**Pastor Demetric Felton Sr. December 24, 2023**

**The Gift That Keeps On Giving**

Matthew 18:15-20

**Key Truth:** In the family of God, there are going to be times when we are offended. However, Jesus wants us to deal with the offense with forgiveness and reconciliation.

**How To Resolve Conflict In The Family Of God:**

1. Be proactive and go to the person privately.

 Why? To preserve the person’s dignity and to protect

 the church’s unity.

2. Be intentional and go to the person purposefully.

 Why? The goal is restoration and reconciliation.

3. Be humble and go to the person prayerfully.

 Why? You may not have all the facts and you can’t know

 a person’s heart.

4. Be patient, it may not go how you desired.

5. It’s the responsibility of the community of faith to help

 facilitate grace, forgiveness, accountability, discipline,

 restoration, and reconciliation.

**Jesus Makes The Point With A Parable: Matthew 18:21-35**

1. Because we have been forgiven mercifully by God, we are to extend mercy by forgiving others.

2. Unforgiveness places you in a prison of your own

 making.

3. For Christians, forgiveness isn’t an option but a

 requirement. Matthew 6:14-15

**Taking It Beyond The Walls:** Thank God for sending Jesus Christ to restore our broken relationship with Him. This Christmas, give the gift of forgiveness to the person who hurt you.

**Food For Thought:**

Read Matthew 18:15-20: How many conflict situations do we discuss openly with someone not in the conflict before ever speaking to the offending spouse, friend, or fellow believer? What does this say about our motives and fears?

In contrast to speaking publicly, what benefit does a private discussion offer for both parties?

Practical steps to help you resolve conflict using the SBI Method: (by Pastor John K. Jenkins Sr. “Grace To Grow”)

Identify the *Situation*

Tell the person what they have done and how it created a problem. Focus on the *Behavior*, something that can be observed.

Simply state how the person’s behavior *Impacted* you. What were the results, and how did it make you feel?

Practical steps to help you respond when confronted with a situation using the LUVAA Method: (by Pastor Keith Battle)

*Listen* – Focus on what the person is saying.

*Understand* – Try to understand by putting yourself in the person’s shoes.

*Validate* the person and their feelings. This doesn’t mean you must agree with how they feel.

*Apologize* – Admit where you wrong and ask for forgiveness.

*Amend* sometimes an apology is not enough; sometimes we need to right a wrong in order to resolve the conflict.