



Relational Peacemaking™

Turning conflict into an opportunity™

About the Course Designer

Ken Sande is the founder of Peacemaker Ministries and Relational Wisdom 360. Trained as an engineer, lawyer and mediator, Ken has conciliated hundreds of family, business, church and legal conflicts.

As president of RW360, he now focuses on teaching people how to “get upstream of conflict” by building strong relationships in the family, church and workplace. He teaches internationally and is the author of numerous books, articles and training resources, including *The Peacemaker*, which has sold over 500,000 copies in twenty languages. He is a Certified Relational Wisdom Instructor and Conciliator, Emotional Intelligence Certified Instructor (through TalentSmart) and has served as a church elder and as an Editorial Advisor for Christianity Today.

He and his wife, Corlette, have two adult children and a growing number of grandchildren, and love to hike and ski in the mountains near their home in Billings, Montana.



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THIS STUDY GUIDE BELONGS TO

Introduction

WELCOME TO DISCOVERING RELATIONAL PEACEMAKING™

This course is designed to teach you how to improve your ability to resolve conflict in a way that leads to more authentic, enjoyable and durable relationships. The principles you will learn have the potential to impact every area of your life, including your worship, marital intimacy, parenting and friendships, as well as your workplace performance and career advancement.

I say “potential to impact” because there are no quick and easy shortcuts to developing better peacemaking skills. We’ve all developed attitudes and habits that undermine our ability to deal with conflict, and it takes a lot of determination and effort to change the way we engage others when we are at odds with them. The good news is that we can change! This process will go more smoothly if we are willing to admit where we’ve gotten it wrong in the past, if we decide to learn and practice new

relational skills, and if we are open to accepting advice and assistance from those who love us and want to help us grow.

My motivation for developing this seminar is my belief that every person on the face of the earth has been made in the image of God, and since God is a highly relational peacemaker, we are designed and called to be highly relational peacemakers as well. That both excites and challenges me!

Your motive for exploring these concepts may be different from mine. That’s okay—we’re all on a journey of learning and growing. Whatever your motive is, I hope that what you learn in this seminar will enable you to better understand yourself and those around you and to enjoy deeper, more fulfilling relationships in every area of your life.

Ken Sande

SCRIPTURE, MOVIES & FEEDBACK

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We would welcome your evaluation of this seminar and the individual who teaches it to you. Please visit rw360.org/survey and give us the benefit of your experience, comments and suggestions on how we can improve the delivery of this material.

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Study guide design by Sarah Lagace | v. 1.1

Supplemental Resources Available At:
rw360.org/downloads

Relational Peacemaking: Study and Discussion Questions
Relational Peacemaking: Personal Application Workbook
Relational Peacemaking: Case Studies



going beyond
emotional intelligence™



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SESSION 1

Conflict Provides Opportunities

The Peacemaker¹

- Day 1 - Pages 11-16
- Day 2 - Pages 17-20
- Day 3 - Pages 21-25
- Day 4 - Pages 25-29
- Day 5 - Pages 29-31

Memory Verse

"So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God."

- 1 Cor. 10:31

Key Principle

Conflict is an opportunity to reflect the reconciling power of Jesus and his gospel.

Icebreaker

Briefly introduce yourself and explain why you want to study peacemaking. One way to begin your explanation is to answer the following question: "When you were a child, were you more of peace-faker, a peace-breaker or a peacemaker?"

Learning Together

GOING BEYOND CONFLICT RESOLUTION™

The primary goal of peacemaking is to **reflect the reconciling power of Jesus and his gospel**. If you've resolved a conflict without drawing attention to the reconciling power of Jesus and his gospel, you've wasted the conflict!

RELATIONAL PEACEMAKING IS THREE-DIMENSIONAL

"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you" (Eph. 4:30-32).

