

Resolving Conflict in Ministry

**Module 3:
False Teachers**

Philippians 3:2-3, 15-21

*“Look out for those dogs,...
those who mutilate the flesh.”*

67

Philippians 3:2-3, 15-21 (ESV)

2 Look out for the dogs, look out for the evildoers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. 3 For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh....

15 Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. 16 Only let us hold true to what we have attained. 17 Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. 18 For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. 19 Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things. 20 But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

68

The Importance of Doctrine

- ◆ Acts 2:42 – The early church devoted itself to the apostle's doctrine.
- ◆ Ephesians 4:1-16 – Doctrine is the basis of unity and stability in the Church. (next two slides)
- ◆ 1 Timothy 3:13-16 – Doctrinal teaching must be the focus of pastoral ministry.
- ◆ 2 Timothy 4:3 – In the church of the last days, people will not tolerate strong doctrine.

69

Ephesians 4:1-16

I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all....

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry...

70

Ephesians 4:1-16 (cont.)

*...for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the **unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God**, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the **truth in love**, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.*

71

A HIERARCHY OF TRUTH

TIER #1: CREEDS – UNIVERSAL

**TIER #2: STATEMENTS OF FAITH
– DENOMINATIONAL**

**TIER #3: FORM & STRUCTURE –
ISSUES OF PREFERENCE**

72

What Doctrines Do the Creeds Teach?

In Small Groups: Review our two creeds to determine what specific doctrines they teach. What are our Tier #1 Truths?

- ◆ **Group #1: Apostles' Creed**
- ◆ **Group #2: Nicene Creed (Part A)**
- ◆ **Group #3: Nicene Creed (Part B)**
- ◆ **Report...**

73

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

74

The Nicene Creed (381; Part A)

We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, visible and invisible.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate from the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and was made man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

75

The Nicene Creed (381; Part B)

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father [and the Son],[†] who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church. We acknowledge one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

76

What Evangelical Christians Believe?

- ◆ The Trinity/Triunity of Father, Son & Spirit.
- ◆ The Full Deity & Humanity of Christ.
- ◆ The Atoning Value of Christ's Death.
- ◆ The Bodily Resurrection of Christ.
- ◆ Salvation by Faith (apart from Works of merit).
- ◆ Need for A Personal Relationship with God.
- ◆ Priesthood of Believers.
- ◆ The Second Coming of Christ.
- ◆ Inspiration and Authority of God's Word.

77

Characteristics of False Teachers

- ◆ False teachers vary on doctrines significant to salvation – e.g., Trinity, deity of Christ, salvation by grace through faith, atonement.
- ◆ They prey on the untaught and unaware.
- ◆ They focus on externals – “earthly things.”
- ◆ They use covert and secretive methods.
- ◆ They often appear harmless (moral, include some truth in their message).
- ◆ They cause divisions in the body of Christ.
- ◆ Their teaching results in damnation.

78

Warning Signs of Cults (Rose)

- ◆ A leader who claims to be divinely inspired.
- ◆ Extra-biblical revelation (written or oral) or an authoritative interpretation of the Bible.
- ◆ Rejection of other churches.
- ◆ Control over members' activities and friendships.
- ◆ Brain-washing techniques (e.g., sleep deprivation).

79

Warning Signs of Cults (Rose; cont.)

- ◆ Over-powering demonstrations of love.
- ◆ Control over finances and financial decisions.
- ◆ No personal privacy (yet private meetings).
- ◆ Leadership that will not tolerate honest questions.
 - No accountability in leadership structure.
 - No checks-and-balances.

80

Principles for a Godly Response

- ◆ Expose false teachers as enemies of Christ without hesitation or compromise.
 - *Yet, don't overstate the case – be concise.*
- ◆ Do not allow them to infiltrate the Body.
- ◆ Engage them strongly and contend for the integrity of the Gospel.
- ◆ Warn believers with the strongest words – shake them from their complacency.
- ◆ Teach strong doctrine – take the offensive.
- ◆ Challenge every believer to take responsibility for their own growth in Christ.

