

# Conflict Resolution

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 10 April 2022

[ 0 : 0 0 ] I'm very thankful for the opportunity to preach. Pastor Cornwell and Ms. Steffer should be on the way back to South Carolina, be back here soon. Basically, they're not here tonight. So we'll be in Proverbs chapter number 25.

He got the privilege to preach at a missions conference up in Pickens, South Carolina. Sounds like it went really, really well for him, so that's exciting. I think I have a, yeah, there it is. I like pictures and visual aids. But Proverbs chapter number 25, as we turn there, we're going to talk about conflict resolution.

We live in a world in which there's people and we all have different ideas and opinions and thoughts and processes and ways we like to do things. Some people put the toilet paper roll facing out. Some people put the toilet paper roll facing in, you know, or some people went on one sock at a time and then their shoes.

Or some people went on both socks and their shoes, whatever it may be. We live in a world in which people do stuff differently. There's conflict. We butt heads from time to time. Even believers do. We're going to talk about conflict resolution, ways that the Bible gives us advice on how we should crush conflict in a Christ-like manner.

So let's go ahead and dive in here. I will open up in a word of prayer. Lord, thank you for this day. Thank you for the opportunity to preach, Lord. Thank you for your word and how it works. Thank you for the power that it bears, Lord. I pray that you work in our hearts.

[ 1 : 1 2 ] Lord, I pray that you'd help us seek peace in our relationships. God, I pray that you'd help us seek peace in all that we do. Help us do all that we do for your honor and for your glory, Lord. I pray for tonight. I pray for the quarrels as they drive back, Lord.

Keep them safe. Thank you for how you move, work, and operate, Lord. In the name I pray. Amen. Proverbs chapter number 25. Just a reminder. Proverb. It's a book of the Bible, as you probably know that.

But a proverb is a general principle that, when generally applied, brings generally a good result. So that's what a proverb is. Proverbs are not promises. Like, you know, if you love your parents, your days will be long.

Well, car wreck might change that. You know, anything like that. But when applied, it generally has a good result. That's what I'm saying. So this proverb, Proverbs 25, is full of great wisdom, great truth, great principles.

And I love it. We'll start in verse 1. These are also proverbs of Solomon, which the men of Hezekiah, king of Judah, copied out. First thing we want to look at, this is a proverb penned by King Solomon, then procured by King Hezekiah, but ultimately is preserved by God.

[ 2 : 1 0 ] So that's a really cool thing. King Solomon wrote it. King Hezekiah applied it, copied it, wrote it in his book. And ultimately, God's allowed it to be in our Bible today. That's a really neat fact. It is the glory of God to conceal a thing, but the honor of a king is to search out a matter.

How neat is that? It is the glory of God to hide something, right? Because God is so big, it's hard for him to hide something. He's so big and so marvelous, it's hard for his glory not to be revealed. But it's the honor of a king to blow something up.

It's pretty neat how the, almost the paradox there. Verse number 3. The heaven for height, the earth is for depth, and the heart of kings is unsearchable. Take away the dross from the silver, and there shall come forth the vessel for the finer.

Take away the wicked from before the king, and his throne shall be established in righteousness. Who you associate with has a big impact on who you'll be and how you work and the sins you make. It's pretty neat.

Verse number 6. Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men. For better is it that it be said unto thee, Come up hither, than that thou shouldest be put in lower presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen.

[ 3 : 14 ] Go not forth hastily to strive, lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof, when thy neighbor hath put thee to shame. Over and over and over in this proverb, there's ways of handling conflict.

We see conflict resolution, conflict resolution. Look at verse number 8. Go not forth hastily to strive. Let's look at verse number 9. Debate thy cause with thy neighbor himself. Verse number 10. Same sentence there.

Let's look at verse number 16. Or verse number 17. Withdraw thy foot from thy neighbor's house, lest he be wary of thee. He got tired of his neighbor. We look at verse number 21. How to treat your enemy. Verse number 28.

