

# SOLVING TEAM CONFLICTS

## INTRODUCTION

Believe it or not but you **are** going to have team conflicts. Well, praise God, it gives you something to do. It gives you something to pray about. It gives you a lot of opportunities to find solutions. It gives you the privilege to see miracles happening--how God can come in and purify and beautify your team. ***Don't be afraid of conflict.***

## I. PREVENTIVE MEASURES FOR SOLVING TEAM CONFLICTS

Even though God can use the difficulties, it is still our responsibility to do all we can to prevent conflicts from even starting. There are several areas that can help you do this.

### A. Procedure for acquisition of Team

#### 1. *Recruiting*

If you recruit the right people you will have fewer problems. If you recruit the wrong people you'll have more problems. There is a great lecture to help you with recruiting. It's called "Building and Keeping a Committed Team."

#### 2. *Requirements*

It's important that your new team, and all of your team, knows what is required of them. There is a much greater responsibility for coaches than merely leading a group. They need to come to some training sessions before they can lead a group. That means extra meetings, extra time, and extra work. Maybe there are certain things you want their wives to help you with, typing out the certificates for the courses or helping with the year-end graduation service. Let them know what you expect of them. Most people don't object if they just know. But if they don't know and then you keep adding more and more, "Oh, and can you do this and can you do that?" This will cause team frustrations.

#### 3. *References*

Find out about this person before he comes on the team:

##### a) What was this person's responsibility?

What did he do before in other places of service? That gives you an idea of his capabilities or the type of work he was involved in and whether it's close to what you want him to do or something totally different. This information tells you how much you need to explain and how much you need to train him. It also gives you an idea if his job was just a daily task, routine type job or did he have a lot of personal responsibilities at this job? That's an important question. Another item here is:

##### b) Why did he leave?

This is a question that you ask from him as well as from his previous employer, why is he leaving? There may be many normal reasons he wants to do other things. Perhaps he did not have enough work, or he wants to live in another city, or he wants to earn a little bit more money. Perhaps there are reasons that are not so nice, like he had an argument with one of the workers or some of the money was missing. We've had one man who was travelling in distant regions and he lost a lot of money. Next time he traveled he again lost a lot of money and we said, "You know, we cannot do this all the time." He went a third time and again lost money and we said, "Bye-bye." Another point here:

##### c) Would you rehire him if you had opportunity?

Be sure to ask his previous employer. That's a crucial question, isn't it? That's a key question. If people would ask me, "Do you want to work with Vera again?" I would say, "Yes." If Sasha left and they would ask, "Do you want to work with Sasha?" "Yes." If brother Pavel was leaving and they would ask me, "Do you want to work with brother Pavel?" "Of course we want to work with brother Pavel." You see, that's an important question because it shows the value the manager gives to that worker. If he says, "No," you may ask, "Why not?" He may just say, "Well, he is a nice man but our characters are so very different." Or, if he says, "Well, I would have to think about it," then you know there are some pluses and some minuses.



## B. Philosophy of leadership

### 1. The leader



- a) God calls leaders to a ministry.

Some people get the idea that God calls them to be a boss or God calls them to give the instructions, but God calls us to do a ministry. Think of Jesus and how he constantly put himself out to help and serve others. He said I did not come to be served but to serve. Think of how he trained his team. Go through the gospels and mark all the places where he was training his team. Study the calling of Moses, Isaiah, Jeremiah and others. Write one page about your own calling, it might refresh you. File it, treasure it and refer to it whenever doubts and temptations come. Perhaps you want to take a few days out, go to a solitary place and renew your calling. **Keep that first love for Jesus.**

- b) Anybody under you desires your love.

If you can train our pastors to love their elders you will have accomplished a very great and significant thing. That basically does not exist and people need that very, very much. That's how teams are built. People want to work if they feel their leader loves them. You want to please your wife and your wife wants to please you because you love each other. The Bible says there should be the same kind of unity in the church and that's built on love. And that is what you need in the team that you are going to build.

### 2. Leadership

A ministry director must have time twice a month to discuss the work with his team. This activity will become the most important ongoing activity for a director. It will take about two years roughly to build a good team that actually productively works together.

