouragement.

Notes