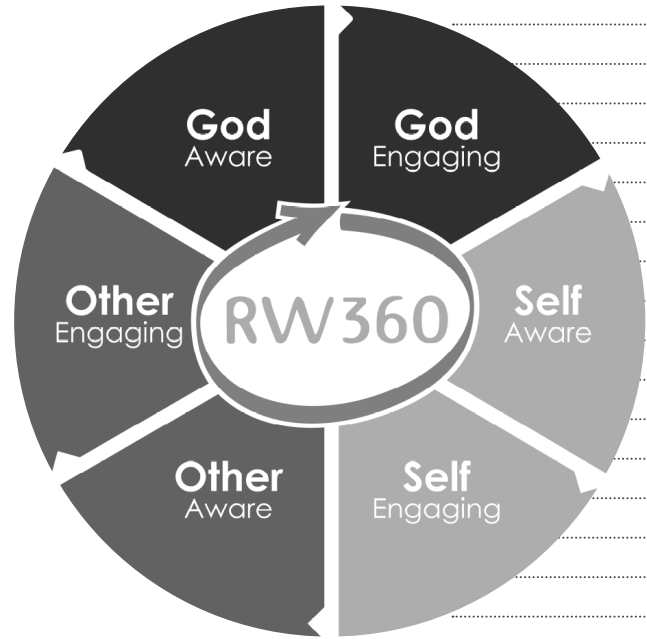
The Bible's teaching on relationships may be organized into a paradigm called "relational wisdom," which includes six core skills or disciplines: God-aware, God-engaging, Self-aware, Self-engaging, Other-aware, Other-engaging.

¹You will grow more through this study if you read relevant sections from *The Peacemaker* (Ken Sande, Baker Books, 2004) either before or after each lesson. For your convenience, these sections are divided into five daily readings of 4-5 pages each.



Relational wisdom, in essence, is the desire and ability to obey Jesus’ timeless command, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart ... and love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 22:37-39).

As you learn these relational skills, you can experience multiple benefits, including stronger and deeper relationships, less conflict at home, at church and in the workplace, improved job performance and a more compelling witness for Christ.¹



UNDERSTANDING CONFLICT

1. What is conflict?

- A difference in opinion or purpose that frustrates someone’s goals or desires.

2. Is conflict good or bad?

- The Bible does not teach that all conflict is bad. Some differences are natural and beneficial, while others can cause harm and estrangement. Our response to conflict often makes all the difference.

3. What causes conflict?

- Misunderstandings (Josh. 22:10-34)
- Differences in values, goals, gifts, calling, priorities, expectations, interests, or opinions (Acts 15:39; 1 Cor. 12:12-12-31)
- Competition over limited resources (Gen. 13:1-12)
- Sinful attitudes and desires that lead to sinful words and actions (James 4:1-3)

THE FOUR G’S: A GOD-CENTERED RESPONSE TO CONFLICT

- **G**lorify God (1 Cor. 10:31).
How can I please and honor God in this situation?
- **G**et the log out of your own eye (Matt 7:5)
How can I show Jesus’ work in me by taking responsibility for my contribution to this conflict?
- **G**ently restore (Gal. 6:1)
How can I lovingly serve others by helping them take responsibility for their contribution to this conflict?
- **G**o and be reconciled (Matt 5:24)
How can I demonstrate the forgiveness of God and encourage a reasonable solution to this conflict?

Each of the Four G’s is guided and empowered by the fifth and most important “G,” the Gospel of Christ: “Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners” (1 Tim. 1:15).

¹An 8-lesson course on improving your relational wisdom is available at rw-academy.org.

THE SLIPPERY SLOPE OF CONFLICT



Escape Responses | Peace-Faking

The three responses found on the left side of the curve are directed at getting away from the conflict situation rather than resolving it. These responses are:

- **Denial:** Pretend that a conflict does not exist or refuse to do what you should do to resolve it properly. This is always a wrong response to conflict (see Gen. 16:1-6; 2 Sam. 2:22-25)
- **Flight:** Run away from the person with whom you are having a conflict. This is a legitimate response only when it is presently impossible to resolve the conflict in a constructive manner (see Gen. 16:6-8; 1 Sam. 19:9-10).
- **Suicide:** A person takes his or her own life. This is always a wrong response to conflict (see 1 Sam. 31:4).

Attack Responses | Peace-Breaking

The three responses found on the right side of the curve are directed at bringing as much pressure to bear on opponents as is necessary to defeat their claims and eliminate their opposition. These responses are:

- **Assault:** Use force or intimidation (physical, verbal, financial, or otherwise) to compel an opponent to give in to your demands (see Acts 6:8-15).
- **Litigation:** A matter is taken before the civil authorities for a decision. At times this is a legitimate response, but it should be used only after exhausting the peacemaking responses (with a few rare exceptions) (see Matt. 5:25-26; 1 Cor. 6:1-8; also Acts 24:1-26; Rom. 13:1-5).
- **Murder:** Kill the person or persons who oppose you. Murder is always wrong (Acts 7:54-58), even when it's done only through hateful thoughts (1 John 3:15).