### 3. Leading

Receive direction from the Word of God. It's amazing how many leaders don't really know how to get direction from the Word of God. They don't understand principles, they don't understand promises, and they don't know how to fight in prayer. Many Christian leaders get their directions from worldly books or worldly management styles, or from what other businesses are doing. However you can also find Christian manuals which are based on Biblical principles to give specific directions for your ministry.

## C. Preaching to lead the team

### 1. Heb.13:17 Watching for the souls of the team

It says here, "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority, they keep watch over you as a man who must give an account." Your job is to watch over your team. God has placed you in that position to take care of these people. We are interested in you making the new trainers successful. We are interested in these successful coaches making students successful to have groups with unbelievers and have people saved and starting new churches. God has made you a watchman for the souls of men. Read these passages in Ezekiel. Watch and pray!

### 2. The Boss needs prayers 1Tim. 2:1-2

When you go to a new province to start a New Life ministry, who is going to be the boss? A little bit scary when we use the word "boss" about ourselves. We right away feel, "Well, isn't there someone else who carries all that weight? I don't think this should be me. Please don't call me boss." Now listen to 1Tim. 2:1-2, "I urge you then first of all that requests, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for everyone, for kings and all those in authority." Here we have director Gregory Boyko mentioned

together with a king because he is in authority. If that idea is a little bit scary then you go to a group of pastors there and say "Dear brothers, I've come here to help you with the church based training ministry. I have some requests from God. I need your prayers and I need your intercession." You see that makes you, as a boss, subservient to God. Your success is now dependent on the requests and prayers, and intercession, and thanksgiving from the other pastors.

### **3. *Preaching to lead your team***

Preaching to lead the team doesn't always mean a big sermon on Sunday morning. You can do a lot in five-minute team sermons. This is a way to encourage your team, to lead your team. Maybe your team lacks vision and you turn to 1st Chronicles 4: 9-10 and talk about Jabez who asked God to enlarge his ministry. There are many things like that in the Bible. When you see a need in your team, preach about it from the Word of God. Three major ingredients for your team are:

## **D. Three major ingredients for your team are:**

### **1. *Commitment to the Lord***

You find all through the scriptures that there is no greater challenge for your team than to be fully committed to God. Especially when they understand that what they are doing is putting into practice a Biblical concept, a Biblical ministry.

### **2. *Convictions based on the Bible***

We have about five or so key Bible passages that we use with the New Life ministry and we refer to them very, very often so that people can develop convictions.

### **3. *Cause for which we stand — a banner to rally around.***

Keep the purposes, goals and methods of your ministry before the team. New Life is "knowing, being, doing". Refresh the team about the emphasis on evangelism and church planting. Share the concepts of transferability. Keep the focus on small group discussion ministry and so on. This way you show the cause for which we stand. "This is our ministry. This is what we want to accomplish. This is our motto. This is what we stand for in our ministry." People will rally around you, around the motto, around the banner. Example: "Church based training for our church." The team learns about that through various NLC materials. Find the most appropriate lecture so your team will have a fresh focus on what church based leadership training is all about. A team member may be encouraged or feel a new commitment, "Yes. That's what I want to do."

## **II. PREPARATION FOR SOLVING TEAM CONFLICTS**

Despite your desire and care in preventing team conflicts, they will come and you need to be ready. There are 3 areas you can prepare for:

A. The person: A team is made up of individuals, B. The plans: A team achieves by objectives, C. The power: A team's inner motivations.

Let's begin with

### **A. The person: A team is made up of individuals**

#### **1. *The person has needs***

It's amazing how our bodies are different from day to day, from week to week. I am sure all of you talk about that at home, "I was so thirsty today." or, "This month you've been eating a lot more than a few months ago." Or, "Emotionally I just don't feel as up-beat as last month."

Ladies also have their regular physical cycle and that means they have different feelings, different moods. It is like I have 3 different wives. I have one wife who has terrible headaches, I have one wife who is terribly funny and very interesting, and I have one wife who is just normal plain and hardworking. That's kind of what happens to women, and when they are expecting a baby their feelings fluctuate even

more. You as the supervisor must be sensitive to the moods of others. What you say, when you say it, how you say it, is so important.

