

Dear School of Mediation participant,

Welcome to First Baptist Church and The School of Mediation. To say that we are thrilled you are here would be an understatement! Why are we thrilled? When I think of the potential of 35 or so participants learning to be Christlike by serving as mediators, I can't help but be excited. Here's why: if each of you only lead two mediations a year, then 70 relationships would be reconciled. Even more, since it represents a relationship of two, we would be influencing 140 people. Let's add to that all the others who are affected by the broken relationships. If we only count one child or adult that has been touched by the lack of reconciliation, that would be 70 more for a total of 210. You get the point. There is a lot of potential in this room for the glory of God!

I'm also excited because I know the practice of the skills and the learning of new tools will enhance your counseling abilities. I use the tools and skills that I learned in conciliation training on a weekly basis. I thank the Lord for the training received through The Institute for Christian Conciliation.

Please pray that our Lord will be exalted as we work hard over the next three days. I know that He's pleased you are here because Matthew 5:9 says, "**Blessed** (my emphasis) are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God"(ESV).

If there is anything we can do for you, please let us know.

Your servant for Christ,

Ernie

## School of Mediation Schedule

### Thursday, September 6

8:00-9:00 a.m. Registration & Light Breakfast  
9:00-9:15 a.m. Welcome

#### Part One: Foundations (Session 1–3)

9:15-10:15 a.m. Session 1 – A Biblical X-Ray into Relationship Dynamics - Part 1  
10:15-10:30 a.m. Break  
10:30-11:30 a.m. Session 2 – A Biblical X-Ray into Relationship Dynamics- Part 2  
11:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Practice Session 1 – Identifying Heart Themes and a Plan for Change  
12:00-12:45 p.m. Lunch  
12:45-1:45 p.m. Session 3 – Understanding the Process – The Slippery Slope  
1:45-2:00 p.m. Break

#### Part Two: Conflict Coaching (Sessions 4–8)

2:00-3:00 p.m. Session 4 – Leading People to Please God  
3:00-3:15 p.m. Break  
3:15-4:15 p.m. Session 5 – Leading People to Repent on the Heart Level  
4:15-4:30 p.m. Break  
4:30-5:30 p.m. Session 6 – Leading People to Repent on the Behavioral Level  
5:30-6:30 p.m. Dinner  
6:30-7:15 p.m. Practice Session 2 – Listening Skills and Hearing Concerns  
7:15-8:15 p.m. Session 7 – Leading People to Love by Forgiving

### Friday, September 7

8:00-9:00 a.m. Light Breakfast  
9:00-10:00 a.m. Session 8 – Leading People to Love by Confronting  
10:00-10:15 a.m. Break

#### Part Three: The Mediation Process (Sessions 9–12)

10:15-10:30 a.m. Role Play Instructions  
10:30-11:30 a.m. Session 9 – Description of Premediation and the Mediation Process/  
Forms, Legalities and Premediation  
11:30 a.m.-12:25 p.m. Question and Answer  
12:30-1:15 p.m. Lunch  
1:15-2:15 p.m. Session 10 – Introduction to Mediation (GRACEE) - Part 1  
2:15-2:30 p.m. Break  
2:30-3:30 p.m. Session 11 – Mediation (GRACEE) - Part 2  
3:30-4:00 p.m. Practice – Turning issues into strategic questions to be answered  
4:00-4:45 p.m. Question and Answer and Instructions on Pursuing Specialization  
4:45-6:15 p.m. Dinner (with role play partner and planning for mediation role play)

#### Part Four: Additional Topics

6:15-7:15 p.m. Session 12 – Dealing with Those Who Won't Reconcile  
7:15-7:30 p.m. Break  
7:30-8:30 p.m. Session 13 – Preparing for and Handling Church Conflict

### Saturday, September 8

8:00-9:00 a.m. Light Breakfast  
9:00-11:30 a.m. Mediation Role Play 1 – “Frank and Evelyn”  
11:30-12:00 p.m. Role Play Debrief  
12:00-1:00 p.m. Lunch  
1:00-3:30 p.m. Mediation Role Play 2 – “The Teammate Conflict”  
3:30-4:00 p.m. Debrief

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- What Is the ICC?
- Standard of Conduct for Christian Conciliation
- Sample Forms

## **Appendix Two**

- Practice Sessions/Role Play/Case Studies & Instructions

**SESSIONS 1 & 2**  
**A Biblical X-Ray into Relationship Dynamics**  
**(Getting to the Heart of Conflict)**  
Dr. Ernie Baker

**Introduction:**

Goals of this material:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

***I. Understanding the flow of thought (think of an iceberg)***

- A. What's causing the "heat"? What are the complaints? What's the situation?  
(The tip of the iceberg).
  