How to deal with conflict internally. See, this proverb is full of ways in which we deal with conflict, which is real neat. We as Christians, we are people who hate division, love, peace.

That's inherently biblical. But the only issue is sometimes it's hard, right? I don't know about you, but I've woke up, read my Bible before, and I said, I'm going to be blessed to the peacemakers, right? You leave, you're ready to do right, to be as Christ-like as possible.

[ 4 : 14 ] Then you hit 285 traffic, and that goes all out the window, right? It takes like 15 minutes. You're like, oh, man, I've got to start over. Well, the Bible's full of passages like Romans 14, 9. Let us therefore follow after the things which make peace.

And the things we're with, one may edify another. We follow things that make peace. Or we'll read Hebrews 12, 14. Follow peace with all men. Matthew 5, 9. Blessed are the peacemakers. We love peace.

But sometimes it's really hard to have it. I don't know about you all, but sometimes it's really difficult. We all know that we seek peace, but we all have that hard conflict, right? You know, that guy. Or, oh, man, it's hurt.

Or some road rage. Or at least that's for me. Road rage happens. Or did they really just say that? Did they really just do that? Are you serious right now? Did they just did that? Did they just e-mail me this?

Are you for real like, really? You know, whatever it may be, conflict's inevitable, right? We seek peace, but sometimes it's difficult. And conflict resolution is a really big deal in our lives because ultimately the way we find peace is based on how we resolve conflicts.

[ 5 : 13 ] There's a really Christian way to resolve conflicts. There's a really Bible way. There's also really carnal ways to resolve conflict. And this proverb gives us great truth on how we should do that. Or maybe you find yourself in conflict.

Like, you're like, yeah, Greg, I know I got a beef with somebody. I'm trying to fix it. It's just really hard. I'm looking for a way to end it. You just don't know what to say. Or maybe this is really difficult when every time you try to end the conflict, you just find no headway.

That's okay. Proverbs 25 is full of great principles. Providing peace in problematic problems. Personal problems. Whatever it may be. This is really neat. Let's look at this proverb here.

Aren't you happy we serve the God of peace? I love this so much. You know, in Judges 6, verse 24, they give God a title called Jehovah Shalom, the God of peace. You know, God is not a God who likes conflict per se.

He's not a God who likes war. He's not a God who likes chaos and animosity and division. Actually, he's a God of peace. It's nice when brethren dwell together in unity. God likes peace.

[ 6 : 12 ] You know, in Isaiah chapter 9, verse 6, it's actually a title given to Jesus. He's called the wonderful counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting father, and the prince of, what's that last word? Prince of peace.

God is serious about his peace. And as his children, we should be serious about our peace as well. One, peace with all men. Two, peace with God Almighty. And then three, with peace within.

We should be people of peace. Our God is a God of peace. We should want what he wants. We can have peace in our relationships. You can leave here with principles that help you have peace in your relationships. And I think it goes so far because everything we do in society's relationships, whether it be a colleague at work, an acquaintance, somebody you just wave at on the way to work, or a friend, a relationship, your husband, wife, mother, father, whatever it may be.

Everything we do is relational. And this proverb offers such wonderful truth about how we can have peace within our relationships. First things. First look at verse number 8, Proverbs 25.8. Go not forth hastily to strive.

Now, patience is really important in conflict. And anything I say tonight, I'm going to try to back up with the verse because as I was studying this, I was like, ouch, that one hurt, that one hurt, that one hurt there. I can do this one better.

[ 7 : 20 ] This proverb lit me up, and I love getting to go through it. Proverbs 25.8. Go not forth hastily to strive. Basically, patience is important. Don't blow up.

That's a really good concept when it comes to making peace. Don't go looking for a fight. Don't rush into conflict. Don't lose your cool. Right? Don't jump to conclusions. Don't assume the worst.

