



# Bringing Relational Wisdom Into Your Church

Relational Wisdom® 360

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## BRINGING RELATIONAL WISDOM® INTO CHURCH

Get upstream of conflict and equip members with relational skills that build unity, prevent conflict, strengthen marriages and enhance their Christian witness.

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### DAILY RELATIONAL CHALLENGES

In John 13:34-35, Jesus commanded Christians to love one another as he has loved us. When we live up to this calling, God is honored and people are drawn to Christ. But all too often, our Christian witness is stained with relational tensions and conflict:

- Leadership tensions and divisions
- Elder/staff misalignment or siloed teams
- Doctrinal and cultural controversies
- Small group conflicts and pastoral care overload
- Marriage, family and parenting tensions
- Social media controversies and gossip cycles
- Compassion fatigue and pastoral burnout
- Forced pastoral exits and church splits

### TRANSFORM YOUR CHURCH

As you strengthen your congregation's relational skills, you can build a church that is characterized by unity, wisdom and a compelling witness. Relational wisdom enables you to:

- Build a solidly united and supportive leadership team
- Shepherd members with humility, empathy and wisdom
- Teach members to resolve conflicts personally and privately
- Equip small group leaders as peacemakers and mediators
- Unify elders and staff around shared values and mission
- Train a Peace Sower team that shares your peacemaking load and enables you to spend more time with your family
- Strengthen members' ability to build an appealing witness
- Reduce exposure to threats of legal liability
- Use relational wisdom to spread the gospel in your community

## SUPPORTING STUDIES

Multiple studies reveal the value of relational skills training in Missions.

1. [Strike the Shepherd](#)
2. [Emotional Intelligence for Church and Ministry](#)
3. [Relational Wisdom Strengthen Both Families and Businesses](#)

## SET AN INSPIRING EXAMPLE AS A RELATIONAL LEADER

In 1 Timothy 4:15, the Apostle Paul gave his young protégé some life changing advice: *“Practice these things, immerse yourselves in them so that all may see your progress.”*

Modeling is the most effective way to teach relational skills and to set the stage for sharing the gospel (1 Cor. 11:1; John 13:35). As Paul teaches Timothy, the best way to become an effective model is to “practice these things and immerse yourself in them.”

Here are some practical ways that you and your leadership team can do this:

1. [Model humility, teachability and flexibility](#) (Phil. 2:3-4).
2. Realize that [sin can turn strengths into weaknesses](#) (1 Cor. 8:1).
3. Guard against [the seductiveness of power and its potential for abuse](#); (see [Power Causes Brain Damage](#) and [Psychology of Power](#); contrast with [Reagan, Lincoln, RW and You, Lincoln's Relational Wisdom](#) and [Nelson Mandela](#)).
4. Become [skilled peacemakers](#) and [conciliators](#) who [model confession](#) and inspire the “[Golden Result](#)” (Matt. 5:9; James 3:18; Matt. 7:12).
5. [Always bring the gospel to your people](#) (Rom. 5:1-11).
6. Develop and model [empathy and compassion](#) (Col. 3:12).
7. Show how to [redeem an offense](#) (Prov. 15:1).
8. Show your people how [political strife creates opportunities](#) (1 Cor. 10:31-11:1).
9. Use [gentle shepherding](#) and [loving discipline to restore lost sheep](#).
10. Be both [approachable](#) and [accountable](#) (Luke 7:37-38; Matt. 8:9).
11. Constantly [build passport](#) (John 4:7-30).
12. Always provide the [Three P's of Satisfaction](#) (1 Cor. 14:40; Matt. 7:120).
13. Show how to practice [clarity plus charity](#) (Matt. 7:12).
14. Learn how to [defuse explosive meetings](#) (Matt. 7:3-5).
15. Show that there is [a better way to handle](#) abuse (Prov. 28:13).
16. Show how to apply RW in every challenge of life, including [cancer](#).

Many of these principles are drawn from conciliation cases where churches *failed* to practice these concepts and consequently experienced major conflict. Your leadership team can avoid such experiences by putting these concepts into practice today.

## A STRATEGY FOR CHURCH GROWTH

Investing in relational skills training today can save your church from having to spend hundreds of leadership hours and thousands of dollars resolving serious conflict or healing a church split in the future (see [Strike the Shepherd](#)). As the old saying goes, “An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.” Here are some practical ways you can bring relational skills training to your church before conflict strikes.

1. Pray for guidance, asking him to give you wisdom, discernment and unity as you build a growth plan that fits your church.
2. To see how relational skills training can equip your leaders and your members to prevent and resolve serious conflicts, take a few minutes to read these real-life peacemaking and conciliation cases:
  - [Personal Peacemaking Cases](#)
  - [Informal Conciliation Cases](#)
  - [Formal Conciliation Cases](#)
3. Develop a plan for personal and organizational growth ([Download template here](#))
4. Start with yourself; practice these things, set an example (1 Tim. 4:15).
  - Download free resources ([RW App](#), [RW Blog](#), [Free Downloads](#))
  - Foundational training ([Discovering Relational Wisdom](#), [Relational Peacemaking](#)).
  - [RW Shepherd Certificate](#)
  - [Advanced Training and Certification](#)
5. Use relevant training resources to disciple your current leadership team and to screen and train new leaders.
6. Use this 70-page ebooklet, [Guiding People Through Conflict](#), to learn the basic principles of conflict coaching, mediation and arbitration.
7. Build a [Peace Sower Team](#) to share training, coaching and peacemaking responsibilities (Exod. 18:22-23).
8. Use *faith-based* relational wisdom and peacemaking [group study sets](#) for Sunday school, group studies and professional staff development.
9. Use [Relational Commitments](#) to clarify and obtain informed consent to your pastoral care policies and practices, which can reduce misunderstandings, conflict and exposure to legal liability.
10. Use PACE (Professional and Community Engagement) resources to spread the gospel in your community (see [Using RW for Outreach, Evangelism and Church Growth](#), [PACE Program](#), [PACE FAQs](#), [RW Strengthens Both Families and Businesses](#); [PACE Instructor Training](#)).