

How to Resolve Problems I

Fred R. Coulter—June 9, 2012

How many here have never had a conflict with anybody in the Church? How many here have caused a conflict which everybody knows? *Some of you!* Have there been a few of us who have done things and caused conflict that we didn't know anything about? *Yes!*

Byron brought it up to me on the *Transhumanism* one. On the first one I gave I rang the cowbell, but not the second one. So we're going to have little rough spots from time-to-time. Some of those will be residual from what happened in the past. Some of us will be both totally right, but from our individual perspectives we may not see it exactly the same. For example, if someone says, 'You shouldn't bring that up, you're dividing the Church.' He says, 'I brought this just as a point of information.' *Both are correct from your own perspective!* You should have introduced it with a disclaimer. That would help.

Always remember: *you see things through your own perspective* and your own memory of what you have lived in the past. All of us do! In some cases this makes us a little super sensitive because we've been through things and we don't want to go through it again—right? I don't! You want to go through the things you've gone through in the past, again? *No!* So when you see what looks like a little bit of it arising when it really may not be but because of your perspective and what you've gone through it looks like it is, that's the time to go face-to-face with each other. That's how you solve it. Those are individual problems.

We're going to talk about some things. I've got a whole series on *Judge Righteous Judgment*. I'm going to make sure you all get it and those out there in video-land and CD-land if you want it you can write for it.

Turn to John 7:24, and we'll learn just a few of the principles of righteous judgment. As we're doing this, think of some criminal cases that have come up, even recently. The one in Florida, think of that; rush to judgment, rush to condemnation and rush with assumptions with impartial facts bring you wrong conclusions and offended people.

John 7:24, Jesus told the scribes and Pharisees: "Judge not according to appearance, but **judge righteous judgment.**" The only way you can do that is get all the facts.

We're going to look at some Proverbs and this will help us. Here are some things that are true and they especially know this with politics. The first one out with the story it sticks whether it's true or

not. Proverbs 18:13: "He who answers a matter before he hears it, it *is* folly and shame to him." Have you ever done that? Someone's trying to tell you something, you cut them off and say, 'I already know.'

Remember what happened with Trayvon Martin? One woman said, 'He was hunted down like a dog.' She didn't know any of the facts. When you have conspiracy of the media against truth, which they did, they withheld the photos showing what happened to George Zimmerman—right? If you're going to hear a matter, you have to hear it all. You have to get all the facts. Here's what happens when you make emotional statements. How do you know it's an emotional statement? *Either the person is all upset and angry or they say, 'I feel!'* Based on the thing is you have to get the facts, not the 'feels.' Notice, if you don't:

Verse 19 takes over: "A brother offended *is harder to win than* a strong city; and *their disagreements are* like the bars of a fortress." This is especially true if you have been offended in the past or if you have gone through things in the Church which are absolutely terrible and ungodly and unscriptural. You're going to be very sensitive to react. That's understandable.

Always remember: *'all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose.'* All your mistakes, all the mistakes of other people, all of the rough edges that conflict, maybe from time-to-time is there so we can work them out between ourselves. Then division and political parties don't form. When that didn't happen in the Church when they told us all the lies and the underground truth which they labeled as gossip. Some things are gossip, some things are slander, some things are underground truth, because you can't officially say that they are so because of the ruling party in government or the ruling hierarchy within a church.

It's like today, there's a big controversy going on at the Vatican, because they are not open and don't tell people, what happened? All the secret intrigues and all the secret problems were let out.

So, this causes confusion; this causes division. Here's what we need to understand with what we're saying and speaking. This is why we need to solve problems that are between us, between us. You have a problem with this person over here, you go to him or her. If you have a problem with me, you come to me; I'll listen. If I'm wrong, I'll repent and you need to forgive me. If it's just a misunderstanding, we just wipe the slate clean but

don't hold it in here and don't fuel it with emotions and feelings.