## 2. *The person has abilities*

Team members function best and are happiest when they can perform at the level of their abilities. It is crucial for the pastor to provide the team with opportunities to use their skills. If a team member is asked to perform duties below his capabilities he will become inevitably disappointed and discouraged. He will begin to set his sights on other organizations. The pastor should be attuned to assist team members to grow and develop new abilities. As people learn and mature they should be given new challenges and possibilities. If team members are placed in a position that requires them to perform above their capabilities their job performance will be disappointing and they will become quickly frustrated with the demands placed upon them. So, proper team evaluation and placement is important. A good boss works with his team; that is what discipleship is all about.



## 3. *The person has interests*

People have specific interests, which they want to pursue. Hobbies are an expression of that and sometimes a hobby turns into a career. They may be inclined to a specific part of the ministry. A good pastor draws out these interests and makes use of them. Team members like to express themselves and their personal interests can be used creatively to do extra tasks. Such interest may lead the team to newer higher levels of service. Be aware of your team's interests, encourage them, build a vision and put them to use.

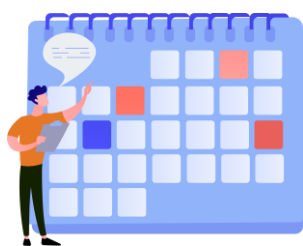
You want your team to grow, develop and move up to a higher level. Some of them can move up fast, some of them can move up only slowly, some can progress by themselves and some need a lot of help. You have the vision and you can help them to move towards that vision.

NOTE: As pastor you should have a notebook with you. Keep one page to write some little notes about your deacons' in training people. Mostly about good things like their talents or abilities, interests. Things to remind you how you can guide them better in the future and help them to move towards the fulfillment of their life's goals. Build a vision for that person.

# B. The plans: the team achieves by objectives

## 1. *Always plan objectives*

Every manager ought to have at least a three-year plan. His co-workers ought to have at least a two-year plan and all team members should have a yearly plan. If you want to run a good ministry you make a complete plan in May for the next academic year. The academic year is then nearly finished, everything is fresh in your mind and you know what you need to do in the fall time. You make a very



accurate written plan of how many groups you want to have. Now when a group leader asks: "I need to be away, I need to visit my aunt for three weeks. Can I do that in September?" You have your plan and can say, "Yes, we can do this," or "No we cannot do this." An administrator who does not have objectives is one of the key sources of frustration for his team. It wastes a tremendous amount of time. I remember once I started at four o'clock in the morning and did something for my boss. He got up at seven o'clock and said, "Why did you do that?" I replied, "Well, I thought that's what you wanted." He said, "No, I wanted something else." I woke up earlier, tried my best, but due to lack of instructions

could not please my boss.

## 2. *Allow time for changes*

What is clear in your mind is often not clear yet in your team's mind, or they haven't even thought about it, and you come up with an activity, "Well, next Saturday we'll do this or this." That's very frustrating. You need to give time for changes. If you have good, accurate long-range plans there will be fewer problems. It is very important because each person has his own family, has his private plans and life-style.

## 3. *Avoid too much help*

You can get a lot more done with a few dedicated quality workers than with many part-time people that pop in and pop out and are not really dedicated. Avoid too much help. With too many team workers they can end up standing around talking to each other. Then when they sit down to work their mind is not there and they make a lot of mistakes. This principle is applicable everywhere, with camp workers for

instance, or in construction of buildings or other situations. These principles work anywhere in Christian ministries. What I am sharing with you here you can share with other pastors or leaders for their ministries.

## C. The power: the team's inner motivations

That's where the power is. You can never accomplish by money, by paying a big salary or other things compared to what people do if they really want to do it.

### 1. *The power of character*

You are the overseer of a small team of trainers in your area and they should be producing church leaders. Leaders need character and there is a tremendous amount of power in a person with deep inner convictions. Jesus taught as one having authority. Nobody could go to Jesus and say, "Jesus, I don't think you know what you are talking about." It was so 100% clear! His whole character was displayed in his miracles, in his teaching, and in everything else. People of character will do the right thing; they will not compromise.

### 2. *The power of a Christian's prayer*

***There is power in prayer!*** We all believe that and claim that. How much time weekly do you as pastor spend in prayer? You will spend more or less time in prayer depending on how much you believe in it. Is it a primary aspect of your ministry or a secondary aspect? The same will be true for your team. People depend on your priorities and example, so include prayer in their job description. Emphasize and practice prayer in your meetings and other events. Don't forget to include team wives. Have wives train and minister with their husbands so they completely understand the whole ministry. They will develop the same vision as their husbands, there will be unity, there will be accurate prayer, intelligent prayer, targeted prayer and that's where the power is. Then have the wives contact wives of key members and set up prayer chains.

