

Sermon Guide: Engage in Conflict Redemptively – Matthew 18:15–20

Purpose:

Jesus teaches us that conflict is inevitable in community, but it can be handled in a redemptive way that restores relationships and strengthens the church.

Icebreaker (5 minutes)

When conflict arises, what is your natural tendency—avoid it, confront it, or something else? Why?

Scripture Focus

Read **Matthew 18:15–20 (ESV)**.

As you listen, notice:

- What steps does Jesus give?
 - What tone or posture stands out?
-

Observations from the Text

1. What is the first step Jesus gives (v.15)?
 2. Why keep it private at first?
 3. What changes in stages 2–3 (vv.16–17)?
 4. What does Jesus promise in verses 19–20?
-

Core Teaching Connection

Because we are made for community and are also sinful, conflict is inevitable—but it must be engaged redemptively.

Jesus does not call us to avoid conflict, but to step into it with:

- clarity
- humility
- love
- and intentional action

Sermon Guide: Engage in Conflict Redemptively – Matthew 18:15–20

In Matthew 18:15–20, Jesus gives four stages:

1. Honest, private, personal conversation
2. Purposeful, minimal broadening of the circle
3. Involving church leadership
4. Discipline aimed at restoration

The goal is not winning, but reconciliation.

Not control, but restoration.

Not avoidance, but love in action.

Group Discussion

1. Why do you think we are often tempted to avoid conflict rather than engage it?
 2. What dangers come from turning preferences or minor issues into conflict?
 3. What makes it difficult to have a private, honest conversation with someone?
 4. How does Jesus' process protect both the person and the community?
-

Dig Deeper – “We Over Me”

1. Where do you tend toward avoidance, defensiveness, or self-protection in conflict?
 2. What would it look like to pursue “we over me” in a current situation?
-

Personal Reflection (Quiet – 2 minutes)

- Is there a conflict I've avoided?
 - What step might Jesus be calling me to take?
-

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for not leaving us alone in our relationships. Thank You for giving us a clear and loving way to engage conflict. Forgive us for avoiding, reacting in anger, or protecting ourselves instead of pursuing reconciliation. Give us humility to examine our own hearts, courage to step toward others, and grace to reflect Your love. Help us become a community marked by truth, restoration, and peace. Amen