

Maple Springs Baptist Church

Series: Your Story for God's Glory

Week 3: Controlling Conflict in Your Story

You are a major part of God's story.

Every great story has the same structure.

Act 1: The Setup. Characters are introduced.

Act 2: The Conflict/Tension. The story gets interesting.

Act 3: The Resolution. The story wraps up, either with a happy ending or a tragic ending.

All of our stories are guaranteed to include conflict. But conflict doesn't ruin your life or your story. Grow through what you go through.

The story would be so boring without the conflict.

Jeremiah 17:5-8:

- Jeremiah was a prophet during a massive war. His home country was captured by the Babylonians and burned to the ground. Jeremiah woke up one day to find thousands dead.
- He understood complex emotions of loss, anger, stress, loneliness, and pain.
- God gives some of the most powerful advice for people experiencing conflict. He says the secret to making fruit is to be near a life-giving source.

3 pieces of advice to help you enhance your emotions and reinforce your reactions:

ONE: Don't be easily swayed. (Jeremiah 17:7)

- Don't make life so complicated. Complicated people tend to be highly emotional & reactionary, easily swayed by their moods and feelings.
- A tree, like this passage talks about, is the exact opposite. It's powerful; it's strong.
- A person like this draws strength from deep roots & can process emotions without being shaken by circumstances.
- **Trees are strong because of their roots.**
- Don't complicate your life by being swayed by your environment. Stand strong by knowing who you are and who God has created you to be. Dig deep into your faith and establish a strong foundation that will hold you steady despite your circumstances and what others are saying and doing around you.
- Truth is: stress is inevitable. Learn how to succeed through stress.

TWO: Stress doesn't need to make you a mess. (Jeremiah 17:8)

- Drama makes for great stories, but in real life, drama just exhausts people.
- When we have unhealthy reactions, our stress doesn't just hurt us. It also hurts the people we love.
- It's crucial that we learn how to cope with stress in healthy ways because ... **Stress is no excuse for sin.**

Stress is inevitable. Slow down. Don't React. Pray for the peace of God that will guard your heart and mind through Jesus. Have patience & self-control. Then, look at the situation again from a godly perspective.

THREE: Don't let a bad day make you think you have a bad life. (Jeremiah 17:8)

Have you ever had a day where nothing went your way?

- **Never let a negative moment give you a negative mindset.**
- How do trees handle conflict? With deep roots, daily nourishment, and drawing from the source.
- Let your struggles breed strength by actively deciding to reinforce your response. Don't just go through it; grow through it.
- A moment in the Word will give you momentum to get through your whole day, whatever life throws at you.
- Get near the source-the water (17:8) It's very hard to lash out when you're actively connected to the God of love. It's hard to hold grudges when you confessed your sin to Jesus. It's hard to feel out of control when God's Spirit is flowing through you. Despite the stress, you will inevitably produce something sweet.

Conclusion: All of our stories are guaranteed to include conflict. But conflict doesn't ruin your life story. It can actually do the opposite if you Grow through what you Go through.

- Don't be easily swayed -establish deep roots of faith that allow you to stand strong and still with peace and patience.
- Don't let your stress make you a mess. Feed your faith.
- Don't let a bad day make you think you have a bad life.
- You can live a better story. Remember God created you for a reason and a purpose.

TRUTH: We can find the strength and stamina to withstand any conflict in life by drawing near to God.