MANAGING THE CONFLICTS THAT HAPPEN IN GOD'S PEOPLE  
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ABSTRACT  
Conflict often occurs among God's people. Disagreements among church members are common, but if the disagreement rises to contention among fellow members, even bringing fellow members to the judiciary, then that is a remarkable thing. Conflicts occur among fellow Church Council members, even among fellow Pastor. That is why the Members of the church, Assembly of the Church, and Pastor need to know the basic right to manage conflict, so that it can prevent the occurrence of even greater problems and lead to the destruction of the church.  
The Bible teaches Christians to manage conflicts with, 1. Looking at every conflict from side to show God's love. 2. Demands requested by the parties to the conflict must be based on justice in accordance with the will of God. 3. Each accountable for its actions in accordance with the truth of God. 4. Restoring the conflicting relationship based on mutual respect and regard the interests of God's work more important than personal interests.  

KEY WORDS : Conflict, Reconciliation, Relationship  

INTRODUCTION  
Church member quarrels with another church member, church member quarrels with the church committee, this are not a strange thing anymore, but often happens. Some of the churches have been broken because of the unfinished conflicts. The impact of the disunity are, some of the church members will not talk with another church members, the others keep hatred, the others will never come to the church, moreover they make another worship churches.  
Why these things happen? Exactly, it is not only the church that gets the ashamed feelings, but they blaspheme God because of the every conflict, that happens between the people of God. Inspiration writing tells, “Every effort have to appear to settle problems between church members and keep those conflicts as can as possible into a smaller scope. The controversy, conflict, and law matters between brothers and sisters in Christ are the defect for the truth. Those who do these things, open the church toward the foe’s disdain and cause the devil wins. They fierce again Jesus’ wound and blaspheme Him openly. By neglecting the church authority they show a rebellion toward God, the One who gave authority to the church. This case is according to the Bible in 1 Corinthians 6:7 “already it is altogether a defect in you, that ye have lawsuits one with another.”  
The conflicts that happen in the life of church are a flaw, which can be used by devil to put the church to the blemish of truth, moreover to bring the church into discomfiture. When the opportunity of the conflicts is opened, then various attacks to destroy church will come in various ways also. The church must see this case seriously, and not just as a common thing. There should be an immediate and a serious handling to solve every conflicts, but it should be based on the principals and God’s will.  
How come the conflicts infiltrate into the church?  
We can see the exact answer in Mark 2:17b “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.” This verse tells us as the followers of Christ or as Christians, we are the sinners. Also Paul says in Romans 3:3 “none is true”.  
As a sinner, each one of us has the importance and self desires which are different between one another. As the untruth people, we all have different motivation for the service at church. But when these things combine in one bond as the fellowship of God, which each members who admit as the followers of Christ but in fact they do not leave the self-interests and self-motivation, then the conflicts always happen inside of the church.  
At the end, there is no difference between the conflicting church members with the conflicting earthly people. Moreover, there are times when the conflict of the church members is worst than the conflict of the world. This matter has been strengthened by Paul to the church of Galatians that is written in Galatians 5:15, “But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not fulfill the lust of the flesh.”
There are some cases that cannot be solved in the good way at church. In fact they bring them in the court. The church members put another to the jail. The church members defeat another and try to find the rights in the middle of the unbelievers. Meanwhile, the Bible says in 1 Corinthians 6:1-3 “Dare any of you, having a matter against his neighbor, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Or know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?”

**The kind of conflicts that regularly happen in God’s people life**

What things that mostly bring conflicts to the church? How should be the Christians and church act while facing this conflict? There are some disagreements happen at the church but they have not been solved properly and correctly. Until it brings another big conflict, then destroys the unity of the church members. There is a conflict between individual with another individual, but there is also conflict between individual with the group, even one group with another group. These are the kind of conflicts that are happening:

1. A small and simple misunderstanding

Communication is the important factor in social life. By a good communication helps us to have a good interaction with others. Communication also helps us to face the happening conflicts. But on another side, the un-well communication can bring to the other conflict.

Those small and simple things are just a missed communication, the unintentional thing in citing one word or one action that the other members interpret in their different thoughts, the words that hard to being understandable, the incomplete information, that all can bring conflict to the church. The conflict that causes by the small and simple thing can appear in the church is reputed as a non-conflict thing. But this also has great impact so it can bring to the church a big controversy.

