

Tackling Life

# Preventing or Resolving Conflict

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- 1. In your close circle of Christian friends and relatives, in your marriage and family,** deliberately adopt the biblical purpose to help one another live for Jesus Christ. When this purpose guides the relationships and takes priority, conflicts will have to be dealt with for God's glory rather than personal gain. Doing relationships within this godly contract is doing them God's way. (See *Submit to God Together* at [ChristiansTogether.org](http://ChristiansTogether.org))
- 2. Let Jesus lead,** then conflict will be limited to disagreement about what Jesus wants, eliminating many other self-focused conflicts. Jesus doesn't ask for conflicting things, so arguing is senseless. Praying to Him and waiting on Him is the best way of shelving conflict and continuing on with the good parts of the friendship. (See *Together Be Led by Jesus Christ* at [ChristiansTogether.org](http://ChristiansTogether.org))
- 3. Reserving yourself for your family and friends** will prevent many conflicts that arise from thinking only of what you want. Wanting for others what they desire makes it necessary to find ways to resolve conflict for everyone's benefit. And doing everything possible to avoid selfish competition also prevents much conflict. (See *Be Devoted to One Another* at [ChristiansTogether.org](http://ChristiansTogether.org))
- 4. Accept the unique differences among your friends and relatives.** Recognize that God has designed them to hold different perspectives and goals than you. If God has given them different personalities, talents and desires, then there is little reason for conflict. However, there may be great need to depend upon God to help you recognize His grand design for your relationship and how your differences

need not create conflict. (See *Accept One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

**5. Discern how God wants the various people in your friendship group, marriage or family** to work together in harmony, turning potential conflict into orchestration that glorifies Him. Conflict makes it seem that someone is right and someone is wrong. But, from God's sovereign view, it might be that both are right, requiring some sort of compromise. Almost always it takes creative thinking to understand a creative God who puts His unique saints together for a higher purpose than any one of them can accomplish alone. (See *Live Together in Harmony* at ChristiansTogether.org)

**6. Put up with each other's annoying behaviors** as God does with ours. This will keep most minor irritations from becoming conflicts. (See *Bear with One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

**7. Be quick to forgive in your family, marriage and friendships** so you keep focused on the purpose of being together to help one another live for Christ. Nothing is more predictable than that Christians will sin against one another. We are sinners, and we will hurt one another or incorrectly perceive that we have been sinned against. We cannot let this take us off the track of loving one another and helping each other live for God. (See *Forgive One Another Without Being Asked* at ChristiansTogether.org)

**8. Let one another have his or her own way** whenever possible, as long as that way will not defame God. If your friendship, marriage or family has the verbalized and adopted purpose of helping one another to live for Christ, you will almost always be on the same track. When what another wants gets the same priority as your own goals, there should be little conflict. Don't let the desire to have your own way destroy relationships that take you closer to Jesus. (See *Submit to One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

**9. Seek to have conflict-free relationships**, which is the way of God's kingdom. The eternal kingdom will have no conflict, so it follows that the kingdom of God here and now can also minimize strife. Jesus instructed us to pray, "Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven," which indicates that we should work toward the least possible conflict. Relationships may not achieve this completely, but they should give every effort to acquire it. (See *Live as Citizens of Heaven* at ChristiansTogether.org)

**10. Remember that you are united forever in Christ and His body.** Even when there is conflict, it should rarely be the reason for ending a friendship. A justifiable reason may underlie the conflict, but the conflict itself is only a signal that there is a problem to be solved. And even when a friendship does have to end, you are still

united in Christ forever. Of course, family relationships do not really end, and conflict should rarely lead there. (See *Live Together in Unity* at ChristiansTogether.org)

11. **Consider all conflict** as merely an indication that a problem needs to be peacefully solved. Learning to work through conflict yields great spiritual growth. It is very freeing, even though it requires trust in God's direction and great dependence upon the Holy Spirit. Remember that internal peace is a fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23) already residing in you and waiting for you to let it take over. (See *Live Together in Peace* at ChristiansTogether.org)

12. **Speak up honestly in a helpful way** whenever something seems wrong in your relationship. Catch problems before they develop or when they are small. Realize that speaking up is biblical obedience. (See *Speak to One Another Truthfully and Helpfully* at ChristiansTogether.org)

13. **When conflict persists**, realize that the devil is behind it. Instead of continuing to turn on each other, join forces to face the evil one who most likely set the conditions for the conflict. It helps to remember that, as friends, you are not really trying to destroy one another, but Satan is. Trust your relationship and the power against evil that God has placed in you through Christ. (See *Stand Up to the Devil at One Another's Side* at ChristiansTogether.org)

14. **Set aside arguments or just let go of the conflict.** In this way, die for one another and save a good relationship — if it is one that is true to the Lord and serves Him. Everything is a smaller issue compared to the purpose of helping one another live for Jesus Christ. Keep in mind that winning is usually losing when it involves conflict in relationships. (See *Die for One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

15. **Take time to let God mediate between you** when there is conflict. Do not mistreat one another to win an argument. Love will always be the way to resolve differences. And being patient allows time to gain wisdom. In the meantime, treat each other well and continue the relationship. (See *Forbid Mistreatment of One Another* at ChristiansTogether.org)

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