Peacemaking Responses | Peace-Making

The six responses found along the top portion of the curve are directed at finding a just and mutually agreeable solution to a conflict. These responses may be divided into two subcategories:

Personal peacemaking responses, involving only the parties:

- **Overlook an offense:** One person deliberately and unilaterally decides to forgive a wrong and walk away from a conflict (see Prov. 19:11; 12:16; 17:14; 1 Pet. 4:8; Col. 3:13).
- **Reconciliation:** Personal offenses are resolved through confession, leading to forgiveness and reconciliation (see Gal. 6:1-3; Matt. 18:15; 5:23-24; Prov. 28:13).
- **Negotiation:** Substantive issues are resolved through a bargaining process in which the parties seek to reach a mutually agreeable settlement of their differences through an exchange of promises (see Phil. 2:3-4).

Assisted peacemaking responses, involving others in the parties' church or community:

- **Mediation:** One or two other people meet with the parties to improve communication and facilitate a resolution. (Mediators can only suggest solutions and have no power to impose a solution.) (See Matt. 18:16).
- **Arbitration:** When the parties cannot come to a voluntary solution, they explain the matter to one or more arbitrators who are empowered to render a binding decision on the matter (see 1 Cor. 6:1-8).
- **Accountability:** When a Christian party refuses to do what is right and just, the church formally intervenes to promote repentance and reconciliation (see Matt. 18:17-20).

Supplemental Resources Available At: rw360.org/downloads

Relational Peacemaking: Study and Discussion Questions
Relational Peacemaking: Personal Application Workbook
Relational Peacemaking: Case Studies

Key Principle:

Conflict is an opportunity to reflect the reconciling power of Jesus and his gospel.

SESSION 2

Live At Peace

The Peacemaker

- Day 1 - Pages 31-36
- Day 2 - Pages 36-40
- Day 3 - Pages 43-47
- Day 4 - Pages 47-51
- Day 5 - Pages 51-57
- Optional Pages 270-275

Memory Verse

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another: just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."
- John 13:34-35

Key Principle

Living at peace is a key to our Christian witness.

Icebreaker

What comes to mind when you hear the word "peace"?

Learning Together

CONFLICT PROVIDES OPPORTUNITIES

"So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved. Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ" (1 Cor. 10:31-11:1).

Opportunity #1: Glorify God

Show who he is, what he is like, and what he is doing.

- God is glorified when his people depend on and trust in him and obey his commands, even when it seems to put them at a disadvantage (see Ps. 37:5-6, John 14:15-31; Luke 6:27-28).
- Key questions:
 - "How can I please and honor the Lord in this situation?"
 - "How can I bring praise to Jesus by showing that he has saved me and is changing me?"

Opportunity #2: Serve other people (AKA, “breathe grace,” Eph. 4:29)

- Help to carry their burdens (Gal. 6:2, 10)
- Help them to change through constructive confrontation (Gal. 6:1)
- Teach and encourage others by example (1 Tim. 4:12; see also Titus 2:7)

Opportunity #3: Grow to be like Christ

“For those whom God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son” (Rom. 8:28-29; see also 2 Cor. 3:18).

STEWARDED CONFLICT

- A peacemaker views conflict not as an accident, but as an opportunity where we can use the resources God gives us to glorify him, serve others and grow to be like Christ (see Matt. 25:21; Luke 12:42-47, 17:10; John 12:24-26).
- A steward also realizes that only God can control outcomes and that successful peacemaking means focusing not on *results*, but on *faithfulness* to God.

GOD CALLS US TO LIVE AT PEACE

The three dimensions of peace:

- Peace with God (Col. 1:19-20)
- Peace with others (Rom. 12:18)
- Peace within yourself (Isa. 32:17)
- Inner peace is a byproduct of being right with God and others.

Our witness for Christ is enhanced by peace and unity in the church

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:34-35; see also 17:20-23).

Jesus calls us to seek reconciliation ahead of worship

“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift” (Matt. 5:23-24).