Hear the whole story. Do not go forth hastily to strive. Proverbs 25.8. We should learn to mull it over. We should think first. Hear it. Rationalize. Pray. Process. But we shouldn't go forth hastily to strive.

Lest thou know not what to do in the end thereof. It's kind of like you jump into something and you don't know how it's going to go. Lest we jump into something we don't know. We should think first. Many good people in the scriptures have gotten themselves into more trouble, rushing in hastily than they have when they stopped and processed something.

I want to remind you of Moses when he lost his temper and he struck a rock and literally was not allowed to go into the promised land because he blew his cool, hit the rock, as opposed to speaking to it like God has said do. Or when David almost killed a man after he blew up because this man said something to him in a really sideways way.

[ 8 : 27 ] David didn't like it. Almost went into like a war trail and really embarrassed himself. Had to have Abigail come out and settle the conflict. Or you remember when David was quick to issue judgment when Nathan came and told him a story and David said, well, he should be dead.

And Nathan's like, that's you, buddy. That happened. People get themselves into more trouble when we rush into things, when we're hasty, when we jump to conclusions, when we jump to conflict. Hear the whole story.

There's often times, at least for me, I've heard half of something and I get really, really upset. And then we don't even know the whole story. And then we hear the thing like, oh man, now I'm embarrassed. Well, you should hear the whole story.

Don't be quick to rush into conflict. And we have to control our temper. I'm not saying anger is wrong either, but there's biblical anger. Look what the Bible says in Ephesians 4, 26.

Be ye angry and sin not. Let not the sun go down in your wrath. I remind you, Jesus Christ our Lord was also angry. He got angry at sin. He was grieved at the hard heart of the Pharisees. There are instances in Scripture when Jesus was angry.

[ 9 : 23 ] But his anger was always righteous. It was always directed at sin, not the sinner. It was always done just right. It was perfect. And the Bible says, be angry and sin not. There is a biblical anger. But if I can remind you of something, blowing up, losing your temper, losing your cool, that is not a biblical anger.

That is not the anger we're commanded to have. A blown temper and an unbridled anger are not conducive to peacemaking. If you want to make peace, going in, guns blazing, super mad is not the way to do it.

A level head. Think it through. Mull it over. Maybe you should not send that email right then and there. Let that thing rest on your lunch break and come back to it. Maybe you should delete that text message and come back and retype it.

I mean, in our lives, it looks different. Maybe you shouldn't say what you're thinking and wait until after that meeting to pitch in that opinion. It looks different for all of us, but being hasty is not the way to go there.

Maybe you should hear the whole story of that person before we jump to conclusions on what we're going to do in this situation. We should be slow to make the conclusion. Process. Listen. Let me give you some more Scripture about what the Bible says about that.

[ 10 : 22 ] Proverbs 14, 17. He that is soon angry dealeth foolishly. To jump to conclusions really quick, to get mad really fast, the Bible says is foolish.

It's not a good idea. Blowing up is foolish. Proverbs 15, 18. A wrathful man stireth up strife, but he that is slow to anger appeaseth strife. Did you know that even being slow to get mad can settle a lot of your conflict before it happens?

You guys ever been in a situation in which something happens, you say something and the situation is way worse than it was before it started? If we're slow to strife, slow to anger, it can even appease strife.

Proverbs 18, 30. He that answereth the matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him. That one's pretty point blank. Answering something before you know the whole story can be folly and shame.

It can make you look real, real bad. Proverbs 29, 20. See, it's thou man that is hastening his words. There is more hope of a fool than him. People who are quick to issue judgment and jump to conclusions and jump to condemnation or jump to fight, there's more hope of a foolish person in life than there is for this person.

[ 11 : 25 ] James 119. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath. There is a way in which we are supposed to conduct ourselves, and blowing up, losing our temper is not conducive to that.

That is not the way we're supposed to. Chill out. Take a breath. Pray. Go to the Lord. Slow down. Remove yourself. Come back to it later. Go to bed. Whatever it may be.

