**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | How to Handle Conflicts |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | James 1:19-20 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #1922 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. There are many differences between men and women.
      1. We are wired differently physically, emotionally and psychologically.
      2. We are also different as individuals.
         1. We have different temperaments.
         2. We come from different family backgrounds.
         3. We have different traditions, thoughts and habits.
   2. The real issue is not if we are going to get into conflicts, but how we settle them.
      1. Rather than being married by the Justice of the Peace, some couples seem to have been married by the Secretary of War.
   3. We need to learn how to handle conflicts, how to fight fair and how to deal with anger.
2. WE NEED TO TUNE IN (James 1:19-20)
   1. We need to be quick to listen.
      1. We need to learn what the other person is saying
   2. There are many reasons why we need to obey God’s Word and be swift to hear.
      1. When we listen, we encourage the other person to talk.
      2. It also helps us to understand.
         1. We cannot understand someone we are not listening to.
         2. When you understand your spouse, it will bring you closer together.
      3. It will help to achieve intimacy.
   3. There are also many reasons why we do not listen.
      1. We are very defensive.
         1. Because of our ego, we do not want to hear; we do not want anyone telling us anything.
      2. We assume we already know what the other person is going to say.
      3. While the other person is talking, we’re thinking about what we are going to say next and how we are going to answer them.
   4. How do we need to listen?
      1. By observation.
         1. Listen not merely with your ears but also with your eyes.
            1. Look your spouse in the face, even if you’re in an argument.
            2. If you are not looking at him or her, then he or she may assume that you are not listening or interested.
            3. When we watch someone, we can read their body language and facial expressions.
            4. Look into the other person’s eyes.

It has been said that the eyes are the mirror to the soul.

You can see joy, fear, anger and confusion.

* + 1. With concentration.
       1. Listen with your mind.
       2. Focus on what the other person is saying.
       3. If we are egocentric or pre-occupied, we will not concentrate on what the other person is saying.
    2. With consideration.
       1. Think about what your mate is saying.
          1. Consider the words your mate uses and the meaning behind those particular words.
       2. Do not jump to conclusions.
          1. Sometimes your spouse will use words he or she didn’t really mean and communication becomes twisted.
       3. Listen to what your spouse means; absorb the feelings.
    3. With clarification.
       1. Think it through until you get it straight.

1. WE NEED TO TONE DOWN (James 1:19)
   1. We need to be slow to speak.
      1. Words will get us into trouble.
      2. Proverbs 10:19
      3. Proverbs 17:27
      4. Proverbs 21:23
      5. Ecclesiastes 5:3
         1. Speech is silver, but silence is golden.
         2. When we are talking, we cannot be listening; and when we are not listening, then we are not learning.
   2. 1 Corinthians 13:4-7
      1. This passage shows us how we should speak when we do speak.
   3. These are some destructive games that husbands and wives sometimes play:
      1. The judge
         1. We want to be the judge, jury and executioner.
         2. We play the blame game and blame our mate.
            1. Adam blamed Eve in the Garden of Eden.

Genesis 3:12

* + - 1. Rather than saying, “You always” or “You never,” we should say, “I feel” or “It seems to me.”
      2. Playing the judge is not kind.
         1. 1 Corinthians 13:4
    1. The professor
       1. The professor always acts superior and talks down to the other person.
       2. The professor’s conversations are filled with criticisms and put-downs.
       3. When you talk down to someone, you are attacking their self-worth, and they will become defensive.
       4. You cannot play the professor and be full of love.
          1. 1 Corinthians 13:4
    2. The psychologist
       1. The psychologist assumes that he or she understands everything about the other individual.
          1. “Let me tell you why you said that…”
       2. We are not to assign motives to another person; only God can do that.
    3. The historian
       1. We are not supposed to keep a record of wrongs.
          1. 1 Corinthians 13:5
    4. The dictator
       1. This individual wants to rule by a show of force.
       2. Never make ultimatums to your spouse.
       3. Never make veiled threats.
       4. A dictator may try to coerce another individual:
          1. By physical coercion; physical abuse.
          2. Men may withhold money in order to be the dictator in the family.
          3. One spouse may withhold affection.
          4. Sometimes the martyr will sulk.
       5. Playing the dictator is absolutely cruel, and you are saying to the other person, “I can do a better job with your life than you can.”
    5. The critic
       1. The critic compares his or her mate with other people.
       2. But the Bible says that love does not behave unseemly.
          1. 1 Corinthians 13:5
    6. The preacher
       1. 1 Corinthians 13:6
       2. Love does not use the Bible as a club.
  1. We are to guard our tongue, listen carefully and speak wisely.

1. WE NEED TO LIGHTEN UP (James 1:19)
   1. We are to be slow to wrath.
      1. Do not get upset so easily.
      2. Be slow to take offense and get angry.
   2. James 1:19 does not tell us to never get angry.
      1. Ephesians 4:26
         1. Jesus was angry but never sinned.
      2. Mark 3:5
   3. How can we be angry and sin not?
      1. Be angry for the right reason.
         1. Jesus was angry at sin.
         2. The way to be angry and to not sin is to be angry only at sin.
      2. Be angry at the right things.
         1. Be angry at the sin, not the sinner.
      3. Be angry in the right way.
         1. Let your anger move you to do something about a situation that is wrong.
   4. We are not to have an uncontrolled temper.
      1. A person who has an uncontrolled temper is very foolish.
         1. Ecclesiastes 7:9
      2. Someone who has an uncontrolled temper has a very weak character.
         1. Proverbs 16:32
      3. An uncontrolled temper will lead to sin in your marriage and professional life.
         1. Proverbs 29:22
   5. If you have an angry mate:
      1. Do not practice avoidance.
         1. Do not suppress or ignore the situation.
      2. Do not practice appeasement.
         1. It is a very unhealthy marriage when one mate, in order to have peace, always gives in.
         2. A marriage is in trouble when one mate seems to dominate or always gets his or her way.
      3. Do not practice aggression.
         1. Do not give anger for anger.
         2. Speak the truth in love, never sarcastically.
2. CONCLUSION
   1. If you have an argument:
      1. Have it at the right time.
         1. Most arguments occur just before we eat, when blood sugar is lower.
         2. Many arguments occur on the way to an event.
      2. Have it in the right tone.
         1. Keep your words soft and sweet.
      3. Have it on the right turf.
         1. Don’t discuss problems with your mate when other people are around.
   2. Three things to remember:
      1. Practice accommodation.
         1. Accommodate yourself to the other person.
            1. This is not compromise.
         2. Learn something about his sport or her hobby.
      2. Practice acceptance.
         1. Do not try to change your mate.
      3. Practice adjustment.
         1. Be willing to change.
         2. If one spouse wants to go to bed earlier, go to bed earlier.
   3. Everyone needs three homes:
      1. A family home
      2. A church home
      3. A heavenly home
         1. Jesus Christ is the key to all three homes.
   4. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
   5. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
      1. Romans 3:23
      2. Romans 10:9-10
      3. Romans 10:13
      4. Acts 16:31
      5. John 3:16