- B. How are their relationship skills and character traits? (The middle section of the iceberg). What makes relationships work?
- C.
  1. Relationship skills

2. Relationship character traits

- C. Where's the conflict really coming from? (The source or bottom of the iceberg).

**Let's do a "bibliocardiogram."**

Why do we do what we do?

1. Biblical view of why we do what we do
  - Mark 7:22-23
  - Proverbs 4:23

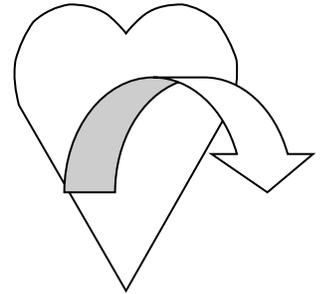
- Jeremiah 17:9
- Heb. 4:12

2. General definitions:

*Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew Lexicon*

*Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*

*A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (Bauer, Arndt and Gingrich)*



3. Let's draw some conclusions

- The “heart” is not fundamentally good for the unbeliever.
- Even as a “new creation in Christ” you struggle with unruly wants, sinful desires, wrong drives, “needs,” sinful passions, misplaced expectations, “remnant sin.” Sanctification still has to happen in the heart.
- Your “heart” is alive not empty or passive
- It takes work to understand—Proverbs 20:5

4. It's really all about worship

- a. We were made to be worshipers of the true and living God
  - Romans 11:36 (cf. also I Cor. 8:6; Col. 1:16)
  - I Cor. 10:31
- b. We turn to other things (other “gods”). What are substitute gods called?
  - Romans 1:25

“An idol of the heart is *anything that rules me other than God* [his emphasis]. As worshiping beings, human beings always worship someone or something. This is not a situation where some people worship and some people don't. If God isn't ruling my heart, someone or something will. It is the way we were made” (Paul Tripp *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*).

To makes matters worse, this idolatry is hidden. It is deceptive; it exists underground. We can make this great exchange without forsaking our confessional theology or even our observance of the external duties of the faith. So we hold onto our beliefs, tithes, remain faithful in church attendance, and occasionally participate in ministry activity. Yet at the level of what we are really living for, we have forsaken God for something else. This is the silent cancer that weakens the church, robs individuals of their spiritual vitality, and leads to all kinds of difficulties in relationships and situations. At its core, sin is moral thievery. It steals the worship that rightly belongs to God and gives it to someone else. It robs the Trinity to purchase the creation. Every sinner is in some way a worship thief. At its center, sin is also spiritual

adultery. It takes the love that belongs to God alone and gives it to someone or something else. It is a life shaped by satisfaction of cravings, rather than by heartfelt commitment and faithfulness. Every sinner is in some way a spiritual adulterer (Paul Tripp, *Instruments in the Redeemer's Hands*).

c. What is worship? (It's more than you think!)

5. Suggested themes to explore for yourself

- Comfort
- Pleasure
- Sports
- Control
- Entertainment
- Food
- Education
- People

“The human heart is like a cauldron constantly bubbling forth idols” (John Calvin).

**II. Praise God an “extreme makeover” is possible! (The other side of the model).**

A.

B.

C.