But jumping in with your temper blown is a really bad way to settle personal conflict, according to this proverb. Pray. Process. Be patient before we engage into this conflict.

It's very important to find a peace that we do. Not just that. Conflict should be kept private. Listen to what this proverb says. Proverbs 25, verse 9. Debate thy cause in the neighbor himself, and discover not a secret to another, lest he heareth it put thee to shame, and thine infamy turn out away.

Conflict is best handled directly. We live in a generation in which it's so quick to air things out on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook. I don't even know what the new social media is. There's like a new one every few weeks.

[ 12 : 25 ] But we're really quick to air things out. That's not the way conflict is to be handled. It should be handled privately, with the person. Conflict is best handled directly, according to this verse. It should be handled face-to-face.

Passive-aggressive or indirect or non-direct is a very poor way to handle conflict. In regards to an issue with the circle of knowledge, it should only be as big as the circle of need. Debate thy cause with thy neighbor himself.

That person, you and the individual, not through another person, not around the person, not behind their back, but with thy neighbor himself. It saves time in the end.

It leads to the settlement of the issue. It leads to the saving of the relationship. It should be done with the person himself and discover not a secret to another. Keep it personal.

Keep it between you and the person. Jesus even explains that conflict is best handled person-to-person. Matthew 18, 15. Moreover, if thy brother or child trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault.

[ 13 : 24 ] Let's see what the Bible says. Between thee and him alone. Between you and the individual. Not in a group setting. Not online. Not whatever. Don't carbon copy someone in that email.

Between you and the individual. You and the person should handle it together. According to this proverb, that's the best way conflict is to be handled there. Don't air it out. Maybe we shouldn't talk about that behind that person's back.

Maybe we shouldn't share that with somebody. Maybe we should just handle it between us and the individual. Maybe that's more conducive to peace. More scripts would even say, Proverbs 17, 9. He that covereth the transgression seeketh love.

But he that repeateth the matter separateth very friends. You want to save your relationship? You want to save your friendship? Stop talking about it. Go talk to the person. You and the individual together are coming to conclusions there.

Not around the person's back. Proverbs 10, 12. Hatred stirreth up strife, but love covereth all sins. If you love a person, you're going to go talk to the person. You want to keep the conflict between you and the individual.

[ 14 : 24 ] Proverbs are full of a bunch of excellent wisdom, and this here seems to be more relevant in our day than anything. So many relationships can be salvaged or saved or friendships and problems avoided if we would just go to that person and talk, right?

How many times we've just left something on the table that we knew needed to be addressed and we just walk away from it and it hurts us more in the end? How many times do we talk around a person and the news gets all befuddled in the game of telephone and it never really gets to the person and by the time they hear it, it's way worse?

Just go directly to the person. It's much easier. Face-to-face, person-to-person, personally, and in secret. We don't air out things. We talk to the people directly, according to this proverb, with thy neighbor himself.

Not about them, but to them. So many problems could be avoided if we would just talk to people directly. That's what our Lord Jesus advises us to do. Not only should we keep it private, not only should we process things, we should also speak precariously.

Let's look at what the Bible says. Proverbs 25, verse 11, as you go through this, A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a pitcher of silver, as an earring of gold, as an ornament of fine gold, so a wise reprove upon an obedient ear.

[ 15 : 31 ] As a cold snow of harvest is in the time of, as a cold snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him, for he refresheth the soul of his masters. A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a pitcher of silver.

A word fitly spoken. Spoken just right. Spoken carefully, cautiously, thought out, methodical, placed there with care. That's how we're supposed to speak. We need to know the power of our words.

In our mouths, there really is life and death. As we read this proverb, let's skip down to 25, 18. A man that beareth false witness against his neighbor is a maul and a sword and a sharp arrow.

