

# CONFLICT

## LESSON 7: RED LETTER BUSINESS

### CORPORATE SITUATION ROOM

Chip is a strong Christian serving as a manager of a large team that does projects around the world for an international company. He is excellent at what he does and has doubled the team and the work they do over the last 10 years. A big part of his success is due to developing his leaders, and he spends much of his time leading, developing and caring for his team.

Robert was a recipient of Chip's time and was a rising star in the group. After 5 years of intensive investment, Robert announced he was leaving the group to start his own company doing the same type of projects! Chip was very disappointed and tried to convince Robert to stay, but to no avail. Not only did Chip lose his future successor that he had spent years mentoring, but Robert also recruited three of Chip's other leaders to leave and join him! Chip was bitter and didn't talk to Robert again.

Five Years later, Robert's company had grown to be very successful, specializing in the same projects as Chip's company. Chip, meanwhile, had also moved up the corporate ladder and was now a vice-president. There was an opportunity forced upon Chip to collaborate with Robert's company on a large project for a client. Chip reluctantly moved forward with the joint project, but as the work progressed it was clear that Chip was biased against Robert and would redirect blame onto him or his company when problems arose. Now the project itself was in jeopardy and Chip was being criticized for his handling of the work. His response was to double-down on blaming Robert. The two companies parted in lawsuits and never finished the project.

- Q. Was Chip justified for his bitterness towards Robert?
- Q. As a Christian business leader, how could Chip have handled Robert's departure?
- Q. How did this unresolved conflict affect Chip? Robert?
- Q. What parties suffered in this conflict?
- Q. What healthy boundaries would you establish to engage an enemy?

### MATTHEW 5:38-48

*<sup>38</sup> You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.'<sup>39</sup> But I tell you, do not resist an evil person. If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also.<sup>40</sup> And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well.<sup>41</sup> If anyone forces you to go one mile, go with them two miles.<sup>42</sup> Give to the one who asks you, and do not turn away from the one who wants to borrow from you.*

### Love for enemies

*<sup>43</sup> You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'<sup>44</sup> But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,<sup>45</sup> that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous.<sup>46</sup> If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that?<sup>47</sup> And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?<sup>48</sup> Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect.*

- Q.** How do you tend to deal with conflict?
- Q.** How have we been taught in business to perceive the competition?
- Q.** Why is it so hard to show kindness to the opposition?
- Q.** As Christians what advantage is there for us to forgive and even love our competitors?
- Q.** What does it take to change how we feel about those who are against us? What part does our identity play?
- Q.** Why does Jesus want us to behave in this way? Who benefits?
- Q.** What Beatitudes are at play here?
- Q.** Why are the Peacemakers the children of God?
- Q.** How can we be perfect? What do you think Jesus means? Leviticus 19:2
- Q.** Does the Old Testament law and Jesus' teaching contradict one another?

See also Romans 12:17-21