Remember this, Proverbs 18:21: "Death and life *are* in the power of the tongue, and those who love it shall eat the fruit of it." That's a pretty heavy statement—isn't it? *Yes, indeed!* So, we shouldn't be exercising those things against us.

Let's come down to Proverbs 20:3: "*It is* an honor for a man to cease from strife, but every fool will rail on." When we have contentions that come up, which they will, we're just people, we have feelings, we have difficulties, we have mistakes. That'll happen, so we resolve it ourselves. It's interesting how Proverbs have these things here for us. We're to be wise.

Proverbs 12:14: "A man shall be satisfied with good by the fruit of *his* mouth, and the reward of a man's hands shall be given to him.... [That is if you do it right.] ...The way of a fool *is* right in his own eyes, but he who listens to advice *is* wise" (vs 14-15).

What we need to do is this. If someone comes to you with a problem or difficulty concerning you and the individual—if you don't know how to start out, you don't walk up and say, 'Hey, I've got something against you there.' You may take them aside and say, 'I need to have a small Matt. 18 with you. Would you mind?' If you do that, all ears. Then you discuss it as mature adults. Are we not to grow up in Christ? *Yes!* Stop and think for a minute. How are we going to rule the world if we can't solve little problems among ourselves? This is not talking about false doctrine. We've covered that, that's another whole different subject. It's going to be a difficult proposition.

Verse 17: "*He who* speaks truth shows forth righteousness..." However, we're going to see *how* do you say it. Dolores has told me, 'Fred, why did you say that?' *But it was right!* 'It's not what you said, it's *how* you said it.' Of course, I have the most friendly face in the world and the kindest, most lovely smile that there ever was. *No!* My countenance by nature is very fierce. If I get intense that magnifies it, so I need to watch out what I do and how I say things.

There may be a time for it, but not over a little issue. Like I said in the past, you don't get rid of a fly by shooting with a 105 Howitzer, you blow up the whole house. You got rid of the fly, but you got rid of the house.

Verse 18: "There are those who speak like the piercings of a sword... [right through] ...but the tongue of the wise heals." What good does it do if you kill your brother or sister by offending him so greatly? *No!* You come in

- A spirit of meekness
- a spirit of truth
- a spirit of love
- a spirit of grace

—and you say, 'Let's have a Matt. 18. How about if we go have a cup of coffee.' Be willing to listen.

- Maybe it was something that was misinterpreted.
- Maybe it was something that it was a real fault.
- Maybe it was something that both of you misinterpreted.

Is that possible? *Yes, indeed!*

I understand how sensitive that we are considering our past church experiences—right? So you're very on guard. It's good to be on guard, but you don't have to lop off the head the first time something is said. Give a little space.

Verse 19: "The lips of truth shall be established forever, but a lying tongue *is* but for a moment."

Proverbs 21:23: "Whoever keeps his mouth and his tongue keeps his soul from troubles." Ever heard of the foot and mouth disease? Foot in the mouth? It's very bad without your shoes and a bad case of athlete's foot!

Proverbs 22:10: "Cast out the scorner, and contention shall go out; yea, quarreling and abuse shall cease." That wasn't done properly—was it? What happens? *Then everybody has to cluster around with those*—especially if you're in a larger group—*that agree with you!* Otherwise you have no protection from it.

What happened to the brethren was that they were put in fear that if they left the church they would lose salvation. They never thought that maybe the whole church might lose salvation. We need to keep all these things in perspective.

Proverbs 17:14: "The beginning of strife is like letting out water..." Think of that! Have you ever seen pictures with an earthen dam? The rains came, the winds blew and the water came down and the dam filled up and then there was a crack. Then it got a little wider. Then got wider and wider and all of a sudden it opened up and the water comes gushing down in the valley wiping out homes and cars and everything in its path.