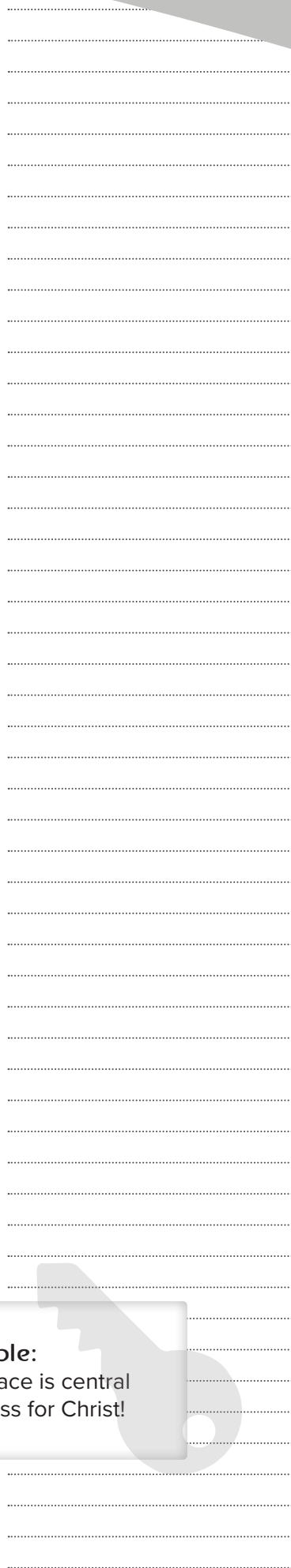
Peacemaking shows that we take the gospel seriously (Eph. 4:1-3).

“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Even our lawsuits should be resolved within the church (1 Cor. 6:1-8).

“When one of you has a grievance against another, does he dare go to law before the unrighteous instead of the saints? Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to try trivial cases?” (vv. 1-2)

Key Principle:
Living at peace is central to our witness for Christ!



SESSION 3

Trust in the Lord & Do Good

The Peacemaker

- Day 1 - Pages 59-62
- Day 2 - Pages 62-65
- Day 3 - Pages 65-66
- Day 4 - Pages 67-70
- Day 5 - Pages 70-72
- Optional Pages 287-288

Memory Verse

"Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday."

- Psalm 37:5-6

Key Principle

Trusting God frees us to respond to conflict biblically.

Icebreaker

When you were young, who was the peacemaker in your family or circle of friends? How did God use that person to bless you or draw you nearer to Christ?

Learning Together

1. FAITHFUL PEACEMAKING REQUIRES A BIG GOD

- **God is sovereign--supreme, unlimited and totally in control.**
"I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose'" (Isa. 46:10; see Dan. 2:20-22; 4:34-37).
- **God is not only all-powerful but also all-loving--He is for us!**
"Once God has spoken; twice have I heard this: that power belongs to God, and that to you, O Lord, belongs steadfast love" (Ps. 62:11-12; see Isa. 43:2-3; Matt. 10:30-31).
- **Therefore, nothing happens by "chance" (not even suffering or conflict!).**
"Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? And not one of them will fall to the ground apart from your Father. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matt. 10:29-30).

"Jesus [was] delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God [and] crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men" (Acts 2:23).



“For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps” (1 Pet. 2:20-21).¹

- **Trusting does not require understanding**

“The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things that are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all of the words of this law” (Deut. 29:29).

2. THE PATH OF TRUST HAS BEEN WELL MARKED

- **Joseph**

“Do not be distressed or angry with yourselves because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life.... As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today” (Gen. 45:5, 50:20).

- **David**

“Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. He will bring forth our righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday” (Psalm 37:5-6).

- **Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego**

“Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of your hand, O king. But if not, be it known to you, O king, that we will not serve your gods or worship the golden image that you have set up” (Dan. 3:16-18).

- **Peter**

“For truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place” (Acts. 4:27).

- **Paul**

“Which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that day what has been entrusted to me” (2 Tim. 1:12)

- **Jesus (Matt. 26:42)**

“My Father, if this cannot pass unless I drink it, your will be done” (Matt. 26:42).

3. TRUST IS A DECISION BASED ON FAITH.

- “Why me, Lord!” Meaning, “This isn’t fair!” vs.
- “Why, Lord?” Meaning, “Please show me all that I need to know so I can cooperate fully with you.”

Key Principle:
Trusting God frees us to respond to conflict in a biblically faithful way.

¹This does not mean that we should remain passive in an abusive family, church or workplace relationship. See rw360.org/abuse.

SESSION 4

Is This Really Worth Fighting Over?

