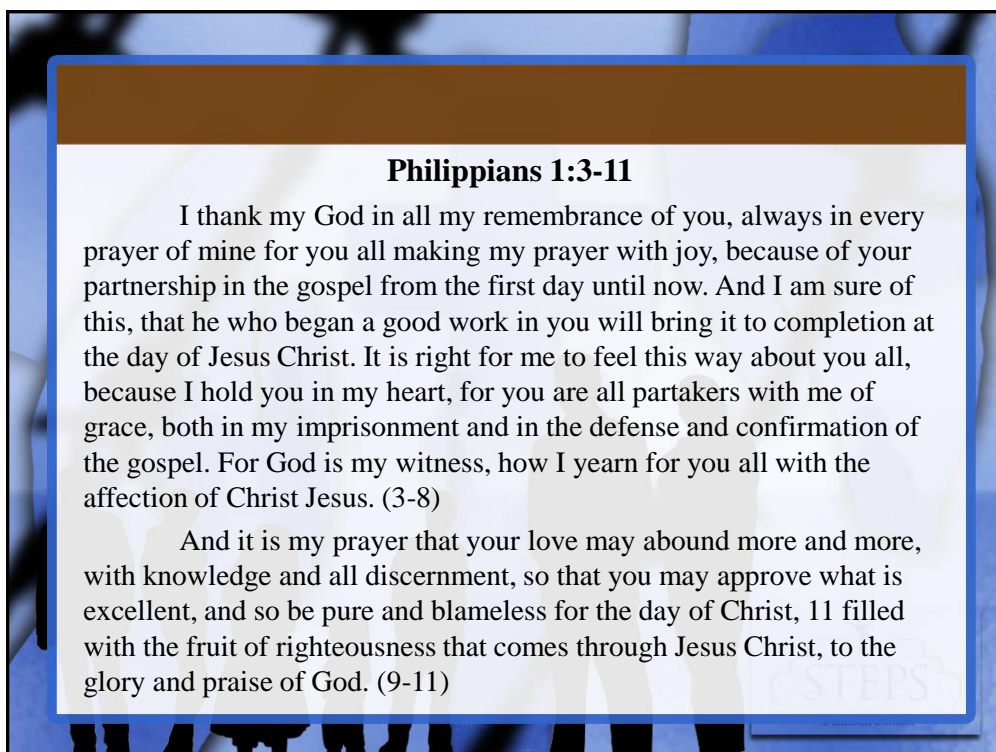


1



2

Why Conflict in Ministry?

- ◆ *Ministries are composed of sinners.*
- ◆ *Ministries are led by sinners.*
- ◆ *The dual mission of ministry is ...*
 - *Reaching sinners lost in a rebellious world*
 - *Renewing sinners dominated by sinful patterns of thinking and behaving*

3

CASE STUDY

Pastor Ed Jones was called to serve Pleasant Valley Community Church, and his first several years of ministry in that setting were as serene as the church's name. After three years, an incident occurred during a youth ministry event that directly impacted his family and ministry.

4

CASE STUDY

The **17-year old son** of an elder in the church sexually molested the **pastor's 8-year old daughter**. The pastor was inexperienced and not well-informed regarding handling sexual abuse issues, but he knew enough to report the incident to children's services, to seek counseling help for his daughter, and to confront the young man in the presence of his father.

5

CASE STUDY

The young man expressed and the father confirmed that this was the only incident of sexual impropriety in the young man's life, and Pastor Jones asked for leniency for the young man before the court. The young man was mandated by the court to go through counseling, but no further penalty or probation was required. The young man and the elder maintained an angry spirit toward Pastor Jones over the incident, but both families remained at the church.

6

CASE STUDY

Two years later, a **sister of the elder** (of the above scenario) came to **Pastor Jones' wife** for counseling. She was deeply distressed over a matter and for a long time was unable to communicate her concerns. What was finally revealed was that her brother, the elder, who was 10 years older than she, had sexually abused her and her younger sister throughout their childhood and even into their adult lives.

7

CASE STUDY

As is often the case, one manifested the abuse by living promiscuously, and the other became relationally cold and distant. These matters had never been addressed between the elder and his sisters, and it had been a struggle for this sister to watch her brother rise to the position of elder in the church while she and her sister struggled with the consequences of this private family sin.

8

CASE STUDY

The church **elder** who had abused his sisters earlier in his life was now also the solo teacher in a Sunday school class **for primary aged children (3- to 5-year olds)**. Having never confronted his sin issues of the past, **Pastor Jones** confronted him about these matters and demanded that he immediately end his teaching of the Sunday school class and told him he would make this revelation of unresolved sinful behavior a matter of business before the elder board at the next meeting.

9

CASE STUDY

When the elders heard the matter, they agreed with Pastor Jones about the Sunday school dismissal and further decided that the elder should step down from his eldership until he had been reconciled with his sisters, gone through personal counseling and was granted by the counselor a clean-bill of sexual and emotional health.

