

## ***Leading Through Conflict: One Point of Departure***

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***Leading*** is simply knowing the way to a desired destination, showing the way, and then going the way ahead of those who follow. If there is no one following, then there is no leader, because leading is the art of influencing people to follow one to a desired destination.

***Through*** is the pathway or road existing inside a circumstance or situation that leads to the outside of that circumstance or situation in the direction of a desired destination.

***Conflict*** is the manifestation of the ***Law of Polarity***—the struggle and unity of opposites that confronts everyone who is on the ***through*** pathway to a desired destination. If “right” is the destination, then “wrong” will oppose it. If “up” is the destination, then “down” will attempt to bar the way. If “love” is the destination, then “hate” will resist it to the very end. If the destination is creating a “Revolutionary Jesus Movement” forward, then expect a “Reactionary Judas Movement” backward to raise its ugly head.

So, to ***lead through conflict*** is to engage opposition at every step of the way—both externally and internally.

The external conflict can be described theologically, philosophically and psychologically. Theologically, the external conflict is against “the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” Philosophically, the external conflict is against the ideologies and world views of the elites who control land, resources and the means of production. Psychologically, the external conflict is against established social paradigms that resist radical change that would cause a reordering of societal priorities.

The internal conflict can be described theologically, philosophically and psychologically as well. (It could also be described medically, but the diagnosis would probably suggest a form of schizophrenia!) Theologically, the internal conflict is between the “old” and “natural” person and her/his “new” and “spiritual” twin. Philosophically, the internal conflict is between the “traditionalist” and “status quo” person and his/her “modernist” and “revolutionary” twin. Psychologically, the internal conflict is between the “quiescent” and “accommodationist” person and her/his “self-liberative” and “change-making” twin.

**If you were on this panel, how and where would you begin our conversation together on this topic?**