

MESSAGE 1: A FAITH THAT DESCALATES CONFLICT
Parts 1-2

“Those who are peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and they will reap a harvest of goodness.” James 3:18 (NLT)

10 BIBLICAL STEPS FOR DEFUSING A TENSE SITUATION

1. _____

“A gentle response will calm a person's anger, but harsh words stir up intense fury.” Proverbs 15:1

- **THE MORE I RAISE MY VOICE,** _____
- **MIRROR BRAIN NEURONS:** _____

“The quiet words of a wise person are more effective than the shouting of a leader of fools.” Ecclesiastes 9:17 (NIV)

2. _____

“A fool gives full vent to his anger, but by biding his time, the wise man calms it down.” Proverbs 29:11 (NAB)

“People with hot tempers start fights and cause trouble, but a calm, cool spirit keeps the peace.” Proverbs 15:18 (MSG/NCV)

“If a ruler (or anyone else) loses his temper against you, don't panic! A calm disposition quiets intemperate rage.” Ecclesiastes 10:4 (MSG)

3. _____

“Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to get angry.” James 1:19 (NLT)

“Arrogant know-it-alls stir up discord, but wise men and women listen to each other's counsel.” Proverbs 13:10 (MSG)

4. _____

“Each heart knows its own bitterness...” Proverbs 14:10 (NIV)

5. _____

“Gideon built an altar for worshiping the Lord and he called it ‘The Lord Calms Our Fears.’” Judges 6:24 (CEV)

“God stills the raging oceans, quiets the noise of roaring waves, and calms the uproar of the peoples.” Psalm 65:7

6. _____
“A person who answers without listening is foolish and disgraceful.” Proverbs 18:13 (ICB)

7. _____
“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.” Philippians 2:4-5 (NIV)

8. _____
“Search me, O God and examine my heart; test me and know my nervous thoughts. Point out anything in ME that is wrong. Then lead me on the path that is always right.” Psalm 139:23-24

9. _____
Jesus: “Why do you notice the little piece of dust in your friend's eye, but you don't notice the big piece of wood in your own eye? First, take the wood out of your own eye. Then you will see clearly to take the dust out of your friend's eye.” Matthew 7:3, 5 (NCV)

10. _____
“Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.” Proverbs 12:18 (NIV)

“Do not use harmful words, but only helpful words, the kind that build up and provide what is needed.” Ephesians 4:29 (TEV)

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God!” Matthew 5:9 (NIV)

MESSAGE 2: A FAITH THAT HANDLES DELAYS PATIENTLY

Parts 1-2

“Be PATIENT, my friends, until the Lord comes back. Remember how patient farmers are as they WAIT for their valuable crops to mature and ripen. They also WAIT PATIENTLY for the spring and fall rains to do their work. You too must be patient! Don't give up, because the Lord could arrive at any time! And don't complain – especially against each other – or God will judge you! Remember that the real Judge is standing at the door! Another example of patience in the face of suffering is God's prophets who spoke God's truth in hard times. Today, we honor them for their patient endurance when they suffered unjustly. Then remember the example of Job. Job continued to patiently trust God while enduring great pain. But we know how God fulfilled his purpose for Job and that his plan for Job ended in good because the Lord always treats us with tender compassion and merciful kindness.” James 5:7-11

WHEN IS WAITING PATIENTLY AN ACT OF FAITH?

1. WHEN _____

“Be PATIENT, my friends, until the Lord comes back. Remember how patient farmers are as they WAIT for their valuable crops to mature and ripen. They also WAIT PATIENTLY for the spring and fall rains to do their work. You too must be patient! Don't give up, because the Lord could arrive at any time!” James 5:7-8

2. WHEN _____

“Another example of patience in the face of suffering is God's prophets who spoke God's truth in hard times. Today, we honor them for their patient endurance when they suffered unjustly.” James 5:10-11a

“Don't grumble about each other, my brothers and sisters, or God will judge you. Remember, the great Judge is coming. He is standing at the door!” James 5:9 (NLT)

3. WHEN _____

“Then remember the example of Job. Job continued to patiently trust God while enduring great pain. But we know how God fulfilled his purpose for Job and that his plan for Job ended in good because the Lord always treats us with tender compassion and merciful kindness.” James 5:11

WHAT SHOULD I REMEMBER WHILE I'M WAITING?