So, it may start as a small thing. I think they're advertising on television now watching the Hatfields and McCoys. That's how it started: hateful, unforgiving, vengeful. Once something started it broke out just like letting out of water. When a wall of water comes it wipes everything out

of the way—doesn't it? So, we don't want to let it get to that.

"...therefore, drop the dispute before a quarrel breaks out" (v 14). How do you do that? You merely say, 'Let's get all the facts. I'll get mine, you get yours and we'll get back together when we get the facts all together. Let's have peace.' We can approach these things from that point of view and that will work.

Proverbs 11:25: "The soul who gives generously shall be made prosperous..." I've seen that. There's another proverb that says in another place, 'There is the one who has plenty, yet, he's poor.' That's the one who is in debt and trying to stay ahead of the foreclosure experts and the repo experts. 'There is the one who appears poor but has a lot' because he doesn't tell you, 'but he'll be made prosperous.'

"...and he who waters shall also be watered himself" (v 25). Very interesting verse—isn't it? This can be in our relations with one another that our relations we keep at a good level so we're in effect cheerfully helping each other, which is the same as watering.

Someone was telling me here about their plants. They've also tested this and also with the wrong kind of music for plants. You can kill them with modern music. You can encourage them with friendly words. Not that they have a mind, but everything that God has created with life has electronic impulses in them to keep them alive. Did you know that every leaf on a tree is a solar panel? *Yes!* Keeps the tree alive, feeds back oxygen to us, likewise in our relationships, if we encourage one another and we water one another. Don't get funny and get a balloon and pop it over someone's head full of water. But this is true.

If I am teaching you, *then God will teach me*. If I don't teach you, *God won't teach me*. If I teach you so you learn, and I don't learn myself, then we come to a stagnation. You ever been in a church where there's stagnation?

1-Corinthians 3; Here's an interesting Scripture. When I first read that in reading the Proverbs, this struck me. This is exactly what we need to do. If we approach each other with love and with grace and with kindness, we'll receive it back.

Now look, brethren, all the churches that have come out of the WCG (Worldwide Church of God) have suffered from these things. We all have to come to the point in our own personal lives and examine our own hearts and thoughts and put it behind us. We're going to have to deal with new sets of problems with new people coming in, because they will be coming. Church at Home is going to

produce. They're going to have their own sets of problems. So, if we learn how to overcome, that will help us help them. But in this world, who knows?

Here Paul says, 1-Corinthians 3:6: "I planted *and* Apollos watered... [That fulfills the Proverbs, 'he who waters shall be watered.'] ...but God gave the increase. Therefore, neither is he who plants anything... [didn't exalt himself] ...nor he who waters; for *it is* God Who gives the increase" (vs 6-7). God gives the increase in growing in grace and knowledge. God gives the increase in the number of people that He sends. I'm convinced that all the Churches of God need to get their acts cleaned up, that includes all of us, so that God can call more people.

Why would He want to call new people into the midst of fighting and wrangling and arguing and petty politics? Why would He call new people into a church which says, 'When you get into this Church you are not allowed to talk to your mother, your father, your sister, your brother, even your own children who are not in the Church.' Not going to work.

Let's understand what God has done for us, 1-Corinthians 1:4: "I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God that has been given to you in Christ Jesus; and that you have been *spiritually* enriched in Him in everything, in all discourse and knowledge, according as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you; so that you do not lack *even* one *spiritual* gift while you are awaiting the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ" (vs 4-7). This was before he knew it was going to be a long time before Christ returned.

Verse 8: "Who will also strengthen you to *the* end..." That's quite a verse—isn't it? *Be strengthened!* Proverbs also says 'if you faint in the day of adversity your strength is little.' We need to be strong in those times. Christ will strengthen us to the end.

"...*that you may be* unimpeachable in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God *is* faithful, by Whom you were called into *the* fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord" (vs 8-9). That's part of the grace, *our fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ is our relationship with God!* This is the thing. That's why it's so great. That's why grace is so fantastic.