You know your mouth can really get somebody hurt real bad, emotionally and or physically. And then not just that, it is a weapon. It is like a maul. That's a battle axe, come to find out.

It's like a sword and a sharp arrow. I think that goes to describe what we say really can hurt people. Bible says this in Proverbs 8 to 21, death and life are in the power of the tongue. And they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.

[ 16 : 30 ] We can speak death into people's lives. We can speak life into people's lives. What we say really matters. A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold. Perfect.

Just right. Helps. But a word unfitly spoken can be very, very destructive. Death and life are in your tongue. We need to learn to speak precariously. The tongue can heal. It can be a weapon.

Actually, how we speak can settle the conflict entirely. Proverbs 15, 23. A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth. A word spoken to your season, how good is it? If we say the right thing at the right time, it might settle the conflict totally.

But on the other hand, saying the wrong thing at the wrong time might go put kerosene in the fire. It might make it worse. Let's pray for the right words. Lord, I pray that you would keep my mouth.

There's psalms all about how we speak. Maybe we should think about what we say. Maybe we should pray to speak the right words. Words that would administer life. Not words that would hurt. Not words that would tear down. Words that would help the person.

[ 17 : 28 ] Speak that which edifies. Speak that which builds up. We don't speak to tear down. That's what the world does. The world always wants to tear down. Believers, we build up. We admonish. We edify. We help.

We apply the word of God. We teach the word of God. We speak like Christ spoke. We don't tear down. Not just that. We should also have the person's benefit in our mind.

We don't speak just to win. Or just to settle the debate. Or just to settle the argument. Proverbs 25, 21. If not an enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat. And if he be thirsty, give him water to drink.

If your enemy is in a bad spot, help him out. And for thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee. How neat is that? If you want to make your enemy feel worse, do something good for them. According to this proverb.

But not just that. The Lord shall reward thee. But in all seriousness, we should be looking for the person's benefit. As believers, we just don't seek to win arguments to win arguments. We're not just in it so we can say, I won. Battle's over.

[ 18 : 24 ] I got my way. They got the highway. We should seek their best. We should love them. We should serve them. We should look to help them. We should look to come to a conclusion that helps both people. That helps them.

Jesus even said in Matthew 5, 544. But I say unto you, love your enemies. Bless them which curse you. Do good to them that hate you. Pray for them which despitefully use you. And persecute you.

Which is so contrary to what the flesh says do. Right? No, no, no. You don't understand. They hurt me. You don't understand. They said this. No, no, no. You don't get it. They cut me off. They said this about me.

They did this thing. This happened between us. Jesus says, love that person. Bless that person. Do good to that person. Pray for that person. That's what the Lord says do.

It's countercultural. It's not what the world says do. But biblically, that's what we ought to do. We seek that person's best. If our enemy's hurt, we help our enemy. If our enemy's in a bad spot, we help our enemy.

[ 19 : 20 ] We bless those that curse us. That's what the Bible's instructing us. That's what Jesus said do. That's what made him so different. When he hung on the cross of wood, do you know what he said? He didn't curse them. He didn't revile them.

He didn't hate them. The Bible says, actually, in 1 Peter, that no corrupt word was found in his mouth. He said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. He was worried about his mother. Jesus never said one bad word while he was on that cross.

Yet how often do we, something happens, next thing you know, we blah, blah, blah, blah, blah, and we hurt the person or we spit off on the person. We say something that just cuts the person down. Our Lord and Savior, that's not how he worked.

That's not how he operated. He spoke words that blessed his enemies. He served his enemies. If I can remind you, that was us. We at one time were enemies of God, yet he still served us and we didn't deserve it.

And if he can do that for us in our fallen, depraved state, how much more can we do it for our fellow man, our coworker, our colleague, our friend, whatever it may be? We don't just win.

[ 20 : 19 ] We just don't have conflict with conflict. We do it for the person's benefit, for the person to help the person. We seek their best interest because ultimately the world is always looking to tear down other people. That's not how we work, though, right?