2. There are differences in the value, objective, priority and hope

The earth rotates in fast, period changes. How very fast the life changes and it makes the aim of life changes also. The things in the past that reputed as a “taboo”, nowadays become a common thing for us.

This change happens in the way of worship. Some past years when the communication tools were not as good as now, people bring the concrete Bible to the church. But by technology nowadays people just download the Bible application to their smartphone. This case makes the church members do not bring their Bible to the church, instead they turn on their cellular while worship. It makes the uncomfortable feelings for the other church members who want to keep the worship holy and calm.

The same thing happens through the way of singing in the church or the instrumental. The earthly music inside of the church are sounded and it brings conflict in the fellowship.

3. The lack of human resource or the Church’s budget

The church is not only as a building, the church is the souls that have been called to go out from the darkness world and come to the light. That means the church is the association of the people who have been saved.

The service at church is not only rely on the pastor. The church needs people who are willing to serve God. That is why there are departments at church with the function to work together for the progress of the church. By these departments, can help the pastor and the church committee in doing their tasks. But by these departments also can bring conflicts, such as, the limitation of the requests or the unfulfilled budget. These things can bring conflict inside of the church.

4. There is a diversity

Indonesia has different tribes, cultures, religions and the point of view in life. In other side, this pluralism has being considered as the asset of this nation. It is possible by raising the tribes, cultures and some point of view can be the source of the conflicts at church. Moreover, it can become a big controversy.

One of the reasons of the broken association of the church is if there is a group that comes from different tribes, language or even different nation, but unfortunately the dominant tribes act arrogantly or even separating themselves from other tribes.
5. The election of church boards
One of the sources of disunity that can destroy the solidity of the church, is when the election of the new church boards. This thing happens rather in the election that held by the church members as well as by the leaders of the church organization.

Each organization, including businesses, government instance, and other organization and also the church organization will always moving forward and make something better. By this context, usually they have been marked with the position reshuffle or certain positions in the organization. Even though that case is such a natural process, but can not be denied that the conflict between an individual or a group regularly happened to those who lose their position or those who get new position. That includes the pastors’ replacement.

The controversy happens because some of the church members who previously hold in the church leadership are not elected for the next period. Because they do not accept the reality and do not realize this is God’s calling for his mission, and at the end some of them who are not elected become disappointed and expand the problems itself.

The other thing is, some of the church members cheat the election process by using the inappropriate way or disagree with the words of God/ these things expand the conflicts at the church. More than many members leave the church or make another rival church.

6. The intentional conflict
There is a intentional conflict which made by the members of the church. And that is the bitter conflict happens when our sinful attitudes and desires motivate us to inflict others. There are times when the dissatisfaction upon the decision and the church leadership bring hatred and intends to destroy the church.

7. A discipline to the culpable members
A discipline upon a member, who has done some serious trespasses or mistakes according to the conference decision, could bring another conflict upon the church. Especially, the offender side, the family, and people who try to cover the sins. When the serious sins have been done by the members, so the church can decide to give a discipline to the offender in the churches. The types of the serious sins that could bring a disciplinary at the church have been arranged inside the book of the church regulations.

Besides the seven problems above that can bring conflict and controversy upon the members, there is some other thing, which sometimes brings another controversy, such as, the pastor replacement from one church to the other church, the unfair pastor’s services, and another possibly things.

Meanwhile, to anticipate those problems then all the church members have to work together with the pastor, and the church elders to fight with the fullness heart by giving the appropriate directions to the church members depending on God’s words. These are the things that should be understood by the church members, so that the congregation can reduce the happening conflict exactly based on the Christian believe.

How can the Church's Conflict be a Christian like?
After we observe the kinds of problems that can lead to the conflict within the congregation, the next step is we need to understand how to handle the conflict that the GOD people should do. The constructive process is vital. What can begin to distinguish Christians in a plot of Christian conflict is, by the way of interaction that awakens and exploits divine features and gifts within themselves and within the wider faith community around them. The key can be found by faith-based processes to be utilized by the involved parties.

This statement teaches, what makes Christians different from the world's people in dealing with the Conflict is the way we behave, the way we exert our influence and faith in the conflict through the grace we have felt in Christ. And surely Christians will confront the conflict with a consistent ethic, always measured by Christian morals. Managing the Conflict should be brought to the vision of GOD's peace.

