



PEACE SOWER TEAMS™

Promoting Peace, Unity and Thriving Relationships

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God gives his people a marvelous promise in James 3:18: ***“Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.”***

This “sow to reap” metaphor reminds us that peace and unity among Christians does not grow spontaneously. To see a harvest of peace, unity and godly relationships, leaders are called to diligently sow and nurture the seeds of gospel-based relational principles.

As relationships thrive, the weeds of conflict have less room to grow, which clears the way for stronger families, more fruitful ministry and church growth, improved work performance and productivity, and most importantly, a compelling witness as Christians live out the gospel in their families, workplaces and communities.

Following Moses’ Example

Peace Sower Teams are designed to support church, ministry and business leaders’ efforts to sow and nurture the seeds of peace. These discipleship teams are modeled after the ministry teams that Moses established to help him maintain peace within the nation of Israel. Rather than exhaust himself trying to solve every conflict, Moses selected “wise, understanding and experienced men” to resolve differences and promote unity within the community. As his wise father-in-law predicted,

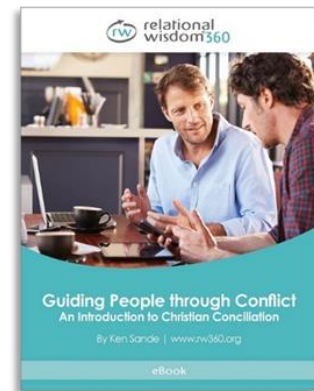
“So it will be easier for you, and they will bear the burden with you. If you do this, God will direct you, you will be able to endure, and all this people also will go to their place in peace” (Exodus 18:22-23; see also Deut. 1:9-18).

Peace Sower Teams promote this God-honoring harvest of peace and unity by being both “reactive” (reconciling people in conflict) and “proactive” (teaching and coaching people to develop skills that prevent conflict). Ideally each team will include members who focus on one or more of three complementary discipleship ministries.

- **RW Instructors** provide in-house training in [relational wisdom](#) or “RW” (which is a biblical form of emotional intelligence) and [peacemaking](#) through seminars, group studies and Sunday school classes. They also provide regular reminders of these concepts through social media, articles and testimonies. Instructors. They are also equipped to spread the gospel in their communities by using RW360’s “[values-based](#)” resources to make introductory presentations in businesses, nonprofits, schools and other secular settings (see [Using RW for Witnessing and Evangelism](#)).
- **RW Coaches** provide **RW life coaching** (helping others to develop skills that strengthen their relationships and enable them to “get upstream of conflict”) and **conflict coaching** (assisting individuals to apply RW and peacemaking principles to resolve existing conflicts). A key goal of this ministry is to strengthen relational skills and reduce the need for prolonged pastoral counseling when relationships fail.



- **RW Conciliators** mediate conflicts between people who are unable to resolve differences on their own. The conciliation process may involve **conflict coaching** (advising an individual how to resolve a dispute personally and privately), **mediation** (meeting with both parties to improve understanding and negotiate an agreement) or **arbitration** (listening to both sides and rendering a binding decision). The biblical basis and practical applications of these processes are described in a free 70-page ebooklet, [Guiding People Through Conflict](#).



A HARVEST OF PEACE AND EVANGELISM

Peacemaker Ministries piloted a similar “peacemaking team” concept during Ken Sande’s tenure as president, which led to the establishment of over 200 church-based teams. This [newsletter](#) shows how quickly one church began the process of developing a team. This testimony shows how quickly one of these teams was producing a harvest of peace and reconciliation: [A Peacemaking Team in Action](#).

These teams served under the authority of ordained church leaders and usually included at least one or two church officers. Most teams involved three to six members who volunteered 120-180 hours annually (combined) and averaged 23 training events, 28 coached individuals and 6 mediations per year.