The Peacemaker

- Day 1 - Pages 75-78
- Day 2 - Pages 79-83
- Day 3 - Pages 83-90
- Day 4 - Pages 90-91
- Day 5 - Pages 92-98

Memory Verse

“First take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother’s eye.”

— Matt. 7:5

Key Principle

A gracious, gentle attitude can prevent most conflicts.

Icebreaker

Complete this sentence: “Something that easily robs me of peace is _____.”

Learning Together

1. TWO KINDS OF LOGS TO REMOVE:

- A critical, negative attitude that leads to unnecessary conflict.
- Actual sinful desires, words or actions.

2. GOD CALLS US TO OVERLOOK MINOR OFFENSES

“Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense” (Prov. 19:11).

- **Why?** To imitate the Lord
“The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. He will not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever. He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities” (Ps. 103:8-10).
- **When?** If the offense is not dishonoring God, if your relationship has not been permanently damaged, if others are not being hurt.

3. CHECK YOUR ATTITUDE—AND CHANGE IT

- Rejoice in the Lord always
“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice”! (Phil. 4:4).
- Let your gentleness be evident to all
“Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand” (v. 5).
- Replace anxiety with prayer
“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (v. 6-7).
- See things as they really are
“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things” (v. 8).
- Practice what you’ve learned
“What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you” (v. 9).

4. COUNT THE COST

“Come to terms quickly with your accuser while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison” (Matt. 5:25; Luke 14:28).

Key Principle:

A gracious, gentle attitude can prevent most conflicts.

SESSION 5

Conflict Starts in the Heart

The Peacemaker

- Day 1 - Pages 100-103
- Day 2 - Pages 103-106
- Day 3 - Pages 106-109
- Day 4 - Pages 109-112
- Day 5 - Pages 112-115

Memory Verse

“What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?”

- James 4:1

Key Principle

God uses conflict to reveal our idols.

Icebreaker

What thoughts or images come to mind when you hear the word “idol”?

Learning Together

1. THE PROGRESSION OF AN IDOL

“What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions” (James 4:1-3).

- I desire
- I demand – The birth of an idol!

An idol is anything apart from God that we depend on to be happy, fulfilled, or secure. It is something other than God that we set our heart on (Luke 12:29), that rules us (Eph. 5:5), or that we trust, fear, or serve (Isa. 42:17; Matt. 6:24; Luke 12:4-5). Given its controlling effect on our lives, an idol may be referred to as a “functional god.”

SESSION 6

Confession Brings Freedom

The Peacemaker

- Day 1 - Pages 117-119
- Day 2 - Pages 119-123
- Day 3 - Pages 123-126
- Day 4 - Pages 126-130
- Day 5 - Pages 131-136
- Optional Pages 276-278

Memory Verse

“He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper; but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.”

- Prov. 28:13

Key Principle

Confession brings freedom.

Icebreaker

Proverbs 28:13 promises, “He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper; but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.” Describe a book or movie that illustrates the consequences of either concealing or confessing sin.

Learning Together

THE SEVEN A’S OF CONFESSION

1. Address everyone involved

“And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, ‘Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold’” (Luke 19:8).

2. Avoid if, but and maybe (Ps. 51)

3. Admit specifically (sinful desires/idols, words and actions)

Sinful desires/idols

- Inherently sinful cravings or attitudes, such as pride, lust, greed or hatred (Matt. 15:19)
- Good things that we want too much, without which we feel we cannot be content, fulfilled, secure or happy (James 4:11)

Sinful words

- Harsh, reckless or worthless words
- Grumbling and complaining
- Falsehood -- any deception or twisting of the truth
- Gossip -- revealing or discussing personal information about others with people who are not part of the problem or the solution
- Slander -- speaking false and malicious words

Sinful actions

- Not keeping your word
- Not respecting authority or misusing authority
- Not treating others as you want to be treated (Matt. 7:12)

4. Acknowledge the hurt. Express sincere sorrow for the way you affected others.**5. Accept the consequences**

“Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants” (Luke 15:19; 19:8).


6. Alter (change) your behavior

“Put off ... put on” (Eph. 4:22-32).

7. Ask for forgiveness and Allow time

“Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you” (Gen. 50:17).

Caution: Never make a confession to simply get a burden off your shoulders or to minimize the consequences of your sin. Rather, your goal should always be to glorify God and to minister (bring healing and comfort) to the person you have wronged.