It's better than a cell phone. You don't need a battery. It's right here. You have direct access to God the Father and the first words you say in your prayer are '*Our Father*.' Fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ comes down to us and then to each other.

Verse 10: “Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing... [Not like a bunch of robots, but you understand the Truth and you can even explain the Truth in different words that are still correct.] ...and *that* there be no divisions among you; rather, *that* you be knit together in the same mind and in the same judgment.” This is the goal of his Epistle of 1-Corinthians. He knew that he a lot of problems to address.

1-Corinthians in summary:

- Chapter 1—talks about the calling—*you see your calling, brethren.*
- Chapter 2—talks about how God’s Spirit reveals even the deep things of God.
- Chapter 3—prepares them and tells them that they are a temple of the living God.
- Chapter 4—all ministers are to be stewards and don’t be trying to puff up one minister against another minister.
- Chapter 5—sin in Corinth city; Paul says to put that one out.
- Chapter 6—‘What? Don’t you know how to judge?’

Where did we start? *Judge righteous judgment!*

- Chapter 7—talks about all the immorality and the need for marriage and things like that.
- Chapter 8—eating things sacrificed to idols.
- Chapter 9—talks about the necessity of tithing and why he didn’t do it.
- Chapter 10—all the things in the Old Testament happened as types or examples for us.
- Chapter 11—talks about the proper relationship between men and God, women and men, the Passover.
- Chapter 12—talks about we are all baptized by one Spirit into one body.
- Chapter 13—love

Now then, he brings out another problem:

- Chapter 14—speaking in languages.

1-Corinthians 14 23: “Therefore, if the whole Church is assembled together in one place, and all are speaking in unknown languages, and unlearned persons or unbelievers come in, will they not say that you have lost your minds?”

How many here have been to a Pentecostal church where they jump up and down and run around? When you finally came to your senses you said, ‘Yes, they’ve lost their minds.’

Verse 24: “But if all prophesy... [Prophecy here is not a foretelling of the future. This is to speak inspired speaking.] ...and an unbeliever or unlearned person comes in, he is convicted by all, *and* he is

discerned by all. And in this way the secrets of his heart are exposed... [before God] ...and so, bowing down on *his* face, he will worship God declaring that God is indeed among you” (vs 24-25).

He set the stage. I want you to understand how the Apostle Paul wrote this. I want you to go back and restudy all of 1-Corinthians and see how he set the stage:

- First he *set the goal*
- Then he *encouraged them*
- Then he *corrected them*
- Then he *set the goal*
- Then he *encouraged them*
- Then he *corrected them*

Here comes the correction, v 26: “What is it then, brethren? When you assemble together, each of you has a psalm, has a doctrine, has a language, has a revelation, or has an interpretation...”

Over in this corner are all those for Paul. Over in that corner, all those for Peter. Over in the other corner, all those for Apollos. Over in that corner all those who are speaking in tongues. Over here in the back you have those then have a revelation, an interpretation. Sound like a church you attended recently? *or* In the past? *Yes!*

I get these things continuously with e-mails sent to me. I got one the other day, ‘Oh, I had a vision of God and here is what the Sabbath really, really is. You start with the new moon, then you count seven days and that’s the Sabbath.’ It’s called the lunar Sabbath. Anybody heard of it before? I wrote on it, ‘Your vision was not from God, it was from Satan. Your calendar is not true because you have rejected God’s calculated Hebrew calendar.’ He was in South Africa so I guess I’m safe. Imagine walking into a church that way.

Verse 32: “And *the* spirits of *the* prophets are subject to *the* prophets.” In other words, if you are going to get up and speak and say something, it has to be with intelligence. It has to be with understanding. It has to be with knowledge.

Verse 33: “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.” That’s what it needs to be. How did he start out the epistle? ‘Grace and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.’ Here then is how to handle the problems there and to take care of it.

What this does for us is this: since they have been corrected a long, long time ago, as we read and study this and we drink in of it, we ourselves can be corrected so we don’t repeat it. So there’s value in that.