### 3. *The power of Christ's Spirit living within*

The chief should seek to strengthen his team with the power of Christ's spirit living within. Scripture makes it abundantly clear that Christ wants to empower His people. It's an important part of what Christ did for His disciples. Christ definitely had a purpose for giving authority or giving power. Power is one of the missing ingredients among church workers everywhere. Many just don't have it, don't know how to get it, and don't know where to find it. Almost all high level successful people had after salvation another deep crisis experience with the Holy Spirit. Just salvation is not sufficient for being a powerful Christian person who is successful and has a big testimony. I believe that God from time to time needs to come and wants to come to us in a specific way to do a unique thing in our lives other than salvation. At later times in our lives, not only once but maybe several times, He desires to renew and empower us for a special task or ministry. Sometimes it is referred to as a second work of grace. Sometimes it's referred to as the filling of the Spirit. I definitely believe that God has something extra for those who want something more. The pastor should encourage his team to desire and seek a refreshing visit from the Holy Spirit.

## III. PRINCIPLES OF SOLVING TEAM CONFLICTS

What do you do when there are team conflicts? There are principles for solving them and we will go through some of those specifics which are divided into 3 categories:

- A. Dealing with the problem of self-worth
- B. Dealing with personality conflicts
- C. Do's & Don'ts in solving conflicts

### A. Dealing with the problem of self-worth

#### 1. *Recognize the problem*

People do have problems with self-worth. Many people do. Many people get caught up in what we call the humdrum of life. Every day is just the same; you wake up, you do this, you do that, you go to bed and tomorrow is just like that. The dreams of your youth are not being fulfilled and you begin to feel, “Is this what’s before me for the next twenty years?” The problem of self-worth comes to you. I’m thinking of high, very high level businessmen when they retire. The statistics show that most of them died within two years after they retired. They were busy, they were doing this and this, that and that and then pension came. The whole floor was cut out from under them. They fell down into purposeless nothingness and died. They had lost their self-worth because it was so tied up in their jobs. Just recognize that problem.



## 2. **Reveal the principles of life**

God designed each person according to His plan. Psalm 139:14-16, *“I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knows right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in your book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was non-of them. How precious also are your thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them!”* One of the principles is that God has made us precisely as is necessary. We are the perfect creation.

But satan has ways to make team members feel overwhelmed with their responsibilities. He makes them take their eyes off Jesus and focus on themselves. He has ways to make them insecure. Depression and a lack of self-worth are favorite tools. He is a master on creating difficulties, confusion and conflicts. Certain team members may feel and see life and react to it very different from others. Depending on their spiritual maturity, and on the physical situations.

You as a chief need to remind your team member that he/she is God’s perfect creation. God has made that person the way he should be. He has given that person to you to bring out the very best, to bring out his full potential. God also accepts each of us unconditionally. How are you going to accept that person? Furthermore God wants to use us specifically. He has a specific purpose for all of us. How nice would the world really be if the only flowers were roses? God saw fit to make different things, each to serve a very specific purpose. God made us and God has a plan for us. Furthermore we have victory in Jesus!

## 3. **Give verbal praise and acceptance**

Verbal praise and acceptance of workers really helps to solve team problems. Often there is just simply a conflict because of jealousy, some envy or it looks like one person has taken part of a job away from another person, or a person was really doing a pretty good job until someone came who did it better. Praise workers for who they are and for their spiritual maturity and how God has been using them already in many places. That gives a person a feeling of acceptance. Many people very quickly feel rejected. This is the problem older pastors have. They look at some younger church assistant and think, “Aha, he probably wants my job. The church probably thinks I am an old man and I don’t know how to preach well. I never went to Bible College.” He erects a barrier between himself and this younger person. Be sure there is lot of praise and that the person knows he is valuable to God, to you, and to the team.