Key Principle:
Confession brings
freedom.

PART 3 GENTLY RESTORE *“How can I lovingly serve others by helping them take responsibility for their contribution to this conflict?”*

SESSION 7

Just Between the Two of You

The Peacemaker

- Day 1 - Pages 139-142
- Day 2 - Pages 143-148
- Day 3 - Pages 148-152
- Day 4 - Pages 152-155
- Day 5 - Pages 155-160

Memory Verse

“Brothers, if anyone is caught in a transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness.”

- James 4:1

Key Principle

Constructive correction is a sign of genuine love.

Icebreaker

Think of a person who has been able to offer you advice or correction without making you feel defensive. What was it in that person’s attitude or approach that made his or her words easier to hear?

Learning Together

1. GOD CALLS US TO LOVINGLY CORRECT ONE ANOTHER

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother” (Matt. 18:15).

2. CORRECTING MEANS MORE THAN CONFRONTING

“Brothers, if anyone is caught in a transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness” (Gal. 6:1).

“If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray” (Matt. 18:12-14; Gal. 6:1).



3. SOONER OR LATER, GO FACE-TO-FACE

Jacob and Esau (see Gen. 32-33); Joseph and his brothers (50:15-16); David and Absalom (2 Sam. 14:24); you and others (Matt. 5:23-24; 18:15)

4. GO WHEN SOMEONE'S SINS ARE TOO SERIOUS TO OVERLOOK

- Is it dishonoring God? (Rom. 2:21-24)
- Is it damaging your relationship?
- Is it hurting others (including yourself)? (Luke 17:2-3; 1 Cor. 5:6)
- Is it hurting the offender?
- “My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins” (James 5:19-20).

5. SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- First get the log out of your eye
- Approach non-Christians humbly and gently
- Respect those in authority and those under authority
- Deal cautiously with indications of trauma, abuse or power imbalances¹
- Go tentatively and repeatedly

Key Principle:
Constructive correction is
a sign of genuine love.

¹See rw360.org/abuse.

PART 3 GENTLY RESTORE *“How can I lovingly serve others by helping them take responsibility for their contribution to this conflict?”*

SESSION 8

Speak the Truth in Love

The Peacemaker

- Day 1 - Pages 162-166
- Day 2 - Pages 166-171
- Day 3 - Pages 171-174
- Day 4 - Pages 174-178
- Day 5 - Pages 179-183

Memory Verse

“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

- Eph 4:29

Key Principle

Breathe grace rather than judgment.

Icebreaker

Who is the best listener you know? What makes you feel like he or she is really listening to you?

Learning Together

1. BRING HOPE THROUGH THE GOSPEL

“If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.... If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:7-9; John 4:7-26).

2. BE QUICK TO LISTEN

“Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger” (James 1:19).

“If one gives an answer before he hears, it is his folly and shame” (Prov. 18:13).



3. THE TONGUE OF THE WISE BRINGS HEALING

“There is one whose rash words are like sword thrusts, but the tongue of the wise brings healing” (Prov. 12:18).

- Breathe grace, speaking only what will build others up.
“Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear” (Eph 4:29).
- Make charitable judgments (believe the best about others until facts prove otherwise).
“So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them” (Matt. 7:12).
- Talk in person whenever possible.
“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone” (Matt. 18:15).
- Talk from beside not from above.
“For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:23; 1 Tim. 1:15).

4. RECOGNIZE YOUR LIMITS

“If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all” (Rom. 12:18).

“And the Lord’s servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, correcting his opponents with gentleness. / God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will” (2 Tim. 2:24-26).

- Your job: To speak the truth in love (breathe grace) as clearly and persuasively as possible.
- God’s job: To change people

Key Principle:
Breathe grace rather than judgment.

PART 3 GENTLY RESTORE *“How can I lovingly serve others by helping them take responsibility for their contribution to this conflict?”*

SESSION 9

Take One or Two Others Along

The Peacemaker

- Day 1 - Pages 185-187
- Day 2 - Pages 187-190
- Day 3 - Pages 191-193
- Day 4 - Pages 193-196
- Day 5 - Pages 197-199
- Optional Pages 279-286

Memory Verse

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you.”
- Matt 15:16

Key Principle

Mutual accountability is God’s gift and blessing to the church.

Icebreaker

Describe a way that someone “breathed grace” to you recently, or a way that you “breathed grace” to someone else.

