



Walking in the Light

“For you were once darkness, but now *you are* light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.” Ephesians 5:8

For almost 60 years, Bible Related Ministries, under the leadership of Rev. Chuck Svoboda and Rev. Dave Bauer, has been helping churches address conflict and sin. There’s much to be thankful for, as Rev. Svoboda and Rev. Bauer, along with our dedicated associates, have been used by God to bring peace, healing, restoration, and purification to hundreds of churches throughout the Midwest. Unfortunately, churches are still dealing with the same issues of conflict and sin they were 60 years ago. Which begs the question, where does conflict come from?

The obvious answer is that conflict originates in the first chapters of Genesis, where Adam and Eve disobeyed God’s command not to eat from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. Their act produced the six major sources of conflict we still experience today, man vs. God (Gen. 3:8) man vs. Satan (Gen. 3:15), man and woman vs. their own bodies (Gen. 3:16, 19), man vs. his environment (Gen. 3:17-18), man vs. his fellow man (Gen. 3:17; 4:8) and man vs. sin (Gen. 4:7). However, Genesis also reveals three kinds of conflict that are specific to man and his fellow man.

1. Competing desires (Gen. 3:16): Prior to the fall, Adam and Eve’s desires were in perfect harmony. They both wanted to love and obey God. But Eve’s curse created discord in their relationship. Their once harmonious relationship became one divided by separate and often competing desires.
2. Ruling, or authority and submission conflicts (Gen. 3:16): What was once a complementary relationship guided by a God-established structure of authority and submission became one marred by oppression and rebellion.
3. Sin (Gen. 4:7-8): When God rejected Cain’s offering, He warned Cain about the danger of sin and of being ruled by it. But Cain’s jealousy toward Abel led him to kill him, and so sin was revealed as the third source of conflict between man and his fellow man.

Satan is still using these three sources of conflict to wreak havoc on churches all over the world today!

Competing desires conflicts can be both the easiest and the hardest kinds of conflicts to resolve. They’re the easiest because they deal with

simple issues: what temperature to set the thermostat in the sanctuary, what kind of coffee to serve during fellowship, what color to paint the walls, and what kind of green beans to serve at a potluck. But they can also be the hardest because, according to Thom Rainer, author and founder of ChurchAnswers.com, these issues, along with many others like them, are major sources of conflicts, debates, and arguments that lead people to leave churches and even cause church splits.

Authority/submission conflicts are common as well. Pastors and church leaders can be like the evil shepherds in Ezekiel 34, exercising authority God hasn’t given them to lord their wills over the church, like the Pastor who stood barring the door of the church against a member he was having a conflict with, and told him, “You’re not welcome in my church.” Church members also rise up against their leaders and pastors, as the board that drove out their Pastor did, because they didn’t like the way he handled a conflict, while they ignored everything the Bible said about how they needed to deal with the conflict they were having with him.

Sin conflicts have grown both more and less over the last few decades. They have grown more in that sin has swept through the church. People who claim to be Christians have a growing acceptance of sexual immorality, seeing nothing wrong with having sex outside of marriage. More and more Christians are looking to Eastern religious practices that incorporate “stillness, contemplation, and the emptying of the mind to achieve a state of enlightenment or spiritual awakening.”¹ And heretical teachings are widely embraced by churches across the country, like those of John Comer, who redefines sin (pg 20) and the Gospel (pg 136) in his book *Practicing the Way* (2024). Yet sin conflicts have grown less in that churches are less likely to recognize or address them.

Fortunately, God has given us everything we need to deal with each of these conflicts, and His instructions for how to do so are scattered throughout the Bible. It is our responsibility, however, to mine, rightly divide, and set them into a harmonious and functional tool to help the church “grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ” (Eph. 4:15).



Rev. Tracy McConnell

RECIPES

Smothered Mexican Lasagna

Brenda Britten

- 1 ½ pounds Ground beef
- 1 bunch green onions chopped
- 1 (1.25 oz) package taco seasoning
- 2 cups water
- 1 (14.5 oz) can diced tomatoes undrained
- 1 (4 oz can diced green chile peppers drained
- 2 cups grated Cheddar or Mexican cheese
- 8 (10 inch) flour tortillas

Preheat oven to 400°. Brown the hamburger in large skillet over medium-high heat and drain the grease, then add green onions, taco seasoning, water, diced tomatoes with juice, and green chiles with juice. Reduce heat to medium and simmer for 5 minutes. (Let simmer longer for a dryer lasagna)

Place 2 tortillas in the bottom of a 9x13” pan. Spread ½ cup of grated cheese on tortillas. Spoon ¼ of the meet mixture of the cheese. Repeat until all is used up. Bake for 20 minutes, or until sauce is bubbly. Add your favorite toppings!