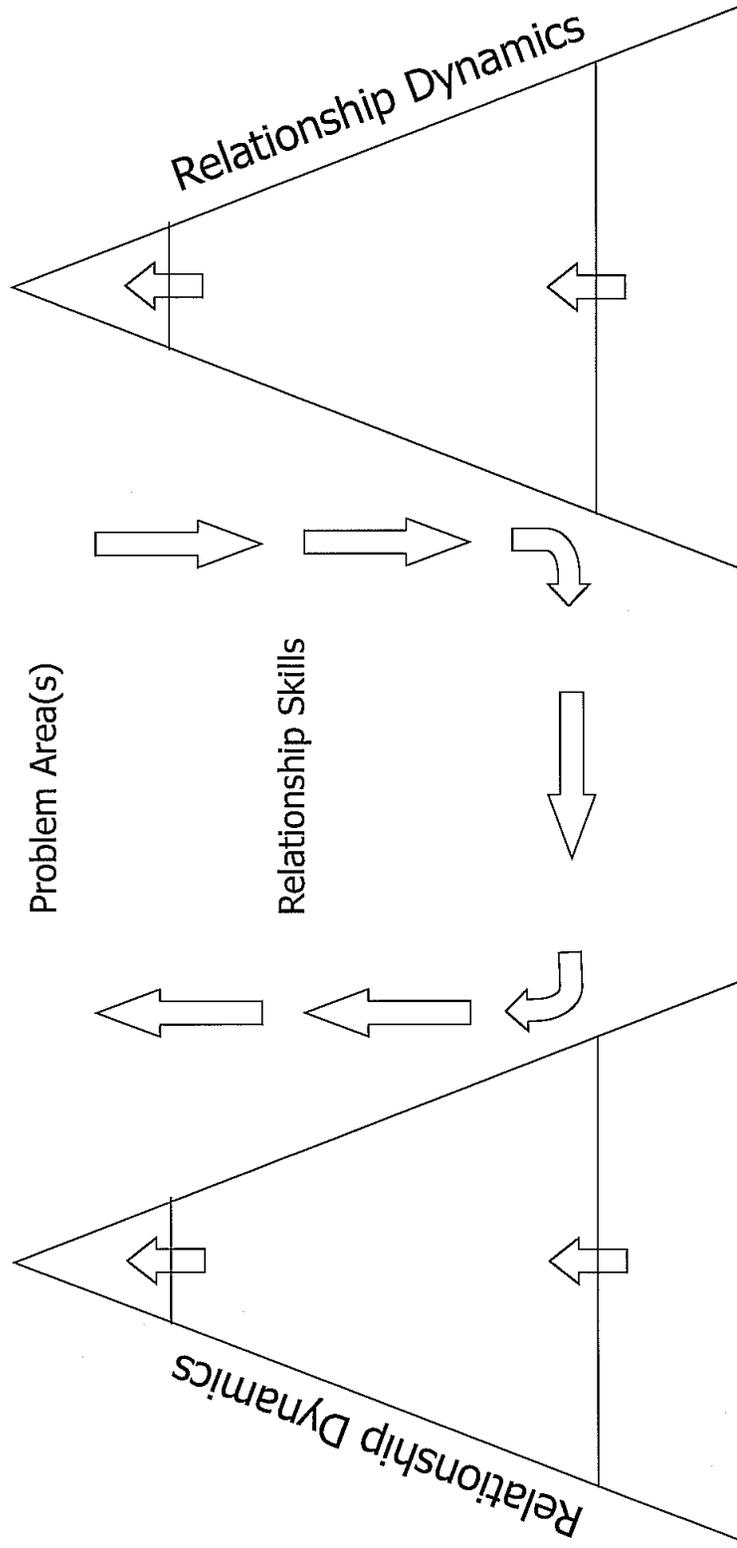
D.

E. Questions to put together a plan for change

F. Theology implicit in the model

G. Examples of plans for change (these are not detailed but are meant to prime the pump).

# Marriage/Relationship Counseling Model



## Assessment Questions for Relationship Dynamics Triangles

General comments: Asking these questions will reveal a lot of information about the health of the relationship. There would be many temptations to go into too much detail and turn this into counseling. Since I am using this as a pre-mediation tool though I am resisting the urge to go into detail about the issues that arise and primarily use this as a tool to see what the big issues are in the relationship. In other words, I am using this to help reveal items for an issues list and keeping an ear open primarily for what are the big concrete blocks that are building a wall between the two.

### Assessment questions top of the triangle:

On top of understanding the general life pressures (the context of their lives) in particular I want to explore these 4 areas—money, sex, kids and in-law pressures. These are 4 common areas of marital pressure. These are just tip of the iceberg issues though.

*\$--What seem to be your common disagreements in relation to money?*

*Sex—On a scale of 1-10 how satisfied are you with your sexual relationship? On a scale of 1-10 how satisfied are you with your intimacy? How often are you intimate with one another? Does that seem like it is enough or too little?*

*Kids—What seem to be your common disagreements when it comes to the kids?*

*In-laws—Where are you feeling pressure in relation to your in-laws? What arguments arise because of your in-laws (a version of this question could be used with each area).*

Summary: What big issues am I hearing here? How does my list compare with what they say the issues are/their complaints about the relationship? How would I state the issues?

