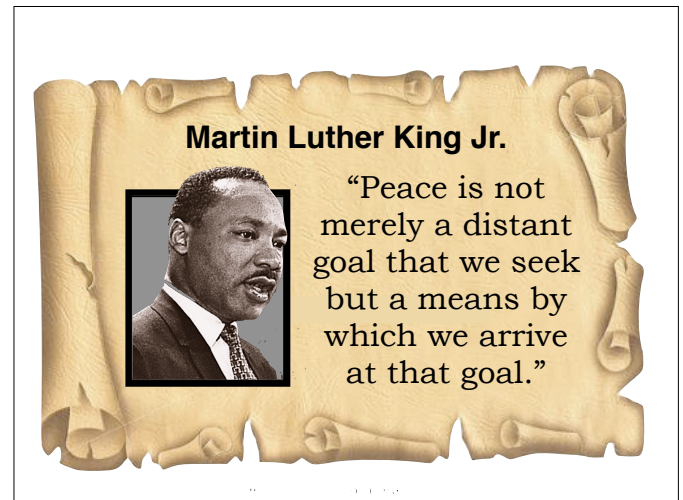
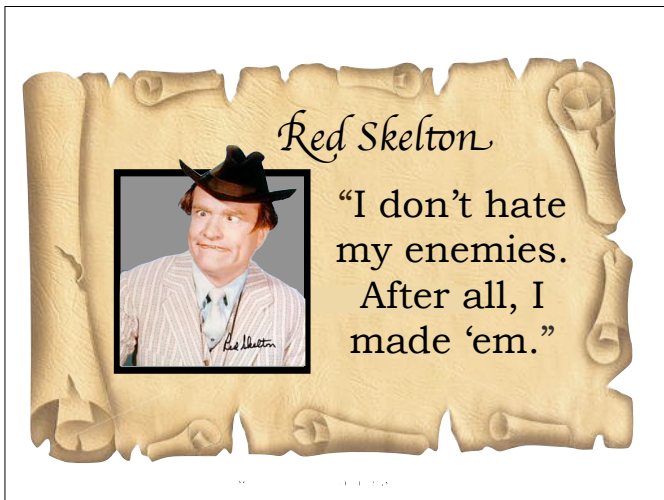




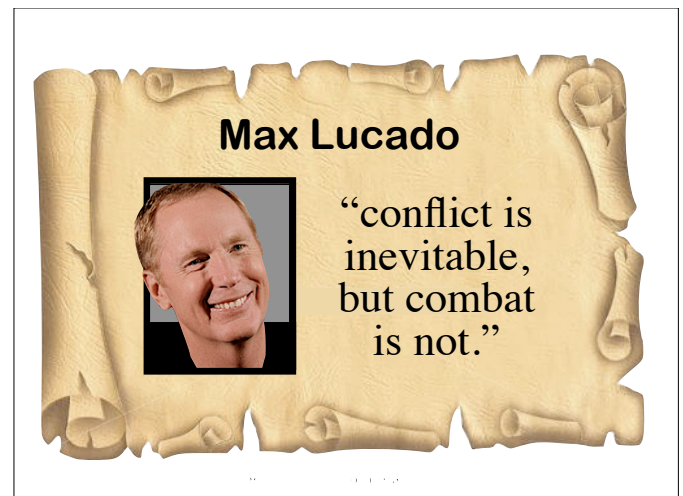
*Where we are going and where we have been.*

1. Character and Christianity
2. Character and the image of God
3. Character and the Body of Christ
4. Challenges that shape and show character.
  1. Vision - direction & expectations
  2. Fear - faith
  3. Relationships - community
  4. **Conflict - differences**
  5. Change - growth
  6. Success & Failure - stress
  7. Private life - the heart



## Persons of Godly character discern the difference between:

- peacemakers, pacifism, and empathy fatigue.
- necessary & unnecessary conflict.
- **conflict and combat.**



## Insight #1

**Conflict provides a unique opportunity to develop and demonstrate Godly wisdom, creativity and character.**

*2 Peter 3:8-9*

“to sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit; **not returning evil for evil or insult for insult, but giving a blessing instead**; for you were called for the very purpose that you might inherit a blessing.”

***Being treated unjustly is the context of a call to display Godly virtues.***



Virtue	Context
Faith	Fear
Hope	Failure
Love	Abuse
Courage	Disappointment
Grace	Injustice



***Peter - before Pentecost***

**slow to listen, quick to speak, and quick to anger.**

***Peter - after Pentecost***

*1 Peter 4*

“<sup>12</sup> Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; <sup>13</sup> but to the degree that you **share the sufferings of Christ**, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.”

***Paul - before conversion***

**slow to listen, quick to speak, and quick to anger.**

***Paul - after his conversion***

*Philippians 3:10*

“that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and **the fellowship of His sufferings**, being conformed to His death;”

## Rule of engagement #1

**Seize the moment not just to win or even resolve conflict but to respond in a Godly way.**

***The leader's first responsibility in conflict is to model how to respond to conflict.***

**Most of the decisions we make will not be as important as the quality of our relationships in making them.**

***Don't confuse Goals with Wants.***

- ✓ **Set goals only for issues we can control.**
- ✓ **When we confuse wants with goals we tend to be anxious and manipulative.**
- ✓ **Pray for wants, work for goals.**

"My desire (want) is to have you agree with me. My goal is to really hear you out, present my case lovingly, and respectfully and work with our decision."

