

Unity

Story: Oxen are yoked together to get a greater reward for their efforts. Synergy happens when something becomes greater than the sum of its parts. If one oxen can pull 500 lbs., two oxen can pull well over 1,000 lbs. This happens because they are unified in their purpose. They are pulling in the same direction at the same time, together.

Conflict happens when unity is void. It is when forces are pulling in opposite directions. This makes things impossible to move forward. Conflict is not necessarily bad if done in a loving and respectful manner. If it is handled correctly it can be very healthy. However, if handled incorrectly it will destroy! Teams and life are full of conflict. We all have different personalities, goals, and opinions. There are often many courses of actions that can get us to the same desired outcome.

Conflict is most often simply a misunderstanding. Therefore, some keys to conflict resolution are listening, clear communication of goals, and a seeking to understand.

Questions to consider:

How do you handle conflict?

What happens when issues aren't dealt with?

Have you ever had a teammate kicked off the team?

Context: Jesus had communicated his desire for people to be in a right relationship with Him. Not only is being in right relationship with God important, but it's important for us to be in right relationships with others. Conflict however arrives between us all in various degrees. All too often conflicts are not addressed or if addressed they aren't in a loving way. Jesus lays out the steps for us to deal with conflict with the ultimate goal of restoration.

Scripture: Matthew 18:15-17

1. What is the right way to deal with conflict?
2. What is the purpose for dealing with conflict?
3. How do you treat someone who refuses to listen when they are in the wrong?

Key Verse: "...If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private..." Matthew 18:15

Anchor to remember:

- Seek to understand rather than to be understood.