1. REMEMBER _____

“Be patient, my friends, until the Lord comes back.” James 5:7

“Be patient and stand firm, because the Lord's coming is near.” James 5:8

“Don't complain...the Judge is ready to come!” James 5:9 (NCV)

2. REMEMBER _____

"We consider BLESSED those who have persevered." James 5:11 (NIV)

"Let us not get tired of doing what is right, for after a while we will reap a harvest of blessing IF we don't get discouraged and give up." Galatians 6:9 (LB)

3. REMEMBER _____

"We know how God fulfilled his purpose for Job and that his plan for Job ended in good because the Lord always treats us with tender compassion and merciful kindness." James 5:11b

"'I know what I am planning for you' says the Lord. 'I have good plans for you, not plans to hurt you. I'll give you hope and a good future!'" Jeremiah 29:11 (NCV)

HOW DO I TRUST GOD DURING A DELAY?

1. LIKE FARMERS, _____

"...I wait expectantly, trusting God to help, for He has promised." Psalm 130:5 (LB)

"No one who waits for my help will be disappointed." Isaiah 49:23 (TEV)

2. LIKE THE PROPHETS, _____

"It is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the Lord." Lamentations 3:26

3. LIKE JOB, _____

"If a man dies, can he come back to life? I will wait for better times; I will wait till this time of trouble is ended." Job 14:14 (TEV)

"Those who wait on the Lord will find new strength. They will fly high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint!" Isaiah 40:31 (NLT)

"The Lord isn't being slow in keeping his promise to return. Instead, he's waiting on you, being patient with you, because he doesn't want anyone to be lost and perish. Instead he is giving you time to change your heart and turn to him!" 2 Peter 3:9

MESSAGE 3: A FAITH THAT HELPS ME FILTER WHAT I SAY
Parts 1-2

“If you claim to be religious but don't control your tongue, you are only fooling yourself, and your religion is worthless!” James 1:26

“Dear brothers and sisters, don't be in a hurry to become a teacher in the church, because we who teach will be judged by God with greater strictness. Now we all make many mistakes. In fact, if anyone was able to always say the right thing, that person would be perfect, AND they would have perfect self-control of themselves and their body. We can control very large horses by putting a small bit into their mouths. By controlling their mouth, we can turn the whole animal whatever direction we want it to go. Or take ships as an example. A tiny rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot wants it to go, even though the winds are strong. In the same way your tongue is a small thing, but what enormous damage it can do! Just like a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire, your tongue is also a dangerous fire. Among all the parts in your body, it's the one that causes the most wickedness and spreads evil everywhere. It can corrupt and ruin your whole life. It can turn the entire course of your life into a blazing fire of destruction, because it is set on fire by hell itself! People can tame all kinds of animals and birds and reptiles and fish, but no one can tame the tongue. It is an uncontrollable evil, full of deadly poison. We use our tongue to praise our Lord and Father, but then we use the same tongue to attack and curse other people who've been made in the same image of God! So blessing some people and cursing others comes out of the same mouth! Listen, my brothers and sisters, THIS SHOULD NEVER HAPPEN! Can fresh water and bitter water come out of the same spring? No! Can a fig tree bear olives or a grapevine produce figs? No! And you can't get fresh water out of a polluted well! How humbly you live, not how you talk, shows your wisdom. If you harbor bitterness or jealousy or self-centered bias in your heart, you shouldn't boast that you're wise. You deny the truth to make yourself look better. That's not wisdom; it's earthly, it's unspiritual and it's inspired by the devil.” James 3:1-15

WHY DO I NEED GOD'S HELP FILTERING WHAT I SAY?