# B. **Dealing with personality conflicts**

## 1. **Understand different gifts**

I just want to share with you a little bit about different personalities. It is universally accepted now that there are at least 4 basic categories of personalities and it would be good for you to go home and discuss this with your wife and team. Together discover who you are, discover who your spouse is, and discover who your team members are, as well as close friends, relatives or acquaintances. From that you get a picture about that person and that helps you to understand why he or she reacts in certain ways and why he/she talks in certain ways, and why he/she does things in certain ways. As we just saw a moment ago God has just made them like that. The 4 temperaments are called:

*Phlegmatic* — They are laid back easy to get along with people. They don’t cause a lot of trouble or a lot of friction and they have the patience of Job. A prime example is Abraham. God told him, “You don’t have to do anything but wait a hundred years.” He said, “Okay.” That’s a phlegmatic.

*Choleric* — Those people are totally opposite of a phlegmatic. They are aggressive. They have a goal. They want to accomplish everything yesterday. They are full of energy, fast, with little patience, and some such people are even called Abraham. But that’s not Abraham from the Bible! ☺



*Melancholic* — are the detailed people. They are usually quiet; very accurate and perfectionistic. They don't want to accomplish great big things. They are afraid of new things. Many things bother them, but they just can take a violin and they can sit there eight hours and be happy. Musicians by and large are melancholic people. Often music groups when they travel face depression. They are frustrated with all the travels and so on. They are too focused on perfection. Yes, last night everybody clapped and cheered, "But if they only knew, I could have done a little bit better." That's a melancholic.

*Sanguine* — They are talkative and social. They just like to be with people and be the center of attention. They are very enthusiastic and motivational, but often don't carry through because it isn't interesting. It's going to be very difficult for him to be by himself and be a bookkeeper. I know a person who is a lot like that, I think. His name is Mathew Bible. He just needs to talk to someone all the time. Understanding these people helps you to understand their gifts and helps you to know why they react the way they do and why they do what they do.

Needless to say these different temperaments sometimes have difficulty getting along with other kinds, or sometimes even with another person of their own temperament! Helping people on the team understand these traits can ease a lot of situations.

## 2. Use gifts to complete Rom. 12:8

This verse talks about the different gifts God has given to people and how people should be using their gifts. The problem is that a chief often wants team members to do other things for which they are not gifted and that's hard for them. It takes lot of time and energy for them to do other things and usually they are not very good at those things and the results show that. Another difficulty can be that a person does some of these things but he doesn't really give himself to it. This verse clearly says to use the gift you have and to use it to the fullest extent. If you don't discover these things for your team they leave. You are raising up leaders and you may just have someone ready that you think will be a great asset. "You think yes this is the man we want." But if he doesn't feel totally fulfilled with the ministry opportunities he will go. Your job as manager is to discover the gifts and talents and personalities of your team and then with that combination let them be used to the fullest extent. If you learn to do that, your team will love you. They will adore you. They will never go anyplace else because they feel totally and completely fulfilled



## C. Do's & Don'ts in solving conflicts

Here are 12 points to help you:

### 1. Keep personal information confidential



It's amazing how hard it is to keep something confidential. We are such funny creatures. Often when I tell a person something he doesn't care and he'll probably forget it before the end of the hallway. But if I tell him something confidential the first thing he wants to do is go out and find another person and tell him, "You know what Abraham said...? Is it true or not?" When someone tells you something confidential we almost have to firmly restrain ourselves from sharing it with others. Here are some more ideas that go with this.

#### a) Careless handling of written information

I just told you about making some notes on prospective team members. Be careful to keep it private. Some of this information should not be lying open in your office for everyone to look at.

#### b) Don't use present problems for illustrations

We all know that in one group half of Ivan's students just quit and left. You say, "I just want to give you a good illustration here. One of our coaches, I don't want to tell you who, had half of his students leave." Everybody knows! That's not good; don't use any present problems for illustrations. That may be a bit harder when you are young, but when you are a bit older you will have illustrations from previous experiences, from other regions, provinces, etc.

### 2. Don't criticize advice given by others

"Well, it's nice what Andrew just said but I think he forgot..." and then you just give something totally different. You just criticized Andrew's suggestion by saying something like that about it. It would be better to say, "OK, we've already heard what Andrew thinks and there were several good ideas. I think especially point A and point E. I would like to add this to that." People automatically realize, "Aha, OK

this is right, that was maybe a little bit weak.” But if you say, “Igor don’t do that, don’t say that. No, no, no, that was not a good idea,” people just begin to feel that their opinions are not valuable. The team feels, “Well, the boss will do it his own way anyway so why contribute my opinion. I’ll just be criticized.”