Any conflict can actually be handled effectively if we want to develop and implement the effective handling strategies. The most effective way is determined by the intensity of the conflict. A
conflict consists of various stages involving emotions at a certain level and intensity. As the intensity of the conflict increases, everyone will try to defend themselves and want to win. As Conflict rises, each will usually try to save themselves, and in this situation, the patient can be angry and be offended.

The earthly people solve the Conflict by trying to defeat each other, and show who is stronger among those who fight. Just like the animal, who is strong and win is the powerful one, and feel so free to do anything for the weak or the defeated. The people of God are not like the people of the world or like animals, and the way God's people confront Conflict is not like the way of the world or animal do.

To support in managing the conflict in the right way in the life of Christians, there are four things that every GOD people must understand and reflect on when they face the conflict with fellow of God's people or with the other people:

1. Seeing everything inside the conflict through the love of God

The vision to resolve the Conflict must be based on the love of God that has become our part, so that each side will look at one another not in hatred and intent to seek revenge, but with respect and mutual respect. The vision is manifested with a sincere heart, gentle words or dialogue and a humble attitude.

To the controversy parties are expected to do so with a process that requires respect among them. Remember, Jesus died on the cross to redeem every human being from the source of the Conflict, which is sin. His vision with the Father is to save us from the world that is full of Conflict, and bring to a peaceful life. This vision becomes a basic part for every GOD or Christian people when facing conflict with other fellows.

2. The demand is GOD's Justice

Look everything clearly according to the will of God. The King Solomon once said in Ecclesiastes 3:16 There is what I see in the sun: in the place of judgment there is injustice, and in the place of justice there is injustice. This is life in the world, where people should get justice but infact they get injustice. Why? Because in this world, a justice can be traded. Justice can be twisted. Justice can be in the side of the people who have material, wealth or fraternity.

In Solving the conflicts among the people of God are directed to the quarrel parties to see based on justice in accordance with the will of God, no cheating, no partisanship, because the justice of GOD is based on the Truth. The people of GOD does not seek justice according to his own righteousness, or self-interest, but his demands are in accordance with the Justice of GOD. This is what should be asked from the conflicting parties. Seeking justice in the Conflict among GOD's people is not by bringing things to those who do not know God. ! Corinthians 6: 1 “Is any one of you contemptible with another, seeking justice for the unjust, and not for the saints?”, 1 Corinthians 6: 6 “Are there any one brother seeking justice for another brother, and even among the unbelievers?”

The demand of GOD's Justice is based upon sitting together, side by side in the same mind and trying to put ourselves above the feelings of others. Solomon says in Proverbs 21:15 “It is joy to the righteous to do justice; but it is a destruction to the workers of iniquity.”

3. Make it happen according to the Righteousness of GOD

Asking the conflicting parties to take account of their actions in accordance with the Righteousness of GOD. After the vision of love and demands is the justice of GOD, the settlement of the conflict must be realized in accordance with the truth of God. Interpret everything is not based on the truth of each party in conflict, but back to the truth of GOD. Remember! That the ultimate truth goes far beyond human understanding. What is God's Righteousness? The truth of GOD is the Word of God (John 17:17).

Doing the Truth and the Justice based on GOD's Word is more important than anything we dedicate to GOD. Proverbs 21: 3 “Doing righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice”, GOD's righteous are based on clear and true facts, and hear from every true source and witness. Being firmly based on the truth. The Bible reinforces as it is written in Deuteronomy 19:15 "One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or of any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall a matter be established".
4. Reconciliation Process

There is really no conflict that is totally Christian. But a conflict can be judged to be more or less Christian by how the conflicting parties use power to deal with their differences. Respectful, decisive and responsible behavior and consideration of the broader common good, or the good for the benefit of the people, serve as the standard of conduct in the Christian vocation in the midst of the conflict situation.

The rival party is asked to combine the differences that exist within the broader framework that affect all. This is the last part of the settlement of the conflict among God's people, by taking the attitude of choosing to humble one another among the conflicting parties. This is the way out can be found and implemented.

The biblical principle that the people of God need to apply in managing the conflict

Notice the following table, which shows us the different ways in which the world resolves conflict and the way of God's people managing conflict, based on James 4: 2 and Matthew 5: 23-26, or read an earlier article entitled the Bible's view of conflict.