Learning Together

1. STEP ONE: OVERLOOK MINOR OFFENSES

“The vexation of a fool is known at once, but the prudent ignores an insult” (Prov. 12:16).

2. STEP TWO: TALK PRIVATELY

“If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother” (Matt. 18:15).

3. STEP THREE: TAKE ONE OR TWO OTHERS ALONG AS RECONCILERS

“But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses” (Matt. 18:16).

- To encourage self-control and courtesy
- To ask questions, clarify facts
- To counsel and admonish by God’s Word



- To expand resources
- To observe conduct and report to churches
- To mediate or arbitrate (1 Cor. 6:1-8)

4. STEP FOUR: TELL IT TO THE CHURCH (ACCOUNTABILITY)

“If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church” (Matt. 18:17)

- Implicit in Matthew 18 is the goal of keeping the matter as private as possible as long as possible. Therefore, “tell it to the church” should first involve telling only church leaders and requesting their assistance.

5. STEP FIVE: TREAT THE OTHER PERSON AS A NONBELIEVER

“And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them” (Matt. 17:-20).

- To convict and restore those who stray (1 Cor. 5:1-13; 2 Thess. 3:14)

If a person hardens his heart after repeated appeals and refuses to listen to the church, he is acting like a non-Christian. Therefore, Jesus commands that we should treat him like a non-Christian. This does not mean that you cut off all contact or treat the person in a rude manner (unless he is persistently divisive, Titus 3:10), for that is not how Jesus treated pagans and tax collectors. Rather, it means that you do not pretend that the person is in good standing with God. Instead of viewing the person as the object of Christian fellowship or pastoral care, he should be viewed as the object of evangelism.

“Nothing is so cruel as the tenderness that consigns another to his sin. Nothing can be more compassionate than the severe rebuke that calls a brother back from the path of sin.” Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*

- To guard others from stumbling (1 Cor. 5:6; 1 Tim. 5:20; Titus 3:10-11).
- To protect God’s name (Rom. 2:24)

6. STEP SIX: FORGIVE AND RESTORE THE REPENTANT

“What do you think? If a man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go in search of the one that went astray? And if he finds it, truly, I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine that never went astray” (Matt. 18:12-14; 2 Cor. 2:5-11).

Key Principle:

Mutual accountability is God’s gift and blessing to the church.

3. FORGIVENESS IS A DECISION MODELED AFTER GOD’S FORGIVENESS.

“Forgive us our debts as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Matt. 6:12).

“Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you” (Col. 3:13).

“Love . . . does not count up wrongdoing” (1 Cor. 13:4-5).

The Four Promises of Forgiveness:

In response to God’s love for me and in reliance on his grace, I forgive you. In particular, with God’s help ...

- I promise I will not dwell on this incident.
- I promise I will not bring up this incident and use it against you.
- I promise I will not talk to others about this incident
- I promise I will not allow this incident to stand between us or hinder our personal relationship

4. RECONCILIATION TAKES WORK

“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:1-3).

It takes time and deliberate effort to forgive and to rebuild trust, especially after a serious betrayal (see Eph. 3:30-32; Col. 3:12-14; 1 Thess. 5:15).

You can’t forgive in your own strength. Only God can give us the desire and power to truly forgive others’ sins (see Phil. 2:13).

Be inspired by God’s forgiveness! (Eph. 4:32; Matt. 18:21-32)

Renounce sinful attitudes and unrealistic expectations (Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13), such as:

- Expecting the offender to earn or deserve forgiveness
- Desiring to punish the offender
- Demanding a guarantee

The “Replacement Principle” can speed forgiveness:

“But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you” (Luke 6:27–28).

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things” (Phil. 4:8).

The Young Peacemaker

Good thought
Hurt you not
Gossip never
Friends forever

Key Principle:
Our forgiveness shows what we think of God’s forgiveness.

PART 4 GO & BE RECONCILED *How can I demonstrate the forgiveness of God and encourage a reasonable solution to this conflict?*

SESSION 11

Look Also to the Interests of Others

The Peacemaker

- Day 1 - Pages 225-228
- Day 2 - Pages 228-231
- Day 3 - Pages 231-233
- Day 4 - Pages 234-240
- Day 5 - Pages 240-245
- Optional Pages 289-297

Memory Verse

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.”

- Phi 2:3-4

Key Principle

When you need to negotiate, **PAUSE**.