1. MY TONGUE _____

“We can control very large horses by putting a small bit into their mouths. By controlling their mouth, we can turn the whole animal whatever direction we want it to go.” James 3:3

“Or take ships as an example. A tiny rudder makes a huge ship turn wherever the pilot wants it to go, even though the winds are strong.” James 3:4

2. MY TONGUE _____

“Your tongue is a small thing, but what enormous damage it can do! Just like a tiny spark can set a great forest on fire, your tongue is also a dangerous fire.” James 3:5

“Among all the parts in your body, your tongue the one that causes the most wickedness and spreads evil everywhere. It can corrupt and ruin your whole life. It can turn the entire course of your life into a blazing fire of destruction, because it is set on fire by hell itself!” James 3:6

“If you want to stay out of trouble be careful what you say!” Proverbs 21:23 (TEV)

“People can tame all kinds of animals and birds and reptiles and fish, but no one can tame the tongue. It is an uncontrollable evil, full of deadly poison.” James 3:7-8

3. MY TONGUE _____

*“We use our tongue to praise our Lord and Father, but then we use the same tongue to attack and curse other people who’ve been made in the same image of God! So blessing some people and cursing others comes out of the same mouth! Listen, my brothers and sisters, **THIS SHOULD NEVER HAPPEN!**” James 3:9-10*

“Can fresh water and bitter water come out of the same spring? No! Can a fig tree bear olives or a grapevine produce figs? No! And you can't get fresh water out of a polluted well! How humbly you live, not how you talk, shows your wisdom. If you harbor bitterness or jealousy or self-centered bias IN YOUR HEART, you shouldn't boast that you're wise. You deny the truth to make yourself look better. That's not wisdom; it's earthly, it's unspiritual and it's inspired by the devil.” James 3:11-15

Point: My deeper problem isn't my tongue. It's _____

WHAT'S THE SOLUTION? EVERY DAY...

1. ASK _____

“Rid yourself of all the offenses you have committed and get a new heart and a new spirit!” Ezekiel 18:31

Jesus: “For out of the overflow of your heart your mouth speaks.” Matthew 12:34

2. ASK _____

“Lord, help me control my tongue; and help me be careful about what I say.” Psalm 141:3 (NCV)

“Be quick to listen, slow to speak, and slow to become angry.” James 1:19

**MESSAGE 4: A FAITH THAT MAKES ME MORE
MERCIFUL AND LESS JUDGEMENTAL**
Part 1

"You must show mercy to others, or God won't show mercy to you when he judges you one day. But the person who shows mercy will stand without fear at the judgment. MERCY TRIUMPHS OVER JUDGMENT!" James 2:13 (NCV)

Mercy = Love in action

WHY DOES GOD EXPECT ME TO SHOW MERCY TO EVERYONE?

1. BECAUSE GOD _____

"God is so rich in mercy, and he loves us so very much, that when we were spiritually dead and doomed because of our sins, he gave us a new life in Christ!" Ephesians 2:4-5a

"Shouldn't you have mercy on others, just as I have shown mercy to you?" Matthew 18:33

2. BECAUSE GOD _____

"I don't want your sacrifices! I want you to be merciful!" Hosea 6:6

"God has clearly shown you what is good and how he expects you to live: You must treat everyone justly, love mercy and walk humbly before God." Micah 6:8

3. BECAUSE _____

Jesus: "If you refuse to forgive others, your Father in Heaven will not forgive your sins." Matthew 6:15 (NLT)

"God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy." Matthew 5:7

4. BECAUSE _____

Jesus: "Happy are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." Matthew 5:7 (LB)

"A merciful person helps himself, but a cruel person hurts himself." Proverbs 11:17 (GW)

"After Job prayed for his friends, the Lord restored Job's wealth and happiness, giving him twice as much as before (his crisis)." Job 42:10 (LB)

Jesus told the Pharisees: "You would not have JUDGED these men if you really knew the Scripture that says, 'I want you to be MERCIFUL!'" Matthew 12:7

HOW DOES GOD EXPECT ME TO SHOW MERCY TO EVERYONE?

