

I. Introduction and review: God tells you how to make peace.

II. You cannot completely avoid conflict. v. 18a

A. All conflict is the result of sin: Man/God. Man/Man. 5:10 Gen. 3:10,12 Js. 4:1-2

B. Peace is sometimes out of your reach.

1. You cannot make peace at the expense of truth and righteousness. 16:17-18
Mt. 10:34-38 18:15f Jer. 8:11 Acts 20:28 Pr. 23:23 Jude 3 I Co. 5:6-7 15:33
Titus 3:9-11 II Jo. 1:9-11 Lu. 12:15f Ga. 1:9 2:11f Heb. 2:14 Col. 2:15
2. There are some people with whom it is impossible to make peace. I Co. 7:15
3. God does not hold you responsible for the sinful failures of others.

C. Conflict is very dangerous (The Slippery Slope, from *The Peacemaker*).

Don't make things worse through unbiblical methods of handling conflict.

1. Some fight: revenge, verbal attacks, gossip, slander, assault, murder, lawsuits.
12:17-21 Mt. 5:21-22 Pr. 11:9 29:22 12:18 14:17 18:8 16:28 11:13 I Co. 6:1-8
2. Others flee: denial, escape, suicide. Eph. 4:26b I Sam. 2:22-25 Heb. 12:15

D. Conflict brings opportunity: to glorify God, to be more like Christ, to serve others, and to bear witness to a watching world. Ro. 8:28-29 12:14,20 I Co. 10:31

III. Do all that is within your power to pursue peace. Mt. 5:9 Heb. 12:14

A. Don't stir up strife. 16:17 Pr. 6:19 26:21 18:21 10:19 Ti. 3:10 Eph. 4:29 Js. 1:19 3:1f

B. Overlook minor offences. 14:19 I Pe. 4:8 Pr. 10:12 17:14 19:11 29:11,20,22 25:28
15:18 14:19 Mt. 5:39-40 I Co. 6:7 Phil. 2:5f Mt. 5:39-40 I Co. 6:7

C. Confess your sins: Get the log out of your eye. Mt. 7:1-5 5:23-24 Pr. 28:13

1. You must deal with your own sin before you can help others to overcome theirs.
2. Face up to the root of sin in your own heart. James 4:1-2 Pr. 2:24 Mt. 15:18
3. Seek forgiveness for whatever fault you may have (*even if it is only 10%*).
4. Seek forgiveness biblically. (7 A's from *The Peacemaker*) Mt. 5:23-24 II Co. 7:10-11
Address everyone involved, Avoid if, but, maybe, Admit specifically, Acknowledge the hurt, Accept the consequences, Alter your behavior, Ask for forgiveness.

D. Be ready to forgive others as God has forgiven you. Ps. 86:5 Eph. 4:32 Col. 3:12-14

1. Forgiveness is not optional for forgiven people. Mt. 6:12 Mt. 18:21-35 Jer. 31:34
2. Make the promises of forgiveness (from *The Peacemaker*). Mt. 6:12 I Co. 13:5
 - a. I will not think about this incident.
 - b. I will not bring this incident up and use it against you.
 - c. I will not talk to others about this incident.
 - d. I will not allow this incident to stand between us.

E. Use the PAUSE principle in negotiating/peacemaking (from *The Peacemaker*).

1. Prepare for peacemaking. I Co. 4:13
2. Affirm relationships. I Co. 13:7
3. Understand the interests of others: listen! Phil. 2:3-4 Js. 1:19 I Pe. 3:7 Pr. 20:5
4. Search for creative solutions. Daniel 1 Ecc. 9:16
5. Evaluate options objectively and reasonably.

IV. Promote peace by confronting sin biblically.

- A. Love sometimes requires you to *go and show your brother his fault*. 15:14 Lev. 19:17
Which sins *must* you confront?**
- 1. Notorious sins which could damage the Lord's reputation. I Co. 5:1,11**
 - 2. Sins which endanger the purity and unity of the church. 16:16-17 I Co. 5:6-7 15:33**
 - 3. Sins which could ruin the offender. Js. 5:19-20 Gal. 6:1**
 - 4. It will affect your relationship with this person. Mt. 18:15 Eph. 4:26-27**
- B. First, practice personal peacemaking. Matthew 18:15 5:23-24**
- 1. Go to the individual first before involving others.**
 - 2. Go gently, lovingly, and humbly for the purpose of restoration. Gal. 6:1-2**
 - 3. If he repents, rejoice and forgive. Mt. 18:21-22 Js. 5:19-20 Pr. 11:30**
- C. Then, if necessary seek help in making peace (assisted peacemaking). Matt. 18:16**
- 1. Others can bear witness and join in admonishing the sinner to repent. Dt. 19:15**
 - 2. If you can't resolve a conflict on your own, seek godly counsel to help you.**
 - 3. Sometimes mediation or binding arbitration may be appropriate. I Co. 6:5**
- D. Finally, if necessary, take it to the church. Mt. 18:17a**
- 1. The leaders of the church will determine the validity of the charges and the means of dealing with the matter publicly.**
 - 2. The other members join in to plead with the sinner to repent. II Th. 3:14-15**
- E. If he refuses to listen to the church, he is to be put out of the assembly. Mt. 18:17b-20
I Co. 5:4-5,13b I Ti. 1:19-20 Ps. 1:6**
- 1. He is to be regarded as an unbeliever and an outsider. Mt. 18:17b**
 - 2. Church discipline takes place with the authority of the Lord. Mt. 18:18-20**
 - 3. What is the purpose of church discipline? I Co. 5:5-7 15:33 Dt. 13:11 II Co. 2:6-8**

V. Questions.

- A. Does this approach to confronting sin violate confidentiality or one's right to privacy?
I Tim. 1:19-20 Pr. 29:25 Eph. 5:11**
- B. Do these peacemaking techniques ever fail? Prov. 3:5-6**
- C. How can these principles be applied with unbelievers?**
- D. Is there ever a time when it is appropriate for Christians to go to court?**

VI. Conclusion: Before you can make peace with men, you must have peace with God. 5:1,10 8:6 Isa. 9:6 57:21 Lu. 1:79 2:14 19:38 Eph. 2:17,14 Jo. 17:20-21 II Co. 5:18-20

Discussion Questions

- 1. What is the cause of conflict?**
- 2. Why is peacemaking sometimes impossible?**
- 3. What are two kinds of sinful responses to conflict.**
- 4. What can you do to pursue peace?**
- 5. How could you confess your sins against others?**
- 6. What are the promises of forgiveness?**
- 7. Why should you forgive those who wrong you?**
- 8. When should you confront the sins of others?**
- 9. When and how should you seek help from others in resolving conflicts?**
- 10. What is the purpose of church discipline?**
- 11. How can peacemaking principles be applied in relationships with unbelievers?**