It's easy to say, they hurt me so bad. They did this, but they have to. They just don't deserve my mercy. Friend, we don't deserve, we didn't deserve God's mercy. Eddie was so merciful.

Romans 5, 8, but God committed his love toward us and that while we were good people, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Not while we were seeking him, not while we were wanting a relationship with him, not while we were looking for reconciliation, not while we were doing anything.

He died for us while we were enemies, while we were shaking our fists in God. As the Bible didn't even say we were aliens. We were separated. We weren't even looking for him. By Romans 1, Romans 1, verse 2 just shows how bad we were. He loved us in that mess.

And he died for us. And he sacrificed for us. So how much more would it be? Hey, that person's mad at you? Hey, I got you a cup of coffee. I was just thinking about you. Hey, I just wanted to give you some kind words.

[ 21 : 19 ] Good job on this. Hey, I just wanted to let you know you did great on this. Hey, is there anything I can do for you? Can I pray for you? How can I help you with this? There's some real practical ways we can serve our enemies. Hey, I noticed this was going on. Can I help you with this?

Or do you need anything? Or hey, maybe we can get a bite to eat after work. Whatever it may be. Let's learn to love our enemies. That's what our God did. Ephesians 4, 32. And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another.

For even as God, for Christ's sake, hath forgiven you. If I transgress God and he forgave me, if somebody cuts me off in traffic, oh, how much sooner I should be able to forgive them?

Or if somebody does me wrong, I should be able to forgive them. If somebody transgresses me, I should be able to forgive them. Because when I transgress against the God Almighty, he forgave me. That is incredible.

Because God loved and served us, we can love and serve our enemies. Our peace with people stems from the provision made in Jesus. Our peace with people stems from what Jesus Christ did in that cross.

[ 22 : 16 ] If you're looking for conflict resolution in your own power, you're not going to find it because the spirit may be willing, but your flesh is weak. You may be trying to do it in your own power, but it's not going to work. I recommend the scriptures.

I recommend just hanging even close to Jesus because the closer we get to him, we'll become like that which we idolize, we'll become like that which we worship. When we worship Jesus, we'll start to be more like him. We get in his word, we'll start to be more like him.

We'll start to respond like he will. We get in his word more, maybe the first thing that comes out of our mouth will be a Bible verse as opposed to a rebuke. I want to be like Jesus in conflict. I want to seek the person's best.

Because God forgave me, I sure can forgive this other person. I sure can let go of it. I can get over myself because God stepped out of heaven to get wicked old Greg who didn't want anything to do with him and to save him.

He did the same thing for you. If he can step out of heaven, we can step out of our comfort zone, that awkward feeling, that whatever it may be, our anger, bitterness, frustration, and go embrace that person, forgive that person, seek restoration with that person, mend that relationship with that person.

[ 23 : 17 ] Because that's what God did. And ultimately, it can help and lead to peace. Romans 12, 21, You know, we don't fight fire with fire.

That's not how you win. Ultimately, you overcome evil with good. When you serve and love that person, it's really hard for them not to like you come to find out. It's really hard to dislike somebody who wants your best.

It's really hard to hate somebody who's serving you. Ultimately, we overcome evil with good. You're in conflict. You're in beef. You're having an issue with somebody. Serve them. Ultimately, that can lead to the best result there.

I love this proverb so much. We look for the person's benefit. We speak precariously. We watch what we say. Not just that. We handle it person to person. We keep it private. And we also have to have patience with the person.

We just don't blow up. We go directly to the person. But not just that. We also need to learn to find peace personally within ourselves. Because ultimately, all that we want to do is going to start right here in our hearts.



[ 24 : 18 ] Let's keep reading here. If an enemy be hungry, give him bread to eat. And if he be thirsty, give him water to drink. Thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head, and the Lord shall reward thee. Let's keep reading. Let's keep reading verse number 24.