Because they were really getting uppity, v 36: “WHAT? Did the Word of God originate with you? Or did it come only to you *and no one else?*....

[Remember all the philosophers, remember all of those with their good ideas.] ...If anyone thinks that he is a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things I write to you are commandments of the Lord.... [his correction gets pretty strong here]: ...But if anyone *chooses to be ignorant*, let him be ignorant” (vs 36-38). Now today we’re not to do that.

(go to the next track)

Let’s see how we are to resolve problems and difficulties among ourselves. We know what Matt. 18 is about. We’ve covered that. God wants us to use it. I’ll just use the verbiage of a commercial in the past: Try it, you’ll like it. When it’s all done, you forgive each other, hug and kiss each other, shake hands, and you go away in peace. Then you will know that it works. That’s why God gave it.

Let’s see how Paul applied it, Philippians 1:6: “Being confident of this very thing...” This is what we need to do. I have confidence that God is going to do it. You need to have confidence that God is going to do it. We need to have confidence that God will lead us in taking care of our little rough edges as mature adults, speaking to one another, etc. And solving them without getting into strife and arguments and contentions, seeking out the facts, seeking out the truth and not motivated by feelings of any kind, except love.

Verse 6: “Being confident of this very thing, that He Who began a good work in you...” *That’s grace!* We are God’s ‘workmanship created in Christ Jesus.’ Everything we are going through God is creating in us with His Spirit *to prepare us* for eternal life; *to teach us* how we need to think. Along the way we’re going to make a lot of mistakes. He’ll forgive us.

- we can recover
- we can learn
- we can change

“...a good work in you will complete *it* until *the* day of Jesus Christ” (v 6).

God’s not going to give up on you. All of us we’re marching toward that final line—aren’t we? *Yes, indeed!* God knows that when we get close to the final line we’re going to get weak. Our bodies are going to start failing and God promises in the Psalms that when you’re old and gray He won’t leave you. When you’re weak and ready to expire, that’s part of God’s plan, *because He’s going to raise you up*. He’s going to complete the work in us. ***The finishing touch is going to be the resurrection!*** Can you imagine what a day that’s going to be? I think in the book, *The Appointed Times of Jesus the Messiah*, I brought out that it is the whole world is going to see all the saints being raised from the dead. Wouldn’t that be something? ‘Look, there goes

another one. Where did they come from?’ Of course, they won’t be able to see the angels taking us up there. They’re going to be absolutely convinced beyond any shadow of doubt that the aliens are invading. Here’s this big sea of glass over Jerusalem.

Philippians 2:1: “Now then, if *there be* any encouragement in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of *the* Spirit, if any *deep* inner affections and compassions, fulfill my joy, that you be of the same mind, having the same love, being joined together in soul, minding the one thing” (vs 1-2). The Kingdom of God and being able to be changed so that God can qualify you for the first resurrection. That’s what we’re minding.

When you keep that in perspective, all the little differences and little conflicts and little frictions that come up between us, between husband and wife, between children and parents, you can handle it. You can take care of them.

Verse 3: “*Let nothing be done through contention or vainglory, but in humility, each esteeming the others above himself. Let each one look not only after his own things, but let each one also consider the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus*” (vs 3-5). Then it talks about how he humbled himself.

There are other Scriptures that we could cover. Also, if you read the end of Colossians they are instructed to read this in the Church of the Laodiceans, too. Notice again how Paul structures this. I want you to understand something, why the New Testament, even in the way it is written, demonstrates the grace of God directly to us. All the writings of the apostles, with the exception of the Gospels and the book of Acts, are called epistles. Epistles are letters; so these are letters. ‘Grace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ’—*from Them to us—personal*. You pray to God, that’s personal. God’s Word is given personal, in letter form. Old Testament wasn’t written that way. Some of the Psalms come close to it.

