

# Transformed

God sent his Son into the world to guide our feet onto the path of peace.

**Conflict is everywhere. It's in the news. It's on our streets. It's in the workplace. It's in our homes. It's everywhere.**

But amidst all this conflict, there are oases of peace. There are people who resolve differences, find common ground and work together for good. There are friendships that endure, marriages that thrive, businesses that flourish, and lawyers who negotiate just agreements and reconcile parties.

In many cases, the source of this peace is found in a single person: Jesus Christ. God sent his Son into the world "to guide our feet onto the path of peace" and tear down the walls that divide us (Luke 1:79; Eph. 2:14-16).

This mission of peace is typically referred to as "**the gospel**," which is the good news that Jesus died on the cross to pay for our sins and rescue us from eternal separation from God, and he rose from the dead to give us new life (John 3:16-17; 1 Pet. 1:3). Through faith in Jesus, we can be reconciled to God, adopted into his family, empowered to love others as we love ourselves, and given the gift of enjoying him forever.

When we believe this message and trust in Jesus, God begins a supernatural process that steadily transforms us more and more into the likeness of Jesus himself (2 Cor. 3:18; Rom. 12:2). One of the most wonderful aspects of this transformation is that God calls and empowers us to be part of Jesus' mission to promote peace and reconciliation:

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:17-19).

Through the gospel, God has not only given us eternal life but also transformed us into **new creations** with **new purposes and powers**, which he calls us to enjoy and employ every day of our lives. One way to do this is to constantly look for opportunities to reflect the gospel with this kind of attitude:

"God saved me by giving his Son to die for me. Since he loved me that much, I will love others. Since he forgave me, I will forgive others. Since he reconciled with me, I will reconcile with others."

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## The **Seven A's** of Confession\*

Matt. 7:3-5; 1 John 1:8-9; Prov. 28:13

- Address** everyone involved
- Avoid** if, but, and maybe
- Admit** specifically
- Acknowledge** the hurt
- Accept** the consequences
- Alter** your behavior
- Ask** for forgiveness

## The **Four Promises** of Forgiveness\*

Matt. 6:10; 1 Cor. 13:5; Eph. 4:32

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

## The **PAUSE** Principle of Negotiation\*

Phil. 2:3-4; Matt. 7:12

- Prepare**
- Affirm** relationships
- Understand** interests
- Search** for creative solutions
- Evaluate** options objectively and reasonably

\*Adapted from *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, by Ken Sande.

## Getting **Upstream** of Conflict

Visit [rw-academy.org](http://rw-academy.org) to develop skills that will strengthen your relationships and actually **prevent** conflict!



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 going beyond emotional intelligence™

Through the gospel, God has transformed us into new creations with new purposes and powers.

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You can embrace God's transforming work in your life by praying that Christ would dwell in you so fully that your mind and heart will be transformed to be like his, and by constantly meditating on and delighting in the gospel and its manifold implications (Eph. 3:16-19). As Tim Keller writes:

"All change comes from deepening your understanding of the salvation of Christ and living out of the changes that understanding creates in your heart. Faith in the gospel restructures our motivations, our self-understanding, our identity, our view of the world." (The Prodigal God)

The adjacent chart provides twelve practical ways to live out the transforming power of the gospel in your life and your relationships.

— Ken Sande

# The Transforming Power of the Gospel

	Apart from the gospel ...	Transformed by the gospel ...
1 In daily life	I'm preoccupied with my own desires, plans, reputation and convenience.	I find my greatest joy in pleasing God and serving others (John 8:29; 12:26).
2 When I feel negative emotions	I either stuff them or allow them to move me to say or do things that may disappoint or hurt others.	I draw on the power I have through Jesus to wisely manage my emotions, words and actions (2 Tim. 1:7).
3 When others may be hurting	I'm often so focused on my own goals and needs that I overlook others' needs.	I respond with the kindness that Jesus has shown to me (Luke 10:30-33).
4 When I realize a conflict exists	I wait for others to come to me, especially if I think they are more at fault than I am.	I imitate Jesus by taking the initiative to seek reconciliation, even if others seem more in the wrong (Eph. 5:1; Rom. 5:8).
5 When I see things differently than others	I assume the worst about others, judge their motives, magnify our differences, or cast their positions in the worst possible light.	I am open to learning new views and looking for common ground, shared interests and areas where we can work together for good (Phil. 2:1-4).
6 My top priority when I'm in conflict	Is to vindicate myself, win my points and make myself look just, good and right.	Is to honor God by mirroring his reconciling love and character (1 Cor. 10:31; 2 Cor. 3:18; Ex. 34:5-7).
7 When others behave like an enemy	I treat them like an enemy, thinking and speaking ill of them, or staying as far away from them as possible.	I walk in Jesus' steps by loving them, acting like a friend, and risking to be reconciled to them (Col. 1:21-22; Luke 6:27-28).
8 When I've done something wrong	I cling to my self-righteousness by hiding or minimizing my wrongs and shifting the blame to others.	I trust that Jesus has paid for all my sins, so I can stop hiding and find mercy and freedom in confession (1 John 1:9; Prov. 28:13; Matt. 7:3-5).
9 When others or I keep doing the same sins	I become discouraged and hopeless and give up on relationships or on working to change myself.	I have hope because Jesus promised to steadily change us, so I view conflict as a path to growth (Phil. 1:6).
10 When others have done wrong	I point out their sins with as much detail and persistence as is needed to force them to admit they are wrong.	I recall how kindly Jesus deals with me, so I seek to correct and restore others gently (Rom. 2:4; Gal. 6:1).
11 When others hurt me deeply	I dwell on their wrongs, indulge in self-pity, lash back, or avoid having anything to do with them again.	I forgive just as God has forgiven me, refusing to dwell on their sin or let it stand between us (Eph. 4:30-32).
12 When I feel inadequate, ashamed or vulnerable	I hide, compensate, posture or withdraw from reality and others or pretend to be better than I know I am.	I know that Jesus accepts me as I am and has removed my shame, renewed me as God's beloved child, and will raise me to glory (John 1:12; Col. 3:12; 1 Pet. 2:6).

**Remember:** Reflect much **on** Jesus and his gospel, and you will reflect much **of** Jesus and his gospel!

To study and apply the cited Scriptures, see [rw360.org/transformed](http://rw360.org/transformed).

See also [rw360.org/six-pamphlet-uses](http://rw360.org/six-pamphlet-uses) and [rw360.org/peacemaking-and-abuse](http://rw360.org/peacemaking-and-abuse)