10

CASE STUDY

The **elder** rejected the decision of his fellow elders and enlisted the support of a **sympathetic former minister** of the church who challenged the elders' decision. The former minister accused **Pastor Jones** of having a vendetta toward the elder over the childhood sexual abuse that occurred between the **elder's son** and **Rev. Jones' daughter**. This catch-22 was difficult for Pastor Jones to avoid as he was the only seminary-trained staff person at the church and Pleasant Hills Community Church had no denominational support structure.

11

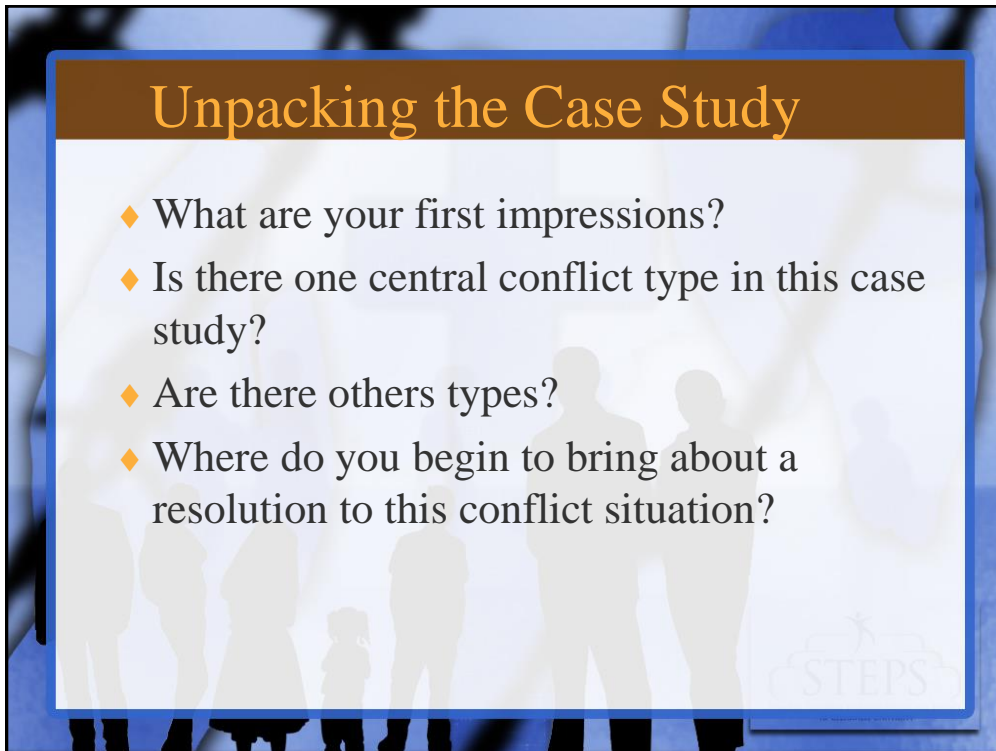
CASE STUDY

The former minister's wife accused Pastor Jones and the elders of being judgmental, but fortunately the church's constitution included "church discipline" among the responsibilities of the elders of the church. As the church members watched this scenario unfold, they were confused due to a lack of information because of the desire of the sisters to maintain the privacy of their abuse and the spreading of gossip by the offending elder, his family and the supporting minister and his wife.