### **3. *Don’t discuss other people’s problems***

Someone comes to you with a report about someone else’s problem, maybe it’s just some marital annoyance. For example, here comes Olga and she says, “You know, my husband Valerie is so messy at home. He leaves his clothes and other stuff laying around.” I reply, “Don’t feel too bad about that. That’s quite normal. Many men do that. As a matter of fact, just last week Svetlana was here complaining that her husband Bogdan has the same problem.” Do you see? I just discussed Svetlana and Bogdan’s home situation with Olga. I may be trying to help Olga, but how does she feel when she hears me sharing about other people’s problems? She leaves and thinks, “Aha, now he is probably going to talk about my problems with others.” Be very careful about that. Be sure not to discuss other people’s problems in any way. Do not discuss people’s difficulties behind their backs. This is serious and divisive gossip

### **4. *Don’t touch a problemed person***

We should have standards never to touch persons of the opposite sex. But because we are human, there are temptations, unforeseen situations, and unconscious happenings. What makes it even harder is that people in an emotional state desire touch. A person who has a problem is experiencing a little bit of depression and she is emotionally sensitive. She feels special things. In sympathy you touch that person, maybe on her shoulder, maybe just on the hand or something. Suddenly a whole new personal bond gets established and you are as it were becoming part of their problem. Somehow she feels, “Hey, this person really cares.” Be very careful about that. Because they are emotionally a bit unstable, these people feel special things and they think special things. One time when I was in a Bible College there was a girl that had a few problems and there was a special activity and nobody wanted to take her. A couple of people talked to me, “Abe, why don’t you take her?” “OK, I’ll take her.” Sure enough, she wanted to marry me.



### **5. *Keep emotions from being a factor***

The Bible has an answer for everything, you know? In Proverbs it says: When listening to the first person who tells you something you tend to think, ‘He is right for sure. How can it be that other people treat him like that?’ “Of course, I agree with you,” and then you hear the second person, “Oh! It was like that!” That is quite different. An overseer needs to find a peaceful solution for that point of friction. Almost always your feelings will not be neutral, but you will be more inclined to one or the other. Be careful to have as much of a neutral approach as possible. To agree vehemently with the correct party may be soliciting pride on his/her part. To be overly negative with an “of course not,” type attitude will damage and diminish a person’s self-worth. So, be careful of getting emotionally involved.

### **6. *Give them your best attention***

When someone tells you about a problem or a difficulty or conflict and you say, “Oh yes, you mean that was last week in Kharkov?” He thinks, “I just told him in Dnepro .” It’s very important to really listen and really listening means paying attention. Before he starts sharing ask permission to make a few notes, “If I occasionally write something down it may help me to remember things better. Is that ok? It won’t bother you, will it?” Most of the time they will say: “Yes, that’s okay.”

### **7. *Have meetings in an appropriate counseling place***

When you need to deal with a conflict, be sure that you have a private place where you can talk to the person or persons involved. You don’t want other people wandering in or out and picking up parts of the conversation. If you need to deal with the opposite sex, then make sure you have another person there with you. Have a door with glass in so people can see you or if need be leave the door open a tiny little bit. Phone your wife or let someone else know if it’s a woman. Let your wife know if it’s a counseling session, or even ask her to phone you after thirty minutes. Just be careful.

### **8. *Get the problemed person to discuss his feelings***

Now the clue here is “to discuss his feelings.” Maybe what he shares is not factual. Maybe it’s not accurate. Maybe it is not real, but that’s how he feels. Is he allowed to feel the way he feels? Can he help the way he feels? Maybe he’s gotten wrong information from somewhere. Get him to simply share about how he feels. That information will give you insights; “Aha, he got this from there.” or, “That’s why.” or, “Yes, this is right,” or, “that’s true.” Perhaps. “Aha, that’s already a long time that this problem has been building, it’s been a long time ago the incident started.” This information gives you an opportunity to gently discuss things with him and guide him into new feelings. You can help him have a better



understanding, a new relationship, willingness to forgive the other person, willingness to maybe admit that he didn't understand it right or that he has made some mistakes, or that his feelings and his attitude didn't have a right base, they were falsely based.