It's better to do well in the corner of the housetop than with a brawling woman in a white house. It's better to do right. Nobody really noticed. And be wrong. And have a really nice thing. And have a bunch of inner turmoil. As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country.

This is a side note, but what a missions verse right there. As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country. Amen. That's missions conference worthy. As a righteous man falling down before the wicked is a troubled fountain and a corrupt spring.

It is not good to eat much honey. For men to search their own glory is not glory. Verse 28. He that hath no rule over his own spirit is like a city that is broken down and without walls.

Ultimately, all the conflict resolution. Speaking patiently. Speaking tactfully. Speaking precariously. Looking for the person's best interest. Speaking to the person, person to person. All that's going to start within your heart.

[ 25 : 20 ] All that's going to start inside. And if we just blow our stack, we have no control over our own spirit. It's like it says you're like a city with its walls torn down. You realize you're vulnerable. One, it sets us up to do more wrong when we don't have our spirit under control.

I got mad, so I did this, this, this, this, this, and this. That's not how that works. It doesn't help you. A prime example. You guys remember Mike Tyson back in the 90s?

He was crazy. Old Iron Mike. Like, I mean, you go back and watch fight videos of this guy. He was, I mean, I would not, I wouldn't even walk on the same street as Mike Tyson back then. He was, I mean, he was like the one hitter quitter, Mike Tyson. Well, Mike Tyson, they said he was the best boxer in the world.

You guys remember that? People said he was incredible, the best boxer. Nobody could stop him. Mr. Tyson had anger issues. You remember, Mr. Tyson lived in a \$4.5 million home. Mr. Tyson had a nice iron driver, had a nice iron putter, baseball bat, stuff like that.

Mr. Tyson sometimes would hear some bad news. Mike Tyson, if you're watching this, I'm sorry. He'd hear some bad news. And what he would do is he would take a baseball bat and he'd go smash up his house, smash up his things, scare his family, scare his kids.

[ 26 : 23 ] They'd leave and he just destroyed a bunch of money, right? He'd go smash his car. He'd go kick stuff, which is great if you're a boxer. Good for you if you're a boxer. Yeah, go hit that guy. But in real life, that's not how that works.

You just don't get to do that. And Mike Tyson, though, he was the strongest man physically. I'd call that rather weak spiritually and emotionally. He couldn't control his own spirit. It ultimately resulted in him losing most of his career, most of his wealth, because he couldn't control himself.

And that's a big example that we could see publicly, but privately. Secondly, how many times have we blown up, lost our cool, and then a relationship suffers because we said, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, and cut that person down, shut that door, burn that door.

Or how many times have we lost our cool and it leads us to doing further wrong? How many times have we gotten sad because of a conflict and it leads us to this, this, this, and this? Whatever it may be, we've got to have rule of our own spirit.

Tonight is like a city with broken down walls. You have no defense. You open yourself up for more. And the opposite of that is to have rule over your own spirit is like a city with walls.

[ 27 : 27 ] But that preparation starts before the conflict. Does that make sense? The preparation starts before the battle happens. The moment of is a really bad time to do something. Preparation is the best way. And that preparation comes from God's word.

A proverb today really is a good thing. Getting that in your heart, storing it there, digging it, digging a well for later use. Why would we want to carry bottles of water where we can go straight to the well of water?

That's what I want to do. We should be prepared for it. Control our own spirit. Finding and ending conflict ultimately starts with us. It doesn't start with the other person. It doesn't start with the other individual.

It doesn't start with them coming to you first. It doesn't start with them apologizing or being sad. It starts with us. It's a heart matter. And how we deal with conflict is a heart matter. Do we want that person's best?

Do we want God to be glorified? Do I want to restore this relationship? Do I want this person to be edified and helped? Do I really care about it? It's a heart matter. A lack of resolution inwardly will lead to a lack of resolution within the problems outwardly.

