



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: Good and Beautiful and Kind: Clash and Chill

Speaker: Matt Manno, Pastor of NextGen Ministries

Scripture: Galatians 2:11-16

¹¹ When Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned. ¹² For before certain men came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles. But when they arrived, he began to draw back and separate himself from the Gentiles because he was afraid of those who belonged to the circumcision group. ¹³ The other Jews joined him in his hypocrisy, so that by their hypocrisy even Barnabas was led astray.

¹⁴ When I saw that they were not acting in line with the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas in front of them all, "You are a Jew, yet you live like a Gentile and not like a Jew. How is it, then, that you force Gentiles to follow Jewish customs?"

¹⁵ "We who are Jews by birth and not sinful Gentiles ¹⁶ know that a person is not justified by the works of the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in^[d] Christ and not by the works of the law, because by the works of the law no one will be justified. (NIV)

Sermon Outline:

Conflict is uncomfortable yet we deal with this all the time. Conflict can be something help build bridges towards one another not put up barriers between us.

For some of us, conflict can feel like we are being attacked, while for others it is a time for them to attack someone else and lastly there are those who do everything they can to avoid conflict in order to keep the peace.

Conflict is difficult. It is not bad or ugly and not the marker of a bad relationship, but part of the human experience.

The people that you have the most conflict with are usually those who are closest to you.

Conflict: a serious disagreement around a meaningful situation.

We find conflict in the Bible repeatedly – between families, religious leaders, the Disciples and many others throughout the scriptures. In today's scripture we see Paul writing about a time when he had to confront Peter. Paul is outlining for us what is happening in this situation. He is able to communicate his values in his conversation with Peter, getting underneath his feelings and expressing them in a healthy way.

Conflict Requires Confrontation.

When done the right way, conflict requires a face-to-face conversation.

Conflict Requires Healthy Speaking

Many of us use dirty fighting tactics (sarcasm, passive/aggressive behavior) instead of using a clean fighting approach to conflict.

Conflict Requires Careful Listening

One of the best ways to love someone is to learn how to listen well. Humility is the key that helps us become open to consider what we might not see about ourselves.

The invitation for us today is to have courageous conversations with one another. By the power of the Holy Spirit, we can do this uncomfortable thing. When conflict is done well it takes hard and holy work, which helps us live in reality.

Our church is better when we confront one another in love and enter conflict well.

Sermon Summary:

This Sunday, Matt Manno, Pastor of NextGen Ministries, continues our series entitled *Good and Beautiful and Kind*. Today Pastor Matt explores what it looks like to have healthy conflict that connects us to people in meaningful ways and deepens our life with God.

Sermon Questions:

1. Do you feel an invitation from Christ in today's scripture passage? Do any of the words resonate with you? If so, why?
2. In our passage we see Paul confronting Peter about his actions. What stands out to you about the way Paul and Peter respond to conflict in this passage? Note the contrast between Paul being direct and addressing Peter versus Peter changing his actions to avoid conflict or disapproval.
3. When you experience conflict, how do you show up? Where do you go in conflict? Do you close in on yourself and get quiet, do you cancel others out or do you triangulate looking to include another person into your conflict? Can you give an example of a way you dealt with a recent conflict?
4. How can we cultivate a spirit of humility and forgiveness in the midst of conflict? What practical steps can you take to approach conflict with grace and compassion rather than defensiveness or hostility?
5. Where do you sense God is inviting you to grow in the way you address conflict in your life? Do you need to begin having face-to-face conversations instead of using social media to address conflicts? Do you need to stop using dirty fighting tactics and learn clean fighting language? Do you need humble yourself, taking time to listen well to those you are in conflict with?