#### **9. *Be patient to get to the basic source of the conflict***

Initially keep asking him if there are other things. Just keep asking him, "What else? Would you share a bit more?" Maybe there are other things that are bothering him, other things he wants to share. Perhaps they are totally unrelated to this problem, but they may play a role. "My mother died five months ago." It has nothing to do with this problem but it has everything to do with him, how he feels about himself, about life, about God, about eternity. It affects his response to life as a whole.

#### **10. *Don't register surprise at comments***

Maybe he just says some ugly things, maybe not about you, maybe about someone else, maybe about himself. Mrs. Billy Graham was asked if she had ever thought about divorcing Billy Graham. She said, "Never. But I've thought about killing him." Sometimes we get upset and frustrated. A person that is in a conflict sometimes doesn't know how to say things nicely. He just shares some of his feelings, which is probably a very good thing. If you register surprise, "No, you didn't really want to kill him, did you Mrs. Graham? He is such a good man!" What else would she talk to you about? You need to learn this kind of self-control. How often have you visited a doctor and he was surprised? "Oh, your heart has a problem?" Doctors don't show surprise. That's part of their profession.

#### **11. *Reflect and restate comments***

Have you ever been surprised when someone repeated what you said or quoted what you said? "Did I say that? No, no, no it can't be." "Yes, you said that." The wife may say that and the children say, "Yes, mommy is right. Yes, mommy is right," and you think, "Did I really say that?" By reflecting and restating the things that person is saying you are helping him to think, "Am I really saying these things? Do I really want to say these things? Do I feel like that?" If he begins to feel a conflict between the words he spoke and how he feels, he says, "I didn't mean it like that. What I wanted to say was...." Now you begin to get a picture of his real feelings, of his real longings, of what he really wants to do or wants to accomplish. It also helps to assure you that you really understood what he was saying. Sometimes in a stressful situation it is easy to misunderstand and increase the problem instead of solving it. Reflecting and restating is very important.

#### **12. *Encourage discussion and suggestions of solutions***

Let him suggest some solutions. I did that with someone not long ago and God blessed it. "What would be a Biblical answer?" "This and this." "What do you think God wants you to do?" "Of these two or three possibilities which would be best?" Let him become part of the answer. It's easy for me to tell Andrew, "Well, I understand it all and, yes, it's true, it really is a problem but I guess you need to do this and this, and this." He says, "Yes, you are right." then he goes out and thinks, "Yes, but Slavic is a bit different. Abraham doesn't understand. I can't do that with my colleague Slavic." You see, verbally he said "Yes." but then he goes out and his whole being says, "I can't do it." However, if he gives suggestions, if he begins to be a part of the solution, then he is taking some steps towards healing. He is leaving his place of despondency or discouragement, or complaint, or grievances, and he is beginning to make steps towards some new possibilities. Then he is convinced, "Yes, that's the right thing, I can do this."

## **CONCLUSION:**

Unity in the ministry of Christ is important for the moving of the Holy Spirit. All through the Scripture, both in the New Testament and the Old Testament the Holy Spirit worked when there was unity. Without His love, men become as sounding brass. Someone just recently gave us a testimony about preaching and doing evangelism without results until they had a time of unified prayer, then the Holy Spirit brought results. Surely the Spirit of God is grieved by discord, disunity, and disruptions. Each Christian is responsible to allow the Holy Spirit freedom to do His work. Each team member has that responsibility. If some team members do not take that responsibility then there is a problem--unity departs. The Holy Spirit does not choose to use a Christian whose heart is not right with God. Conflicts must be resolved. You can't continue if conflicts continue. The spirit of unity must prevail. The work of the Lord must go on in the power of the Holy Spirit.

May the Lord bless you as you work with your team to solve conflicts and achieve unity. Hallelujah to Him. Amen.

Blessings to you, our dear friends!

We are happy to present the video, audio and paper materials that have been prepared by **New Life for Churches**. You have the privilege *upon completion of your practical assignment* to use this lecture with others.

## ***Practical assignment***

- Begin to implement one of the preventative measures for team conflicts. On a separate sheet of paper write down which idea you have chosen to use and how you plan to implement it. Keep track of your progress on the same sheet of paper. ☐
- What team conflicts do you have in your ministry right now? Using the principles from this lecture begin to resolve the conflicts. Write down your experiences without using the names so that you can encourage others at the next meeting. Make sure that you do not break any confidences or spread gossip. ☐
- Lead a discussion on the temperaments with your team. ☐