

What is your favorite genre of movie? Some like romantic films. Some comedies. I like Dramas. Not sappy dramas, but a crime drama or medical drama or dramatic mystery.

*"An exciting, emotional or unexpected series of events"* Great dramas include things like: "conflict/trouble" "protagonists/antagonists" "desperation/hopelessness" "misdirection/intrigue" Ultimately, when we are emotionally drained, it ties up at the end with: "incredible resolutions"

Three things about the slide you see behind me: 1) Drama is GREAT in Movies! We love this stuff.  
2) Drama is THE PITS in Real Life! None of these things are good. We get pits in our stomachs.  
3) Drama is DANGEROUS in the Lord's Church. Nothing you see behind me is God's will for us.

In terms of Attitudes and Interactions and Issues and Fellowship – The Bible has a clear position:

**Galatians 5:13-15** – We do not use our liberty in Christ to make war against one another.

**5:20** – You take this out and there will still be issues and differences, but drama and division are gone.

**5:25-26** – Note this is not about us and the world – this is about us – one another – God's people.

**Acts 15:36-39** – Real life example of drama among God's people. Division was the outcome. Was this Mark's fault for bailing on the first journey? Or Paul's for being adamant. Who knows. What we do know is they couldn't work it out and the Lord's Work was affected and Division occurred. I'm pleased to say they worked it out later (something to consider – we can learn and come back and repair).

Okay, how do we keep things from Escalating and becoming Emotionally Charged and potentially Divisive when God's people have disagreements or other issues. Well, we'd do well to talk about what causes this stuff to begin with. The list I'm sure is lengthy, but here are a few to consider today: (by the way, this short list the product mostly of my own poor conduct over the years).

### 1) Overly Defensive People

- a. Notice "overly" is used here and in all three things listed. A measure of these things is within us all and healthy in our faith. The Scripture teaches us to make a defense for our faith. And the idea of defending our position from those who push is perfectly Biblical.
- b. But some people tend to take nearly everything PERSONALLY. Every potentially negative comment, every critique, every question is somehow seen as a personal attack on their integrity. They can be in a room and hear someone across the room say, "I just don't think that was right." And with no context at all assume it is about them.
- c. To some, every flying object is an arrow of war and every arrow is aimed at them and must be blocked and countered.
- d. *Listen: If this is you, please know that an inability to control this disposition accomplishes two things: it takes relatively minor issues, like a critique and makes it into confrontation. And sadly, you may sometimes create issues where none previously existed.*

### 2) Overly Aggressive Personalities

- a. Yeah, this is me. If you are like me, when some slight has happened or some issue has arisen – I hop on that very quickly. I send that text, or make that catty comment. I confront or address swiftly. Now to me that sounds like being a go-getter.
- b. But really, it's a lot more like Peter in the Gospels. He was aggressive, but he often got out in front of his skis and is said. He spoke without understanding, without thinking about the ramifications. He hopped out of boats without knowing what to do next. I do that. Being passive is a slow destroyer, but being overly aggressive can cause a large explosion right away.
- c. *Listen: You don't have to act on every single thing you don't like. You don't have to right every perceived wrong. And you don't have to do it right now with some half-thought out passive aggressive comment.*

### 3) Overly Protective Parents

- a. Again, it's the overly that matters here. I am a protective parent and most of us are. After all, God charged me with... protecting my kids. From the world, from sin, from themselves. And that means being involved and speaking up for them.
- b. Defensiveness and Aggression is often triggered most quickly, when it pertains to wrongs done to those we love the most. And so, parents, (myself included) can fall victim to this.
- c. But what starts as a hopeful cause can end up causing DRAMA and CONFLICT

- i. I try to police everything around them as I see fit and try to manage everyone.
- ii. I am immediately defensive and aggressive if anyone mentions my kid's error.
- iii. I believe them too quickly, and don't understand they may not tell the truth, may not understand what they saw or heard, or may tell me what I want to hear
  - 1. And sometimes at the expense of my own brethren, adults in our lives.
- d. The overly protective parent rarely sees where they are causing division, therefore can sadly push people away and hinder their children's growth, without knowing it.
- e. *Listen: You can be wrong, kids can be wrong, and others can be right. If we start with that, we may just end up giving the benefit of the doubt to someone other than a 6 year old.*

Well, this won't be lots of fun, but it might be healthy – find yourself up there. Grade yourself. Okay, that is not really an issue for me, but over here, yeah, that's caused some things. I am ENTIRELY convinced that DRAMA which causes lingering awkwardness or even DIVISION is nearly never about what has been done or said, and almost always about how people REACT to that and either soothe it or amplify it.

"If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men." **Romans 12:18.**

### 1) Walk Circumspectly – Ephesians 5:11-16

- a. In fighting sin in your life – look around, identify what's really there, advance wisely.
  - b. So many of my life problems have been quick reactions, emotional reactions... poorly done.
  - c. Look around. Assess. Evaluate. SURVEY. (clock illustration)
    - i. 6oclock – Me – Am I wrong here? What am I feeling and why? What's my role?
    - ii. 12oclock – Them - Why did they do this? What's their thoughts? Justified?
    - iii. 9and3oclock – Others- What does this look like? Do others see it more clearly?
    - iv. 6oclock – How do I feel about it now, after seeing it from all sides?
  - d. Drama is driven by IMPULSIVENESS. Peace is built on PATIENCE and PERSPECTIVE.
- But listen, this is not advising you ignore issues that arise. The text said "walk." So there is progress to be made, after we've surveyed. Ignoring usually just causes differences to incubate and grow.--

### 2) Act Judiciously – Galatians 6:1

- a. Okay, you've thought it through and there is an actual problem. And the other person has done something against you or brought undesirable emotion into your life.
- b. What next? -- Well, call your friends and talk about them. Make some passive aggressive insult when around others. Ignore them for a month. That'll fix it!
- c. Again most drama is the result of REACTIONS. So change the game. (**Galatians 6:1**) – Act, but do so with wisdom. *Do so with spiritual motives. Do so with a gentle spirit. Do so making sure your heart is right and under control.*
- d. **Matthew 18:5-6** – Be very careful. If your actions cause drama and that leads to discouragement or sin in the life of the other... Jesus will be very displeas. Be judicious.
- e. Now you might say --- well, most uncomfortable stuff and friction in the church is not about sin, it's just about personalities or preferences ... then ROMANS 12:18 – choose peace and move on!

### 3) Pursue Forgiveness – Matthew 6:12

- a. Drama is often the result of competitiveness. People act to WIN, not to unite. They want to be right and proven right & both sides want that and so friction ensues. Change objectives!
- b. If you are in any way at odds with anyone in Christ's body, act for the right reason: forgiveness. Someone will say, "*Kris I'm not the one who needs forgiveness!*" Maybe, maybe not. But you misunderstand me – Pursue Forgiveness for ALL involved. The only winning outcome is for us all to be forgiven by the other and by God!
- c. Jesus pursued forgiveness on the cross when He asked God to forgive them. He wasn't pursuing it for Himself, He desired it for even His killers.
- d. (**Matthew 6:12**) – How many issues would disappear instantly if everyone just wanted God to treat them EXACTLY the way they are treating the other person. We'd be tripping over ourselves to get to the other to forgive, communicate, and make things right.

**Philippians 2:1-4** – God has a great plan for the Lindale church. It is built in the image of Christ and it will lead to souls being saved. I couldn't be more excited about our future. We can't let the devil in. He works through drama. It is one conversation, one act of kindness, one hug – what can you do today to help this family keep drama on the tv screen and out of our fellowship?