### Assessment questions for the six relationship skills (Skills=things we do with others. Competencies).

*Communication--Would you consider yourself a talkative person or a quiet person? How about your spouse? On a scale of 1-10 how satisfied with your communication? What is the biggest area of miscommunication?*

*Conflict resolution--What methodology do you follow to bring issues causing tension to resolution in your marriage? On the slippery slope which side do you tend toward?*

*Roles--What is your understanding of your role in the marriage? What questions do you have about your role? Your spouse's role?*

*Walking with the Lord together/worship--How often do you pray together other than meal times? What type of discipleship plan do you have for you children/ Or, how do you approach discipleship of your children?*

*Honoring/serving one another (Phil 2:1-12)--What do you do to proactively show love to your spouse? What do you intentionally do to serve your spouse?*

*Time- what do you do to invest in your relationship by spending time together? How often do you go on dates?*

### **Character Traits (if skills are about doing, these are about being)**

Rate yourself and your spouse in each of the 7 character traits and their opposites with 1 being low and 10 high.

Which 2 of the traits are the ones you know you need to work on the most and why? Which 2 would be your biggest concerns for your spouse?

Summary: How do their answers inform what they say the issues are in the relationship? What are the obvious issues that arise from their answers? How does their practice of the 6 relationship skills and the 7 character traits help explain the tip of the iceberg issues?

### **Heart/Worship/Desires/Treasures/Value System/Loves/Hopes/Affections**

See “Drawing Out the Purposes of the Heart” questions and Chapter five of *The Peacemaker* or Chapter Two of *Peacemaking for Families*.

Note: I will often draw a simple version of the triangles and show them how their answers explain the pressures they are feeling in the relationship.

## **John and Misty's STOREE**

### **Situation:**

John and Misty were married for fifteen years when she came to talk. She was miserable. She knew her attitudes about John were wrong but didn't know what to do. Both John and Misty are former military—in fact they met in the military. They both grew up in Christian homes and his father was a pastor. They are the parents of 8 children and have homeschooled for years. They live in a less than adequate home for their size family and John has not had the income to buy a larger home. At church they portray themselves as the family that has their act together, but at home there is fighting and even more generally a “cold war.” She sings in the choir and has a beautiful solo voice. They are very faithful to church and talk about discipling their children. The kids seem obedient and well mannered. He speaks of family worship and they pulled their children from the Awana ministry so they could spend that time discipling their own children. He has taken another job which means another move. She is tired of moving, tired of her marriage, and the move is only four weeks away so she knows she needs to come and talk.

### **Thinking:**

She meditates regularly on beautiful log homes in “Southern Living” magazine. She also thinks about how much of a loser she married who can't even provide for their family.

She dreams about the day she will be free from this man and makes plans in her mind to get her nursing degree so she can support her children on her own. She dwells on hopeless thoughts many days. She also is consumed with bitter thoughts toward him and calls him a liar and hypocrite in her mind regularly. He makes so many promises that he doesn't keep and portrays himself to others in ways that aren't true. She is so embarrassed of their house and property. She also thinks, “Maybe if I keep putting pressure on him I can get him to change.” It has become painfully obvious that this doesn't work.

When he finally did come to counseling two weeks before they moved I found out that he dwells on being able to relax and does admit to making promises that he has no intention of keeping. When asked what goes through his mind when he knows he is lying to her he says, “I just want her to stop nagging me.” Many days as he drives home from work he dreams about the movie he is going to watch and the nice big cold glass of southern iced tea he will enjoy. He didn't want to come to counseling earlier for fear of what others would think of him.

### **Others:**

The kids are obviously impacted—especially their education. She is feeling so overwhelmed and hopeless that she hardly does any schooling. Their creditors are also impacted and they get letters or calls regularly demanding payment.

### **Responses:**

He likes to come home and just relax but that has become next to impossible because she has neglected the house so much he has to get the kids mobilized to do cleaning. She is so depressed now that she closes herself in her room many days and cries and dreams of being set free. She also has not been paying bills and their checkbook is “a mess.”

He says he is discipling the kids but they don't even pray together. He has promised to lead family devotions many times but never does. He also promises to mow the lawn but doesn't do that either. She is so embarrassed that their lawn is 12” long.

**Emotions:**

Depression, anger, fear, and anxiety are all characteristic of her life. The biggest emotion being expressed though at the time of counseling was hate. She said, "I hate his guts and can't wait to be free from him."

The main emotion he is feeling is fear—fear of what others will think when they find out what is truly happening in his home. He is also angry, angry with all her nagging.

**Expectations:**

She expects him to find a job that provides enough of an income that they can have a bigger home. It would be really great if it was one like those in the magazine!

She expects him to be the spiritual leader and she lets him know it!

She wants him to do what he promises, especially keeping the yard neater and the house repaired.

He just wants some peace and quiet. He wants to be able to relax. He doesn't want people to find out what is happening.

