The Art of Confrontation

Biblically healthy confrontations are a vital part of maintaining and strengthening relationships with people. According to a Harvard Medical School study, one of the keys to effectively dealing with stress is directly confronting life’s issues.

**Question:** What do you think of when you hear the word “confrontation”?

- Anger
- Bitterness
- Lost Friendships
- Peace
- Understanding
- Repentance

**WHAT DOES THE BIBLE SAY ABOUT CONFRONTATION?**

**Matthew 5:23–24**
“Therefore if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.”

**Luke 17:3**
“If your brother sins, rebuke him and if he repents, forgive him.”

**Ephesians 4:25–27**
Therefore laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. In your anger, do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry and do not give the devil a foothold.

Foothold means “opportunity.”

**Ephesians 4:30–32**
And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

**Truth:** People feel rejected and insignificant if they are not confronted and corrected. When done in love, it ministers love and acceptance.

**PROBLEMS WITH CONFRONTATION**

1. Fear of rejection. Fear and faith cannot co-exist.

**Hebrews 11:6**
And without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who earnestly seek Him.

2. Self-doubt and insecurity.
“Well, maybe I’m too sensitive.” | “It’s probably my fault.” | “I should be loving them more.”

- This is the cornerstone thought process of every enabler of abusers and addicts.
- We may be wrong, but we have a right and need to express how we feel and if we are both honest, we will find out who is wrong.
- The way you feel is never wrong.
3. Presumption  
“They will never receive me.” | “They will never change.”
- We are not responsible for deciding how they will respond, but we are responsible to respond righteously ourselves.

4. Delay
- Confrontation must be done in a timely way (Ephesians 4:26–27).
- Results of delay: anger, gossip, abuse, unforgiveness and unrighteous thoughts
- You will find your unconfrented frustrations coming out through other means. Remember what happened when Moses struck the rock.

5. Hiding behind prayer and prophecy.
- Do not use prayer or prophecy as a spiritual cloak to hide your fear or lack of obedience.
- Prayer does not replace confrontation—it only prepares and empowers you for confrontation.

6. Using the wrong method.
- Do not wait until you are very angry and then browbeat them. It is incorrect to use indirect or direct rudeness and verbal sarcasm.

THE RIGHT METHOD
- Confront in a timely manner.
- Begin the confrontation with affirmation.
- Do not accuse until you are certain about the issue. Be sure to share your feelings and thoughts about the situation.
- Listen intently to the other person.
- Be honest and sincere.
- Use scripture as your basis of concern without Bible-beating them or dominating them with your opinions.
- Be gracious. Most people respond positively to positive confrontation.

QUESTIONS TO QUALIFY CONFRONTATION

1. What is my motivation?

**Wrong Answer**
- To make them like me.
- To get my way.
- To keep them from making me mad.
- To ventilate frustration on them that originated from somewhere else.
- To pay them back or get revenge.
- To put them under my control.
- To get out from under authority.

**Correct Answer**
- To protect them.
- To build our relationship.
- To get the whole truth.
- To prevent unrighteous thoughts and feelings.
- To glorify God.
- To obey the Scriptures and God.

2. Is this an important enough issue to confront? If you can answer yes to any of the following questions, it is important enough to confront.
- Is there a destructive sin involved?
- Will this issue affect our relationship in a negative way if I don’t confront it?
- Will I be tempted to gossip, reject them or behave unrighteously if I don’t confront them?
- Is the problem having a significantly negative effect on them?
- Is this issue affecting their witness for Christ or reputation in a significant way?
- Is this issue significantly affecting their growth as a believer?
3. Do I have a platform for confronting them?

Legitimate Platform
- Within my realm of authority.
- The relationship is strong enough to accommodate the confrontation.
- We are both Christians and go to the same church.
- God has specifically spoken to me through the Word and the Spirit to do this.

Note: If you can’t confront them or should not confront, do you have a platform with someone who can? There are some people we cannot confront.

Am I Prepared for Positive Confrontation?
- Have I prayed?
- Are my emotions under control?
- Do I see the good in this person?
- Is my purpose to win or to do God’s will?
- Have I forgiven them?
- Am I open to correction or greater enlightenment?

THE FRUITS OF CONFRONTATION
1. Peace
2. Trust
3. Fear of God
4. Accountability
5. Deeper relationships
6. Unity of the Spirit

PENALTY FOR NOT CONFRONTING
1. Anger
2. Gossip
3. Broken and strained relationships
4. Division and disloyalty
5. Satanic oppression

Who Do You Want to Be?
- A wild-eyed prophet who rebukes with fury?
- Spiritual Jello that conforms to your surroundings?
- A man or woman of God who is full of grace and truth?