1. _____

“When people sin, you should forgive and comfort them, so they won't give up in despair.” 2 Corinthians 2:7 (CEV)

“Forgive us our sins, just as we forgive those who have sinned against us.” Luke 11:4 (NLT)

“Whoever refuses to admit his mistakes can never be successful. But if he confesses and forsakes them, he gets another chance.” Proverbs 28:13 (LB)

2. _____

“Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love.” Ephesians 4:2 (LB)

“Accept one another just as Christ has accepted you. This brings glory to God!” Romans 15:7 (NLT)

3. _____

*“Treat **EVERYONE** you meet with dignity.”* 1 Peter 2:17 (MSG)

“Don't get bitter or angry or use harsh words that hurt each other. Don't yell at one another or curse or ever be rude. Instead, be kind and merciful.” Ephesians 4:31-32a (CEV)

Jesus: “LOVE your enemies and DO GOOD to them! Lend to them without expecting anything back. Then YOUR REWARD will be great, and you will be children of the Most High, because God is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.” Luke 6:35-36 (NIV)

4. _____

“Whenever you possibly can, do good to those who need it.” Proverbs 3:27 (TEV)

“Jesus saved us, not because of good things we did, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins and gave us a new life.” Titus 3:5 (NLT)

MESSAGE 5: A FAITH THAT KEEPS ME HOPEFUL
Parts 1-2

"You must be patient. Keep your hopes high, for the day of the Lord's coming is near." James 5:8 (TEV)

"Do not give up hope!" James 5:8 (NCV, GW, ICB)

**HOW FAITH IN GOD AND HIS WORD
KEEPS US HOPEFUL IN DIFFICULT TIMES**

WE HAVE HOPE...

1. BECAUSE WE KNOW _____

"Take the old prophets as your mentors. They put up with anything, went through everything, and never once quit, all the time honoring God." James 5:10 (MSG)

"We fix our attention, not on the things that are seen, but on things that are unseen, because what can be seen is temporary and will last only for a short time, but what cannot be seen will last forever." 2 Corinthians 4:18 (TEV)

2. BECAUSE WE KNOW _____

"My brothers and sisters, when you have many kinds of troubles, you should be full of joy, because you know that these troubles test your faith, and this will give you patience. So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be strong in character and ready for anything!" James 1:2-4 (NCV/NLT)

"These little troubles are getting us ready for an eternal glory that will make all our troubles seem like nothing." 2 Corinthians 4:17 (CEV)

3. BECAUSE WE KNOW _____

"...Always be slow to become angry because human anger will never achieve God's righteous purpose." James 1:19-20

"Don't complain or grumble against each other, or you will be judged by God who is standing right at the door!" James 5:9

4. BECAUSE WE KNOW _____

"Abraham believed God, and because of his faith God accepted him as righteous.' And so Abraham was called God's friend." James 2:23 (TEV)

5. BECAUSE WE KNOW _____

"Be patient. Stay steady and strong because the Lord could arrive at any time." James 5:8 (MSG)

6. BECAUSE WE KNOW _____

“What a gift life is to those who stay the course! You’ve heard of Job’s staying power, and you know how God brought it all together for him at the end. That’s because God cares, cares right down to the last detail.” James 5:11 (MSG)

7. BECAUSE WE KNOW _____

“Happy are those who remain faithful under trials, because when they succeed in passing such a test, they will receive as their REWARD the Life which God has promised to those who love him.” James 1:12 (TEV)

“Every athlete in training submits to strict discipline in order to win a prize that will not last; but we do it for one that will last forever!” 1 Corinthians 9:25 (TEV)

“So be glad! There is wonderful joy ahead, even though right now you’ve had to endure suffering trials and grief for a little while.” 1 Peter 1:6

“What we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory He will give us later!” Romans 8:18 (NLT)

“There’s no comparison between the present hard times and the coming good times!” Romans 8:18 (MSG)