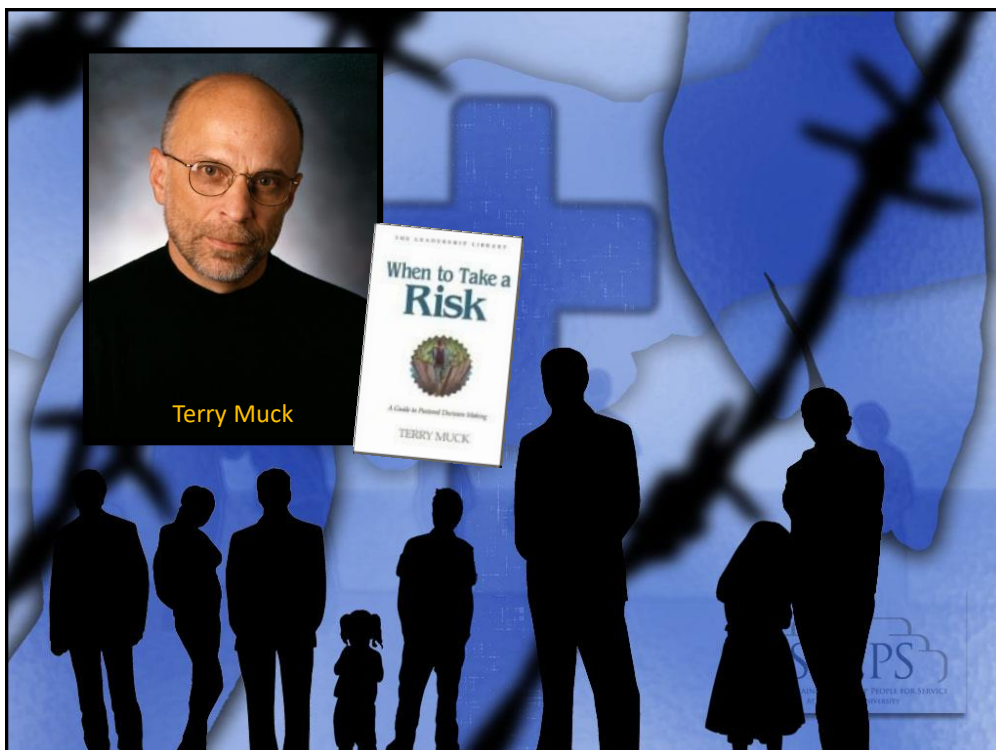
12

Unpacking the Case Study

- ◆ What are your first impressions?
- ◆ Is there one central conflict type in this case study?
- ◆ Are there others types?
- ◆ Where do you begin to bring about a resolution to this conflict situation?



13



Terry Muck

When to Take a Risk
A Guide to Pastoral Decision Making
TERRY MUCK

The background features silhouettes of a group of people and a large gear, with the STEPS logo in the bottom right corner.

14

When to Take a Risk, by Terry Muck

Type of Risk	Theological	Institutional	Interpersonal	Personal
Principle	<i>Law of Right and Wrong</i>	<i>Law of the Good of the Many</i>	<i>Law of Mutual Benefit</i>	<i>Law of the Hippocratic Oath</i>
Motivation	<i>Obedience</i>	<i>Commitment (wrestle through)</i>	<i>Law of Forgiveness</i>	<i>Humility</i>
Standard	<i>God's Will</i>	<i>Efficiency</i>	<i>Unity and Peace</i>	<i>Health of the Body</i>
Task	<i>Stand</i>	<i>Compromise</i>	<i>Peace-Making "Healer"</i>	<i>Heal</i>
When Confused	<i>Fanaticism & Cultism; Inhumanity</i>	<i>Pseudo-Forgiveness</i>	<i>Emotional Separation</i>	<i>Propheticism & Messianism</i>

15

- What I Learned From Muck's Paradigm**
- ◆ **Not all conflict is bad.**
 - Reveals and refines character, distinctives, and purposes.
 - ◆ **Not all conflict is the same.**
 - There are many recognizable types.
 - ◆ **Not all conflict should be met with the same response.**
 - This may escalate tensions and entrench opponents rather than diffuse the situation.
 - ◆ **Not all ministries are the same.**

16

Conflict in the Philippian Church

- ◆ **Philippians 1 – Contentious Christians**
 - Confronting those who oppose your ministry
- ◆ **Philippians 2 – Selfish Believers**
 - Confronting those who complain and argue
- ◆ **Philippians 3 – False Teachers**
 - Confronting those who teach false doctrine
- ◆ **Philippians 4 – Conflicting Leaders**
 - Confronting those who lose focus

17

Conflict in the Philippian Church – Wisdom Model

Text	Philippians 1:12-18	Philippians 2:12-18	Philippians 3:2, 15-21	Philippians 4:2-3
Type of Conflict	Contentious Christians	Selfish Believers	False Teachers	Conflicting Leaders
How It's Manifested				
Godly Response				
If Positive Result				
If Negative Result				

18

Our Case Study Revisited

- ◆ Working with one person to your left or right, seek to identify one or two “types of conflict” using the categories from our paradigms from Terry Muck and Philipians.
- ◆ What is the case study’s predominant conflict?
- ◆ Are there any secondary conflicts?

19

Caveat -- Other Conflict Models

- ◆ **Values Model** – Seek to determine the values that each person in the conflict or controversy endeavors to uphold. How can you achieve a solution that honors all legitimate values?
- ◆ **Cruciform Model** – Taking the cross as a symbol for the “meeting place” of all issues and conflicts “in Christ,” how does this image bring together and resolve the various tensions that exist (both vertical & horizontal planes)?

20

Paul's Controlling Prayer In Philippians

And this is my prayer...

...That your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight...

...So that you may be able to discern what is best...

...And may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ...

...Filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ...

...To the glory and praise of God."
-Philippians 1:9-11

Return

21

Paul's Controlling Concept In Philippians

***"FOR TO ME,
TO LIVE IS CHRIST
AND TO DIE IS GAIN."***

-- Philippians 1:21

STEPS

22

Paul's Wisdom Model for Handling Conflict

- ◆ Paul applied “Canonical Wisdom”
- ◆ Canonical Wisdom is the ability to apply...
 - The breadth of Biblical wisdom (i.e., the mind of Christ) and
 - Our understanding of the heart of God
 - To various situations to determine a wise and godly course of action.

23

Exercising Canonical Wisdom in Conflict

- ◆ This study is not exhaustive - there are many other types of conflict in Scripture and ministry.
- ◆ This study is not prescriptive – rather, it is descriptive of how Paul applied “canonical wisdom” to four particular conflict situations in ministry.
- ◆ This study provides a model for addressing conflict in ministry.
- ◆ The applications are exhaustive (and very likely exhausting!).

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