81

What Every Christian Should Know After Attending Church 5 Years:

- ◆ Assurance of salvation.
- ◆ Basic principles of Christian walk and worship.
- ◆ Overall scheme and story of the Bible.
- ◆ Basic doctrines of the faith – foundations.
- ◆ Principles for reading/interpreting the Bible.
- ◆ Essential purposes of our individual lives.
- ◆ Essential purposes and story of the Church.

83

What Every Christian Should Be Able to Do After Attending Church 5 Years:

- ◆ Read the Bible for themselves with profit.
- ◆ Have an effective quiet time with God.
- ◆ Lead someone to faith in Christ.
- ◆ Disciple someone in basic principles and practices of the faith.
- ◆ Use spiritual gifts in service to the Body of Christ.
- ◆ Live a holy life and be filled with the Spirit.
- ◆ Live a life of stewardship before God (3 T's).
- ◆ Apply Biblical principles to life's issues & problems.

84

What Every Christian Should Be Like After Attending Church 5 Years:

- ◆ Evidencing the Fruit of the Spirit (Gal.5:22-24; Eph.5:9 – “fruit of the light”).
- ◆ Growing in Christ-like Character (Eph.4:13; 2 Cor. 3:18).
- ◆ “Partaking of the Divine Nature” (2 Pet.1:3-11; climbing the ladder of virtue; “moral advance”)
- ◆ Demonstrating Love of God and Neighbor through Obedience, Compassion, Pursuit of Justice, and Good Works (1 Jn. 3-4)
- ◆ Summary: Being Renewed in the Image of God.

85

Questions to Ponder – 5-year plan

- ◆ What is the relationship between knowledge, skills and character?
- ◆ What can the church do to achieve these 5-year outcomes?
- ◆ What are the responsibilities of and demands upon church members in this process?
- ◆ What has happened to Catechesis?
 - Where? Home? Church? Both?
- ◆ The Anglican Way of Spiritual Formation:
Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi, Lex Vivendi

86

What May Happen

- ◆ If the Body hears you, you will save the flock from danger.
- ◆ You may save some who are tempted from being led astray.
- ◆ If any within your flock succumb, they must be exposed and disciplined.
 - To prevent the leaven from spreading.
 - To warn others who are tempted.

87

Summary and Related Scripture

- ◆ Promote the truth and expose error through strong teaching – systematic and historical.
- ◆ Take an uncompromising stand for truth – truth and error do not mix.
- ◆ Acts 20:28-31 – Instruction to Shepherds.
- ◆ Ephesians 4:11-16 – Best defense.
- ◆ 2 Peter 2 – Doomed for destruction.
- ◆ 2 John 7-11 – Don't show hospitality.

88

2 John 7-11

⁷For many deceivers have gone out into the world, those who do not confess the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. Such a one is the deceiver and the antichrist. ⁸Watch yourselves, so that you may not lose what we have worked for, but may win a full reward. ⁹Everyone who goes on ahead and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God. Whoever abides in the teaching has both the Father and the Son. ¹⁰If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching, do not receive him into your house or give him any greeting, ¹¹for whoever greets him takes part in his wicked works.

89

Conflict in the Philippian Church – Wisdom Model

Text	Philippians 1:12-18	Philippians 2:12-18	Philippians 3:2, 15-21	Philippians 4:2-3
Type of Conflict	Contentious Christians	Selfish Believers	False Teachers	Conflicting Leaders
How It's Manifested	Envy & Rivalry	Complaining & Arguing	Deception & Preying	
Godly Response	Promote Christ	Promote Servanthood	Promote Truth	
If Positive Result	Win an Enemy	Gain a Fellow Servant	Protect the Flock from Danger	
If Negative Result	Isolation Departure Discipline	Immature Ineffective Discipline	Exposure Discipline	

93

Collect for the Unity of the Church

O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace: Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions; take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

94