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<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Earthly ways</th>
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<th>God’s Ways</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Destructive Conflict</td>
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<td>Constructive Conflict</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Controversy</td>
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<td>Peaceful</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Finding Win-Lose</td>
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<td>Leading to a win-win</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Brings into a controversy</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Choosing to take sides</td>
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<td>Choosing to step together</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Exaggerating conflicts</td>
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<td>Speaking the truth by love</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>Ended by a selfishness</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>A motivation dropped</td>
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<td>The motivation is to do something righteously</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>There is hiding purpose through the action</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Doing something openly and honestly</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Leads into a war</td>
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The table above shows us that there is a real difference how the earthly people and the people of God manage conflict. Using the earthly way only brings the church and the people of God into a more devastating fragmentation, while using the way God will tend to lead to completion.

Christians as the services of Atonement

Why should Christians be different from the way in which the people of the world solve the conflict? Why is Christ's love should be the ultimate goal of resolving conflict? Why should God's justice be exalted in every conflict resolution? Why should it be based on the truth of God? The answer is very simple, because all followers of Jesus are the people who should bring peace wherever they go, wherever they are, and under any circumstances. The apostle Paul interpreted it correctly and completely to us, as he wrote in 2 Corinthians 5: 14-21.

1. Jesus Christ became a Peacemaker for many.

2 Corinthians 5: 14-16 “For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead. And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again. Wherefore
henceforth know we no man after the flesh.; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more”.

Jesus is dead for everyone. The word "everyone" shows to anyone over the world, including the conflicting parties. The death of Jesus made everyone not live for himself, not thinking of his agenda, his desires, his motivations or everything for himself. But everyone must live for Him (Jesus) who died for them. Whatever every human being is doing, it must be for Jesus. Why? Because the death of Jesus on the cross has saved everyone. His death provides an opportunity for the sinner to have eternal life.

2. GOD entrusts the Atonement to Us.

2 Corinthians 5: 17-19, “So whoever is in Christ, he is a new creation: the old is gone, the new has come. And these are all from God, through whom Christ has reconciled us to Himself and who has entrusted our atonement service to us. For God reconciles the world with Himself by Christ by not taking into account their transgressions. He has entrusted the message of reconciliation to us.

Every people who accept Jesus are new human beings. The word "New Creation" means that their life has been changed. Every redeemed person must have thoughts, deeds and words that are different from his life, which has been dominated by power beyond Jesus or the power of evil. If the old man returns his eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a life for life, a heartache with hurt, hatred with hatred, now realize that Christ died and changed their life, Jesus did to those who were in conflict with Him.

What does Jesus do with those who are in conflict with Him? Jesus does not repay evil with evil, but rewards evil with kindness. Pray for those who hate him, even forgive those who persecute and crucify Him. Jesus reconciled all sinners with the Father who is in Heaven, and he entrusted the atonement task also to all of us who have accepted Him, even the words "He has entrusted the message of reconciliation to us" repeated twice in the passage. It shows that it is important to realize that Jesus entrusted the Peacekeeping duty to all of us who call themselves GOD's people.

3. Being a reconciliation is the duty of the one who has been redeemed.

2 Corinthians 5: 20,21 “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ’s stead: be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.”

Peacemaking work is a supernatural work. A peacemaker is a man who works as an arm of GOD. If there is a conflict, then the people of GOD are the peacemakers there. The people of God who have been reconciled with the Father by Jesus will be the peacemakers, and not the other way around.

Conclusion:

1. Conflicts not only happen in the secular world, but have entered into the life of GOD's people in the church.
2. The causes of conflict entering the church are those who are members of the church are sinners, who have desires, motivations and agendas that are inconsistent with one another, yet while serving the work of the LORD all the desires, motivations, and personal agendas it is not undermined but it is forced.
3. The people of GOD should anticipate everything that can lead to conflict between one another or one group with another group, but if the conflict has already occurred then the need for cooperation with Shepherd/ Pastor, Elder congregation to be able to manage conflict it is to lead to a settlement in accordance with the way GOD.
4. The responsibility of every GOD people to be peacemakers in every conflict that occurs, because Jesus Christ has reconciled us first and entrusted the duty of reconciliation to all who believe in Him.
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