But in this epistle, now notice, it’s like he’s talking to us. Isn’t it interesting that all the words of the apostles Jesus said they would be a ‘witness unto the ends of the earth’ and they never counted on another 2,000 years. But this is what they wrote. They never grasped that it would be the *whole world*. The whole world to them was what we would call the area of the Mediterranean and on up into Europe, maybe over to India. That was the whole world to them.

Now God has granted the technology that we can do a lot with a little. All of our websites are up 24/7. Many other websites they’re all up there 24/7. I hope and pray that more understand the Truth and

preach the Truth and people can find it. We'll do what we can, our part.

Colossians 3:1: "Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God.... [That's where our prayers go.] ...Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth.... [be spiritually minded, not carnally minded] ..For you have died... [You've died to the world, you've died to sin, you have died to Satan.] ...and your life has been hid together with Christ in God. When Christ, *Who is* our life, is manifested, then you also shall be manifested with Him in glory" (vs 1-4).

What is that going to be like? You look in the mirror, you look at this old body and you think, 'How's God going to do that?' *Instantly!* What's it going to be like to have a body of glory? *That's going to happen!* What are we to do with the carnal things in us we still need to overcome?

Verse 5: "Therefore, put to death your members which *are* on earth—sexual immorality, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil desires, and covetousness, which is idolatry.... [Weren't some of those things just rampant within the Church? *Unfortunately!*] ...Because of these things, the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience, Among whom you also once walked, when you were living in these things. But now..." (vs 5-8). There is always a progression of overcoming. There's always a progression of improving, because with God's Spirit in us and the power of God and God's desire and our repentance and yielding to God, He is molding us, He is fashioning us because we are His workmanship.

"...you should also put off all *these* things: wrath, indignation, malice, blasphemy, *and* foul language from your mouth.... [He's talking to baptized Christians—right? Showing that they have their own carnality yet to continue to overcome.] ...Do not lie to one another, *seeing that* you have put off the old man together with his deeds... [in baptism] ...and have put on the new man, who *is* being renewed in knowledge according to *the* image of Him Who created him" (vs 8-10). Isn't that wonderful? We're being renewed in knowledge according to God the Father and Jesus Christ.

Verse 11: "Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian *nor* Scythian, slave *nor* free; but Christ *is* in all things, and in all." Put those out, then you have to put something in. Our whole life is putting out carnality, putting in spirituality. You put out carnality by recognizing sin, recognizing evil, through the power of God's Spirit and you put in the qualities that God wants to have. That comes through prayer and study and serving each other.

Verse 12: "Put on then, as *the* elect of God, holy and beloved, deep inner affections, kindness, humility, meekness *and* longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another..." (vs 12-13). Forbearance is the first point of solving a problem. As I've mentioned before and covered, doctrinal problems are different. Those have to be handled differently.

"...if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so also you *should* forgive. And above all these things *put on* love, which is *the* bond of perfection.... [That's the whole goal to be perfected in Christ.] ...And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which you were called into one body, and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And *in* everything—whatever you do in word or in deed—*do* all in *the* name of *the* Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and *the* Father by Him" (vs 13-17).

So, this how we can solve the problems! This way it will bring

- greater peace
- greater love
- greater joy
- greater fellowship

and a good place for God to send new people that need help.

Scriptural References:

- 1) John 7:24
- 2) Proverbs 18:13, 19, 21
- 3) Proverbs 20:3
- 4) Proverbs 12:14-15, 17-19
- 5) Proverbs 21:23
- 6) Proverbs 22:10
- 7) Proverbs 17:14
- 8) Proverbs 11:25
- 9) 1-Corinthians 3:6-7
- 10) 1-Corinthians 1:4-10
- 11) 1-Corinthians 14:23-26, 32-33, 36-37
- 12) Philippians 1:6
- 13) Philippians 2:1-5
- 14) Colossians 3:1-17

Scriptures referenced, not quoted: Matthew 18

Also referenced:

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- *Transhumanism*
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