

*Embracing  
Conflict*

*...Tools to Survive and Thrive*

Mt. Vernon Christian Church  
Sept.-Nov., 2015



# Embracing Conflict

*...Tools to Survive and Thrive*

## HAVE YOU MET CONFLICT LATELY?

*<sup>14</sup> For he himself [Christ Jesus] is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, <sup>15</sup> by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, <sup>16</sup> and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. <sup>17</sup> He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. <sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.*

*Ephesians 2:14-18 (NIV 1984)*



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## HAVE YOU MET CONFLICT LATELY?

Conflict impacts us all.

- Conflict can grab us, whether we want it to or not.
- Conflict often brings all kinds of emotions with it.
- Each person responds differently to conflict.
- Conflict often leads to questions.
- It may also lead to new relationships (and loss of old ones).
  - Sometimes we just hope to survive.
  - In conflict we often engage with God anew.
  - **God redeems conflict; he uses it for a purpose.**



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Here's the *key motivation and strategy* for this series:



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- **Begin with a Biblical principle**



# Embracing Conflict

## *...Tools to Survive and Thrive*

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- Begin with a Biblical principle
- Express this principle in a practical tool



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  - **That equips us to respond to conflict**



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  - That equips us to respond to conflict
  - **In a healthy, wise, God-honoring way**



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  - **Empowering us and others to survive and thrive**



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  - Empowering us and others to survive and thrive
    - **So as to partner with God to fulfill his purposes.**



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  - Empowering us and others to survive and thrive
    - So as to partner with God to fulfill his purposes.



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# CHOOSE YOUR RESPONSE WISELY

*<sup>1</sup> If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose.*

*<sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup> Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: ...*

Philippians 2:1-5 (NIV 1984)



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- Express this principle in a practical tool



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## CHOOSE YOUR RESPONSE WISELY

### A Backdrop

- Imagine a situation of conflict (or potential conflict).
- You have some interests; I have some interests.
- These interests are clearly different.

### Two Pivotal Questions

- How much energy do I give to meeting my interests?
- How much energy do I give to meeting your interests?
- The answers result in five possible responses.
- It's important to choose your response wisely.

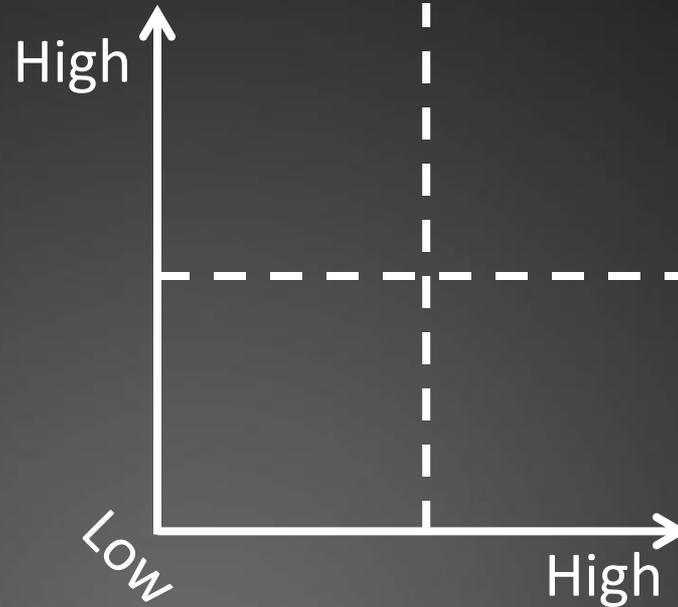


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## CHOOSE YOUR RESPONSE WISELY

Avoid  
Polarities



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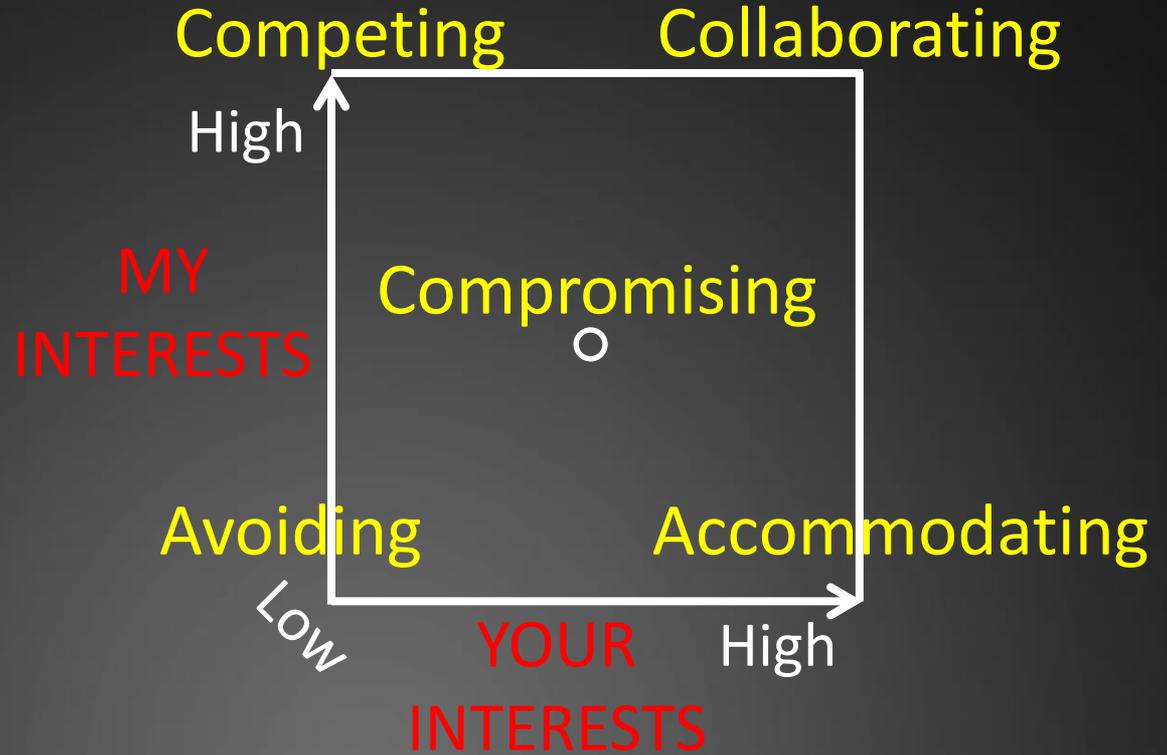
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How much energy  
do I give to meeting

**YOUR INTERESTS?**

How much energy  
do I give to meeting

**MY INTERESTS?**



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**CHOOSE YOUR RESPONSE WISELY**

Practical Tool:

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

<https://www.cpp.com/products/tki/index.aspx>



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