Whenever peacemaking principles are sown and nurtured through these types of discipleship activities, churches can experience a harvest of reconciliation, peace and evangelism. For example:

- Church leaders learn how to turn conflict into an opportunity to model humility, confession and forgiveness (see [A Wave of Confessions Saves a Church](#))
- Members learn how to take peacemaking principles into the workplace and use them resolve conflicts and share the gospel with coworkers (see [Reconciling Two Stubborn Scientists](#))
- Members are less likely to leave their church because of unresolved conflict (see [Four Amazing Church Discipline Cases](#)).
- Married couples are enabled to address relational issues before they require extensive pastoral counseling or result in divorce (see [How to Resurrect a Dead Relationship](#) and [The Best Way to Rewrite History](#)).
- Pastors are inspired to model peacemaking as they shepherd members through difficult conflicts (see [Daddy Is That You?](#) and [Turning Assault into Reconciliation](#)).
- Pastors are spared from many hours of counseling and conflict resolution, which allows them to devote more time to their preaching ministry and to nurture their own families, while also guarding them from burnout (see [Guiding People through Conflict](#), pp. 62-63).
- Churches can develop teams to take relational skills training into businesses, schools, nonprofits and other organizations in their communities, which can draw people to the church and introduce them to the gospel of Christ (see [Using RW for Witnessing and Evangelism](#)).

TRAINING COSTS AND SAVINGS

A Peace Sower Team should include at least two cross-trained members. In a larger church, a team could include six or more members who focus on specific types of ministry, such as: (1) one person qualified to serve as an RW Shepherd; (2) two people qualified to serve as instructors; (3) one person to serve as a

coach; and (3) two people qualified to serve as both coaches and conciliators. The cost to train this type of six-person team will be approximately **\$4,000**. RW360 recommends that churches pay the \$500 registration fee plus half of the individual training costs (**a total of ~\$2,250**) while the individual team members pay half of their own training costs (~\$1,750, an average of \$290 per person).

These one-time costs can be more than covered by the financial savings produced by a Peace Sower Team, which can easily exceed \$4,000 every year:

- As church members learn how to deal with relational tensions more effectively, they are less likely to leave their church because of conflict. Their continued fellowship not only preserves peace in the body but also maintains their financial support for the church, which averages \$2,224 per year for a typical family in America (see [Church Giving Statistics](#)).
- The members of a Peace Sower Team usually provide between 120 and 180 hours of volunteer ministry each year. If this service was instead provided by a paid pastor, the financial value of that many hours of work would be between \$5,500 and \$8,500 per year (see [Pastor Salaries in U.S.](#)).
- By relieving pastors from many hours of stressful counseling or conflict resolution, Peace Sower Teams can reduce the likelihood that pastors will burn out or leave a church because of conflict. Preserving pastors in ministry not only spares their churches the trauma of losing a beloved shepherd but also guards the church from the financial costs of searching for, interviewing, and relocating a new pastor, which can easily exceed \$83,000 (see [Strike the Shepherd](#)).

Ministries and businesses that establish Peace Sower Teams to serve their staffs can see many benefits as well, including improved job performance and career advancement, a more creative and productive work environment and higher profitability, resulting in a return of \$1.50 to \$6.85 for every dollar invested in this staff training (see [Employers Reap a Double Benefit with RW Training](#)).

The training required to establish a Peace Sower Team will be available 100% online. Even so, one of the best ways to sharpen a vision for a Peace Sower Team is to bring a group of potential team members to RW360's annual [Sowing Peace Conference](#) where you can meet like-minded groups and receive inspirational training on how to launch and manage one of these life-changing teams.

The registration fee for a Peace Sower Team is \$500 and the annual renewal fee is \$250. Upon registration, you will receive these resources and benefits:

- You will receive a *Peace Sower Team Manual* that provides detailed guidance on recruiting, training and managing team members; accountability to church leadership; church-wide promotion and training; and community outreach.
- Your Team may select \$600 worth of free training resources (any combination of a Discovering RW Group Study Set, a Relational Peacemaking Group Study Set and additional study guides).
- Your Team Leader will receive a priority response when using RW360's Conciliator Hotline.
- Your Team Leader will be invited to participate in quarterly online Iron Sharpening Iron discussions of best practices for Peace Sower Teams.
- Your Team will be able to connect and collaborate with other Peace Sower Teams in your community and denomination.

For training information, see our [Academic Catalog](#). To register your Team, go to [RW Academy](#).