



October 26, 2014

Part Four: Fight, Flight or Fright

Introduction

Things are really heating up for Jesus in Matthew 21:12-13. The temple court is a place where people came to meet with God. In the middle of all this Jesus flips the tables! Jesus quotes Isaiah and Jeremiah, two prophets they would have known, with these words, “The Scriptures declare, ‘My Temple will be called a place of prayer,’ but you have turned it into a den of thieves!”

1. Matthew 21:12-13 describes a situation in which Jesus initiated a conflict and expressed anger. Discuss anger. What distinguishes good and justified anger from sinful anger? Where do you draw that line?
2. In interpersonal conflict, we are prone to one of three behaviors: Fight, Flight or Fright. Which are you more prone to do in the face of conflict? Why? Discuss when it may be appropriate for a Christ-follower to overlook or flee from confrontation.
3. Interpersonal conflict affects our relationship with God. How have you observed that in your own life or in the lives of others? When have you been offended? Been the offender?
4. In Matthew 18:15-20 Jesus teaches how to treat a believer who sins. David Smith defined the difference between **reconciliation** (having an issue settled, resolved, or even compromised) and **restoration** (when a relationship is repaired, renewed, returned to its original). Clarify the difference in your own words and discuss how this relates to Matthew 18:15-20. Compare and contrast the benefits of reconciliation versus restoration.
5. Review the seven questions to ask when we are in conflict (refer to the sermon notes). Why is it important to ask these questions? In Matthew 18:15-20, Jesus teaches how to respond constructively to a brother or sister who is sinning. David called this “doing the hard thing.” Why is this a “hard thing”? Why do you think God calls us to treat Christ-followers differently than those who are not?
6. What common theme is found in the seven scriptures presented in the sermon note section **I am reconciled when I...?** Do you have anything that needs to be overturned or driven out?

Conclusion

“So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

(John 13:34-35)