Icebreaker

What is one of the most insightful or funniest negotiations you’ve ever seen or experienced?

Learning Together

1. WE NEGOTIATE CONSTANTLY... BUT OFTEN NOT THOUGHTFULLY

2. COMPETITIVE NEGOTIATION IS NATURAL BUT COSTLY

“For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 2:21).

3. COOPERATIVE NEGOTIATION IS CHALLENGING BUT REWARDING.

“Love . . . does not insist on its own way (1 Cor. 13:4-5; see Matt. 22:39).

“Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Phil. 2:3-4; see Matt. 7:12; 1 Cor. 10:24).



4. WHEN YOU NEED TO NEGOTIATE, PAUSE:

PREPARE

“Commit your work to the LORD, and your plans will be established” (Prov. 16:3).

AFFIRM RELATIONSHIPS (ESTHER 5:1-4)

UNDERSTAND INTERESTS (PHIL. 2:1-4)

Interests are what really motivate people and give rise to positions; an interest may be a concern, desire, need, limitation or something a person values or fears. The better you understand others' interests (as well as your own), the more likely you are to develop acceptable solutions.

“[Abigail] fell at [David’s] feet and said, ‘On me alone, my lord, be the guilt. Please let your servant speak in your ears, and hear the words of your servant.... Please forgive the trespass of your servant. For the Lord will certainly make my lord a sure house, because my lord is fighting the battles of the Lord, and evil shall not be found in you so long as you live. If men rise up to pursue you and to seek your life, the life of my lord shall be bound in the bundle of the living in the care of the Lord your God. And the lives of your enemies he shall sling out as from the hollow of a sling. And when the Lord has done to my lord according to all the good that he has spoken concerning you and has appointed you prince over Israel, my lord shall have no cause of grief or pangs of conscience for having shed blood without cause or for my lord working salvation himself” (1 Sam. 25: 24-31).

“And David said to Abigail, ‘Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, who sent you this day to meet me! Blessed be your discretion, and blessed be you, who have kept me this day from bloodguilt and from working salvation with my own hand! For as surely as the LORD, the God of Israel, lives, who has restrained me from hurting you, unless you had hurried and come to meet me, truly by morning there had not been left to Nabal so much as one male.’ And he said to her, ‘Go up in peace to your house. See, I have obeyed your voice, and I have granted your petition” (1 Sam. 25: 32-35).

SEARCH FOR CREATIVE SOLUTIONS

“It is the glory of God to conceal things; but the glory of kings to search things out” (Prov. 25:2).

EVALUATE OPTIONS OBJECTIVELY AND REASONABLY

“Then Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had assigned over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, ‘Test your servants for ten days; let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our appearance and the appearance of the youths who eat the king’s food be observed by you, and deal with your servants according to what you see.’ So he listened to them in this matter, and tested them for ten days. At the end of ten days it was seen that they were better in appearance and fatter in flesh than all the youths who ate the king’s food. So the steward took away their food and the wine they were to drink, and gave them vegetables” (Dan 1:11–16).

Key Principle:
When you need to negotiate, PAUSE.

PART 4 GO & BE RECONCILED *How can I demonstrate the forgiveness of God and encourage a reasonable solution to this conflict?*

SESSION 12

Overcome Evil with Good

The Peacemaker

- Day 1 - Pages 247-249
- Day 2 - Pages 249-250
- Day 3 - Pages 250-253
- Day 4 - Pages 253-256
- Day 5 - Pages 259-261
- Optional Pages 263-269

Memory Verse

“If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”
- Rom 12:20-21

Key Principle

Overcome evil with good.

Icebreaker

Describe a time when someone treated you much better than you deserved.

Learning Together

1. WE HAVE DIVINE WEAPONS

“For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ” (2 Cor. 10:3-5; see Luke 6:27-28; Eph. 6:10-18).

2. CONTROL YOUR TONGUE

“Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them” (Rom. 12:14).

3. SEEK GODLY ADVISERS—AND LISTEN TO THEM!

“Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight” (Rom. 12:15-16).



The complete study guide contains guidance on how to develop a personal growth plan, concepts that will enable you to develop relational skills that enable you to “get upstream of conflict” (i.e., prevent conflict), and information on alternative training methods, including our interactive online course, DVDs for small group study and live training, all of which contain several hours of additional information on how to learn, practice and share the principles of relational wisdom.