

Top 10 Predictable Times for Conflict in the Church

Written by Craig Webb

[Dale Huff](#) uses this list when he teaches pastors about Church conflict. Dale shares that it is adapted from a list authored by church conflict Guru, Speed Leas, in the book "Mastering Conflict & Controversy" by Edward G. Dobson and Marshall Shelley (Word Publishing, December 10, 1993). Dr. Joe Sherrer ([New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary](#)) shared this list with our Doctor of Ministry Class.

I have tried to explain some of the reasoning and appreciate Dale's help with this article. The following are times in the life of the church when conflict is liable to surface. If you are dealing with unhealthy conflict, this may be especially critical:

1. During the Easter Season

- Busiest time in the life of the church.
- Intensity of numbers
- High expectations
- Spiritual dimension - doctrinal issue flies in the face of Satan
- Conflict between pastor and music leader over amount of preaching vs. music

2. During a Stewardship Campaign or Budget Preparation

3. When Adding Staff

4. When the Basic Leadership Style/Approach Changes

5. During the Pastors Absence

- Vacation
- Mission Trip
- Revival Leave

6. Following a Change in the Pastor's Family

- Most people want to feel good about the pastor - but most have an idealized view of the pastor's family.
- During the birth of the baby a pastor will spend more time at home and less time with the church family.
- When there is a wayward teenager or similar crisis.

7. When there is a Significant Generational Change in the Focus of the Church.

- Leas uses the example of an influx of baby boomers into the church

8. Upon the Completion of a New Building

- There has been an excitement and a dream
- The Church family has Raised and given a lot of money
- Now we have this new building and it is not perfect

9. Rapid Loss or Rapid Increase of Church Membership

Dr. Sherrer added number ten ...

10. During the Time Between Pastors

- Jockeying for position and power
- Leadership Vacuum

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