This recipe is great for tweaking to your taste. You can remove the chiles and onions to make it milder, add things to make it hotter, substitute the grated cheese with 1 container of ricotta cheese mixed with 2 eggs to make it richer, substitute ground turkey to make it healthier, char the tortillas to make it smokier, or use charred corn tortillas to give it a tamale flavor.

Tips for Modern Gentlemen

- Take out your AirPods when you're talking to someone. Muting doesn't count.
- Always sneeze as if you're at a library or a funeral. And in the crook of your arm
- Stand up or sit up straight when you're talking to someone. It communicates respect—and good posture is better for your back too.
- Stop walking three feet ahead of your partner. Instead, match their stride.
- Never raise your voice at someone unless there is an emergency.
- Hold the door when it makes sense. This is no longer gender-specific; it's simply the right thing to do.
- When out in the company of others, keep your phone tucked away and out of sight.
gq.com/story/gq-125-rules-for-modern-gentlemen-manners-etiquette-guide

Leave a legacy for your family & favorite ministries. When planning a legacy, give Terry L. Balko a call at 404-229-1645 or email Mr. Balko for forms and details at terrylbalko@gmail.com. **Don't let your hard earned life-savings go into a probate bureaucracy! NOT PLANNING is a plan, but it is NOT a very good plan!**

Bible Related Ministries keeps Church doors open and good men behind our pulpits! BRM is supported 100% by individuals and church donations. Gifts to BRM can be sent to our PO Box or made online with any *charge* or *debit card* using the Paypal button on the left side of website page at: www.biblerelatedministries.org. It's easy to use! Thank you for your faithfulness to this ongoing ministry to facilitate our churches!

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Bible Related Ministries Newsletter

Fernando Garza, Interim Director



“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament shows His handiwork... There is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard.” –Psalm 19:1, 3

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BRM Interims and Associates Engaged in Ministry:

- >Rev. Steve Barack, BRM Associate – Interim Pastor Village Baptist Church, Lake Village, IN
- >Dr. Al Carson, Sr., BRM Associate – Sr. Pastor of Edwards Corners Bible Church, Marcellus, MI
- >Dr. Joe Stewart, BRM Associate – Sr. Pastor of Grace Bible Church, Dallas City, IL
- >Rev. Darwyn Hassert, BRM Associate – Smyrna Bible Church (and vicinity), MI, preaches and assists as needed in nearby areas
- >Rev. Don Zimmerman, Interim Pastor of Western Springs Baptist Church, IL
- >Rev. Jim Vyleta, Interim Pastor of Appleton Community Evangelical Free Church, Appleton, WI
- >Rev. Tracy B McConnell, BRM Associate – Newsletter Publication

Father's Day Fun: Bad Dad Jokes

Have you heard about the restaurant on the moon? Great food, no atmosphere.
I don't trust stairs. They're always up to something.
Why'd the alternate universe Spider-Man do so well on his driving test? He's an excellent parallel Parker.
What's a lawyer's favorite drink? Subpoena colada.
What did Yoda say when he saw himself in 4K? HDMI.
What do you call a wizard who's really bad at football? Fumbledore.
How do flat-earthers travel? On a plane.
I used to hate facial hair, but then it grew on me.
www.menshealth.com

BRM Field Report #6

We're praising the Lord for answered prayers!

- Pastor Rich Hopkins, who suffered a stroke earlier this year, is back in the pulpit. He preached on Easter Sunday from a chair, and the following Sunday was able to preach using a cane.
- Pastor Sam Kostreva is doing well after his brain bleed earlier this year and was also able to preach Easter Sunday.
- Lisle Bible Church has found an interim Pastor, Pastor Allen Austin, after the retirement of longtime BRM friend Lee Roupas.

BRM board member Phil Koler represented BRM at the Bark River Bible Church (planted by Rev. Chuck Svaboda). Phil met their interim pastor, Jim Garnett, and shared BRM's ministry during Sunday School. He also had a table in the lobby with BRM literature to share with people. Thank you, Phil, for taking the long trip to the UP!

BRM is here for you! As we wait on God to provide BRM with a new Executive Director, Fernando Garza (BRM Interim Director), along with Dolores and the BRM Associates, are working together to fulfill BRM's mission. The phone lines are open and manned. Don't hesitate to call with any questions, needs, concerns, or issues.

Faithful BRM friends and prayer warriors, Tom VanHoose in Farwell, MI, has pneumonia and would appreciate your prayers.

Please continue to pray for BRM:

1. For God to provide a new Executive Director
2. For God's wisdom and guidance for the BRM Board