

Flint Hills Bible Church  
Biblical Soul Care Sunday School  
Resolving Conflict Chapter 14 : The Hidden Prerequisite

**I. Introduction**

1. Can you find the hidden prerequisite in our foundational text?

**Ephesians 4:1-3**

**<sup>1</sup> Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, <sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, <sup>3</sup> being diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (NASB)**

2. Why do you think Lou Priolo chose to wait to reveal this fifth prerequisite?

Quote on Page 283

*“The Greek word for diligent is spoudazontes. It means to make a zealous effort, to do one’s best. It characterizes the total conduct of the Christian as he grows in his Christian life. In other words, it has to do with exerting the energy necessary to bring about in the daily reality of one’s life on earth (progressive sanctification) what has been accomplished in books of heaven (positional sanctification).”*

**Objectives:**

We will define and consider diligence in Scripture and apply it to seeking unity and peace through conflict resolution.

We will learn three basic questions to help us evaluate whether we have done “as much as depends on us” in resolving conflicts.

**II. How Diligent do I have to be?**

One dictionary defines diligent as follows: constant in effort to accomplish something; attentive and persistent in doing anything. Another said it is “characterized by steady, earnest and energetic effort.

In the following verses, consider the commands that God is making on his people through these instructions.

**1 Peter 1:3-11**

**5 For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, 6 and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, 7 and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. 8 For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

3. What is “this very reason...” that Peter is referring to here in verse 5?
  
4. Because of this, what command are we given?
  
5. What is the end result if we obey this command?

**9 For whoever lacks these qualities is so nearsighted that he is blind, having forgotten that he was cleansed from his former sins. 10 Therefore, brothers, be all the more diligent to confirm your calling and election, for if you practice these qualities you will never fall. 11 For in this way there will be richly provided for you an entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

6. Peter then gives the negative side of those who are not diligent to add those qualities. What happens if we are not diligent?
  
7. Verse 10 contains another call to diligence. What are we to be diligent about here?
  
8. Whoa whoa whoa! Isn't that Works Salvation? Why not?

**III. Diligence in Resolving Conflicts**

We see then that diligence is commanded and expected from every Christian. In the following passages we will explore how diligence applies to resolving conflicts.

**Hebrews 12:14**

**<sup>14</sup> Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.**

9. What are we commanded to pursue here?

**1 Peter 3:8-12**

**<sup>8</sup> Finally, all of you, have unity of mind, sympathy, brotherly love, a tender heart, and a humble mind. <sup>9</sup> Do not repay evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary, bless, for to this you were called, that you may obtain a blessing. <sup>10</sup> For**

**“Whoever desires to love life**

**and see good days,**

**let him keep his tongue from evil**

**and his lips from speaking deceit;**

**<sup>11</sup> let him turn away from evil and do good;**

**let him seek peace and pursue it.**

**<sup>12</sup> For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,**

**and his ears are open to their prayer.**

**But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.”**

10. What should we do if we desire “to love life and see good days”?

**Romans 12:16-18**

**<sup>16</sup> Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. <sup>17</sup> Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup> If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.**

11. What are the commands regarding relationships in this text?
12. How does diligence affect the way we obey these commands?
13. Why is it so hard for us to pursue and strive for peace with all men?
14. What are some common excuses we might use for not being as diligent as we ought?

**Summary:**

Scripture commands us to exert effort in maintaining unity and peace with all men - especially in the church. We have been learning many tools and strategies that will help us resolve conflict for the glory of God. Now we need to commit ourselves to use them whenever there is a potential for disunity.

**IV. Three Questions for Self Evaluation**

Next Priolo gives three quick examination questions to help us determine if there is something we have done to contribute to the lack of unity and peace. There may come a time when peace just doesn't seem possible. In those situations, the following questions can help us ensure that we have taken the guidance from Romans 12:18 to heart

- a. Have I provoked my opponent to sin?

If yes, what should I do?

If not, what should I do?

- b. Have I protracted his sin by a sinful response in return?

How was my response to his/her initial sin? Did I respond in a similar sinful way?

- c. Have I prolonged the problem by not dealing with it quickly?

15. Why do we sometimes avoid dealing with conflicts quickly?

16. What could be the result of not dealing with conflicts quickly?

17. How do you know if an offense should be overlooked, or if you should approach the person to resolve a conflict?

**Summary:**

Paul is clear: "...as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all." is a very clear standard that we are to commit ourselves to uphold. We now have a few more questions to help us determine if we have met the requirement. But how do we keep up this perspective and effort long term?

**V. What about burnout?**

18. Is it possible to become weary of biblical conflict resolution? Why or why not?

19. How can we encourage one another to stay committed to this hard work of resolving conflicts God's way?

**Colossians 1:28-29**

**28 Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. 29 For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.**

20. How did Paul continue to work hard to complete his ministry calling?

21. What Scriptures or biblical truths could we remind one another of so that we diligently seek peace and unity?

Read and meditate on the truths and promises of Scriptures like Colossians 1:9-14

The person and work of Jesus Christ: Colossians 1:15-20

A reminder of our responsibility in light of these truths: Colossians 1:21-23

**Summary:**

Like in many other areas of our Christian lives we can become rundown in doing good. Daily nourishment from the Word of God, constant reliance and dependence on the power supplied by the Holy Spirit, and meditation on the love and mercy of God (as well as other attributes of God) can help us to find new energy and strength to obey his commands.