## **Insight #2**

**When we are committed to love each other we tend to be patient and depersonalize conflicts.**

**Martin Luther King Jr.**



"Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend"

*Nelson Mandela*



"If you want to make peace with your enemy, you have to work with your enemy, then he becomes your partner."

***We do not mistreat those we love.***

***1 Corinthians 13***

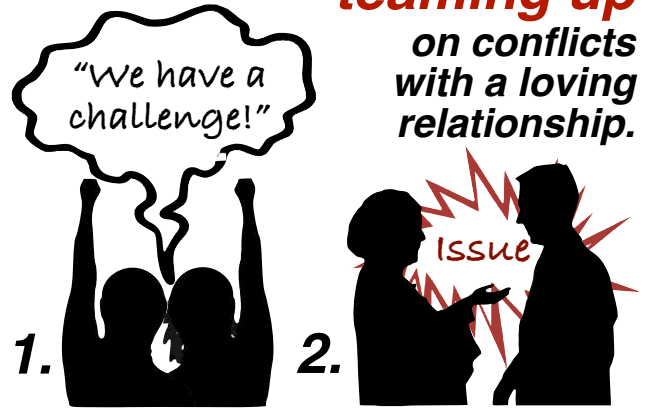
"<sup>4</sup> Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, <sup>5</sup> does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, <sup>6</sup> does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; <sup>7</sup> bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things."

***This is not us but Christ in us.***

**When the issue is “you” or “me”  
there will be winners and losers  
but no love or peacemaking.**



**Peacemaking means  
*teaming up*  
on conflicts  
with a loving  
relationship.**



### **Levels of spoken communication**

“Shooting  
the breeze”

“Giving  
advice”

“Drawing  
out”

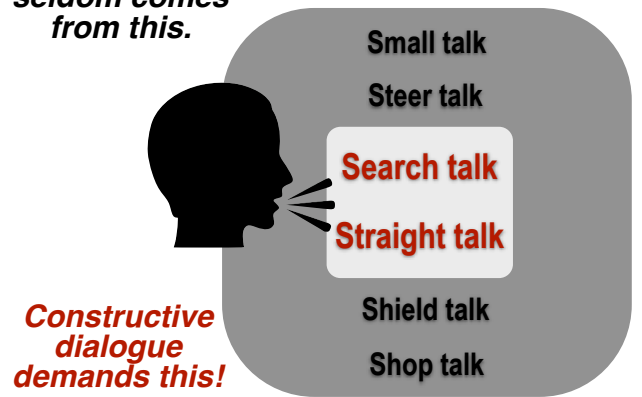
“Revealing  
the heart”

“Keeping  
at bay”

“Sharing  
interests”



**Peacemaking  
seldom comes  
from this.**



**How should I respond to  
the “bad” ideas of others?**



**Yes if.**



**No  
because.**

### **Rule of engagement #2**

**Take your baptism seriously.**

**It's no longer  
all about  
you or  
me.**



### Insight #3

Dealing with  
the fear and anger  
in ourselves and others

**is dealing with  
the conflict.**

**Those who demand  
justice for  
themselves are  
poor peacemakers.**

*Matthew 18:21-35*

**Peacemakers will, like Jesus,  
bear a cross.**

- They must at times absorb a personal loss.
- They must be willing to manage pain in themselves and in others.
- In a conflict, the peacemaker may be seen as an enemy to both sides.
- They must at times be willing to accept failure and not succeed in making peace.

### Rule of engagement #3

**Attend (listen)**  
**Appreciate (value)**  
**Affirm (connect)**  
**Argue (reason)**

*James 1:19*

“Be quick to hear,  
slow to speak,  
and slow to wrath.”

**Slow down  
and listen!**

#### Peace makers

*“I am sorry, I did not  
listen well.”*

*“I am sorry, I spoke  
too soon.”*

*“I am sorry, I rushed  
to judgment.”*

#### Peace breakers

*“You are not  
listening to me!”*

*“You are not giving me  
a chance to speak!”*

*“You are  
(the, my, a) problem!”*





**Others are:**

worriers  
narrow minded  
hot tempered  
wishy-washy  
stuck up



**I am:**

concerned  
principled  
intense  
flexible  
discriminating

## Insight #4

**Peacemaking  
is not always  
successful.**

*Peacemakers may have to agree to disagree but remain one in Christ.*

*Acts 15:39*

“And there occurred such a sharp disagreement that they separated from one another, and Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus.”

Paul later mentions Barnabas (1 Cor.9:6) and John Mark (Col.4:10) in favorable ways.

## Rule of engagement #4

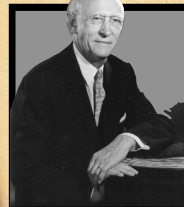
**We may not agree  
on the issues, but  
we can agree to  
disagree civilly.**

*C.S. Lewis*



“God can’t give us peace and happiness apart from Himself because there is no such thing.”

*Vance Havner*



“The vision must be followed by the venture. It is not enough to stare up the steps - we must step up the stairs.”