

## **Biblical Peacemaking Fundamentals**

**The Four G's:** Conflict is not necessarily bad or destructive. Even when conflict is caused by sin and causes stress, God can use it for good! (see Rom. 8:28-29)

### **1st G: Glorify God**

You can glorify God in the midst of conflict by trusting him, obeying him, and imitating him (see Prov. 3:4-6; John 14:15; Eph. 5:1).

*Ask, How can I please and honor the Lord in this situation?*

### **2nd G: Get the Log Out of Your Own Eye**

Examine yourself (1) do you have a critical, negative, or overly sensitive attitude that has led to unnecessary conflict ; (2) did you say sinful words or act sinfully (see Matt. 7:5).

*Ask: How can I show Jesus' work in me betaking responsibility for my contribution to the conflict?*

### **3rd G: Gently Restore**

When confronting someone, our attitude should be one of gentleness rather than anger, and our purpose should be to restore rather than condemn (see Gal. 6:1). Even before you go to talk with someone, remember that it is appropriate to overlook minor offenses (see Prov. 19:11).

*Ask: How can I loving serve others by helping them take responsibility for their contributions to the conflict?*

### **4th G: Go and be Reconciled**

Christians have experienced the greatest forgiveness in the world; therefore, we should be the most forgiving people in the world. As you seek to forgive others, continually ask God for grace to enable you to imitate his wonderful forgiveness toward you.

*Ask: How can I demonstrate forgiveness of God and encourage a reasonable solution to this conflict?*



***Seven A's of Confession:*** *If you really want to make peace, ask God to help you breathe grace by humbly and thoroughly admitting your wrongs. One way to do this is to use the following Seven A's of confession (see Matt. 7:3-5; 1 John 1:8-9; Prov. 28:13):*

1. Address everyone involved (All those whom you affected)
2. Avoid if, but, and maybe (Do not try to excuse your wrongs)
3. Admit specifically (Both attitudes and actions)
4. Acknowledge the hurt (Express sorrow for hurting someone)
5. Accept the consequences (Such as making restitution)
6. Alter your behavior (Change your attitudes and actions)
7. Ask for forgiveness

**Four Promises of Forgiveness:** Through forgiveness God tears down the walls that our sins have built, and he opens the way for a renewed relationship with him. This is what we must do if we are to forgive as the Lord forgives us: we must release the person who has wronged us from the penalty of being separated from us. When we forgive, we should decide to make four promises:

1. "I will not dwell on this incident."
2. "I will not bring up this incident again and use it against you."
3. "I will not talk to others about this incident."
4. "I will not let this incident stand between us or hinder our personal relationship."

**CONFLICT STARTS IN THE HEART**  
**God uses conflict to reveal our idols.**

**I. Introduction**

**A. The Heart**

- Our words and actions come from what is in our hearts.

**B. Spiritual Idolatry**

- An idol is anything or anyone other than God that motivates us; anything or anyone that we trust, fear or serve, love and pursue more than God.

**C. Conflict**

**James 4:1-3** - *What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You want something but you don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have, because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

- When in a dispute with another person, look at your own heart to see whether you are being controlled by unmet desires that you have turned into idols.

**II. The Progression of an Idol**

**A. I Desire**

- The root cause of conflict is unmet desires in our hearts.
- Idols can arise from good desires as well as inherently wrong desires.
- It is often not *what* we want that is the problem, but that we want it *too much*.
- The desire is sinful because it has grown to a position of authority over my heart. This authority belongs to God alone.

**B. I Demand**

- When you see something as being essential to your happiness, it moves from a desire to a demand. "I wish" becomes "I must have."
- Ask questions that help reveal when a good desire might be turning into a sinful demand. Ex: What is the first thing on your mind in the morning and the last thing on your mind at night? How would you answer the question, "If only \_\_\_\_\_, then I would be happy, fulfilled, and secure?" Where do you put your trust? What do you fear?

**C. I Judge**

- In an argument, that person's wrongs and your rights preoccupy you.
- Sinful judgment is characterized by a feeling of superiority, indignation, condemnation, bitterness or resentment; often involves speculating on others' motives and reveals an absence of a genuine love and concern toward others.

**D. I Punish**

- When someone fails to satisfy your demands and expectations, you are hurt and angry so you strike back at them. Punishment can be deliberate or unconscious.
- Ex: reacting in anger, hurtful words, withdrawal, abandoning the relationship...

**III. The Cure for an Idolatrous Heart:** God loves to deliver His people from idols!

**A. Deliverance from Judgment**

- God sent His Son to experience the punishment we deserve because of our sin.
- To receive this forgiveness and freedom, we must acknowledge our sin, repent of it and put our trust in Jesus Christ.

**B. Replace Idol Worship with Worship of the True God**

- We replace idol worship with worship of God by repenting before God, fearing God, loving God, trusting God and delighting in God.