[ 28 : 28 ] If we don't have resolution, composure, or our relationship with Christ, walking with him in his word, relationships will suffer, conflict will occur, things will continue to be bad. We can do more.

We can do none of the other principles found in this proverb for peace without first purposing to do so. It starts before the battle. Who you are in the heat comes out with, or who you are in the heat will be made with who you are when it's cool, right?

You want to know what's in a container? Shake it up a little bit. And what I'm saying is what we put in will be what we get out when the conflict starts. And how many times have we gone out with the heart not full of God's truth, and something happens, and the first response we have is just the wrong one, because we didn't prepare before the battle.

We should take time to prepare, to pray, to meditate, to fill our hearts and minds with God's word before the conflict. We must place these principles in our heart.

The time to prepare is before the battle. Maybe there's an enemy you should start praying for tonight. Maybe there's a conflict that you know is coming, or that you're a little worried about. Maybe, like Jesus said, I'm going to start praying for that person.

[ 29 : 33 ] I'm going to start putting that person forth. I'm going to do something nice for this person. I'm going to say some kind words to this person. I'm going to love this person, even though they are the worst. I'm going to keep loving them. I'm going to serve that person. I'm going to be there for that person, be there to help that person.

That starts before the fact. We have the purpose to do so. You know what? I'm going to let this thing go. I'm going to go mull this over. You know, it's just spilt milk. It's whatever. I'm going to serve this person.

I'm going to be better for this person. Maybe there's that friendship, or that relationship, or that issue, or that family member, or that friend, or that whatever that's hurt you real bad.

You haven't talked to them in years, and the relationship is really strained. Maybe it's time to go seek some reconciliation with that person. Maybe it's time you pray for that person. Begin to look for that person.

Begin to want to help that person. Maybe somebody hurt you really, really bad, and you don't know what to do. I recommend we start praying for them. Maybe there's a conflict, or some bitterness, or some issue, or beef that you've held on to for so long, it doesn't even matter anymore.

[ 30 : 34 ] You don't even know why you're mad anymore, but you still don't like that person. Maybe it's time to let that go. Maybe it's time to move on. Maybe it's time to sit down and talk to that person. Maybe it's time to find them face-to-face.

Whatever it may be, it all starts with purposing in our hearts. Maybe there is, whatever it may be, somebody's hurt you. It's time to seek reconciliation. But it all starts within our hearts.

And that's where everything else is going to come from. The principles we learned today, you can't do them without having the heart to do so. That all starts before the conflict. It's what we put in. It's what we bring in.

It's what we're reading. It's what we're studying. It's what we're soaking in. Because ultimately, that'll come out. I pray that 2 Thessalonians 3.16, as the scripture reads this, Now the Lord of Peace himself give you peace always by all means.

The Lord be with you all. I think tonight we should pray that over our relationships, over ourselves, over each other, over our friends. Because the God of Peace, Jehovah Shalom, Prince of Peace, he himself is with us.

[ 31 : 34 ] The Lord's with us. But we should pray that he gives us peace in our relationships, with each other, with our friends, with those we have issues with. I'm going to pray that he gives me some peace.

I'm going to ask him for peace. After I pray, there's issues and things like that. Let's go look for some restoration, for some reconciliation, for some relationships to be restored. Proverbs, this proverb is a great proverb full of truth, full of goodness.

Conflict is inevitable. But who we are in conflict, that is totally up to us. Are we going to be the carnal person that responds out of anger and spite, to tear the person down publicly, just to win with our foot in their chest?

Are we going to be the Christian who cares, is concerned with the person, wants their best interest, speaks words that are edifying to the person, is wanting to please God in the conflict? Because there's two different ways.

This proverb offers so much good wisdom on how we are to handle that. As musicians come forward, we'll go to the Lord in a word of prayer here. Let's spend the next couple minutes, let's pray for that person.

[ 32 : 36 ] Let's pray for that relationship. Let's pray for that friendship.