**SESSION 3**  
**Understanding the Process**  
**(Conflict and the “slippery slope”)**  
Dr. Ernie Baker

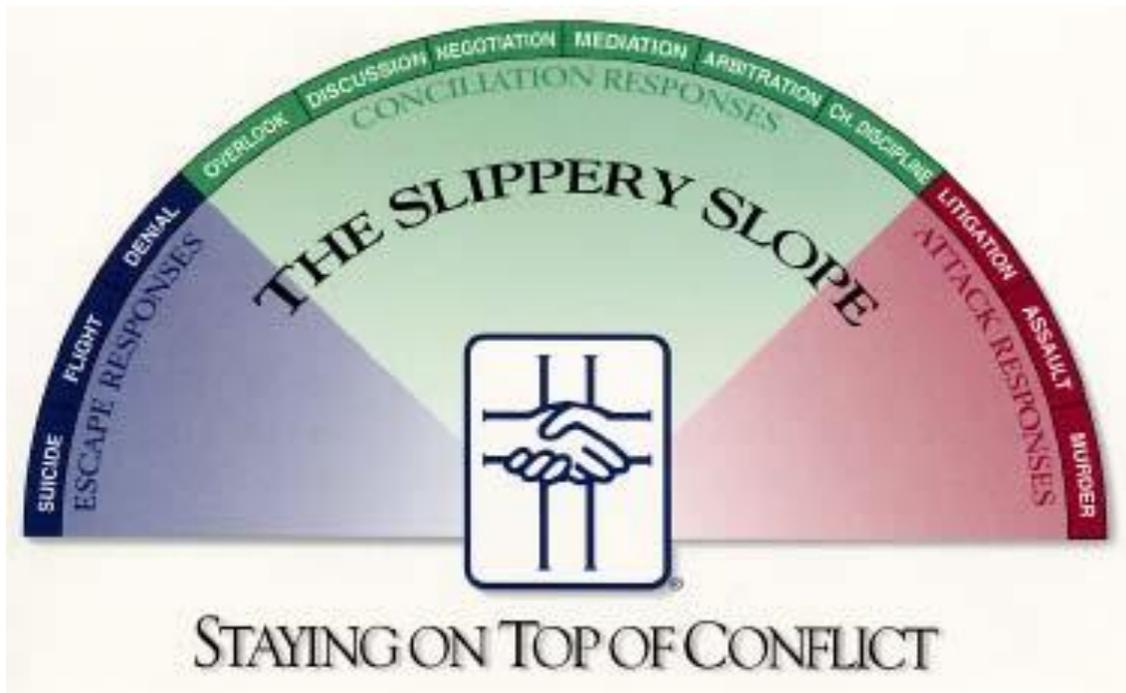
Introduction:

Goals:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Please think of a tense relationship issue or conflict you are currently in or know about. As we go through this material ask yourself how you are responding and what the Lord desires you to do. How can you improve your skills?

### The Slippery Slope



**I. Escape responses—“Peacefaker”/Flight**

A. Denial = \_\_\_\_\_  
What he or she may say or think.

B. Flight = \_\_\_\_\_  
What he or she may say or think.

C. Suicide = \_\_\_\_\_  
What he or she may say or think.

D. Source of these “watch out for self” responses (James 4: 1-2)

## II. Attack/“War-maker”/Fight responses

A. Litigation = \_\_\_\_\_  
What he or she might say or think

B. Assault = \_\_\_\_\_  
What he or she might say or think

C. Murder = \_\_\_\_\_

D. Source of these “war maker” responses

## III. Christ honoring worship or “work it out” responses (a plan showing the attitudes and actions of Scripture).

A. Overlook (I Peter 4:8; Proverbs 12:16; 19:11; 17:14; 1 Peter. 4:8; Col. 3:13).

↳ Why? To imitate the Lord.

*The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever; he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities (Ps. 103:8-10).*

*“Be merciful just as your Father in heaven is merciful” (Luke 6:36; see James 2:13).*

B. Discussion (Matt. 18:15)

Questions to ask to know if you should overlook it or go to the person to discuss it.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

C. Negotiation (Phil 2:3-5) P-A-U-S-E

**P** \_\_\_\_\_

**A** \_\_\_\_\_

**U** \_\_\_\_\_ “Interests”

Issue: \_\_\_\_\_

Position:

Interests:

**S** \_\_\_\_\_ Solutions

Brainstorm rules:

**E** \_\_\_\_\_ objectively and reasonably

D. Mediation (Matt. 18:16)

E. Arbitration (I Cor. 6:1-8) [We will not cover this methodology]

I think this passage [I Cor. 6:1-8] has something to say about the proper Christian attitude toward civil litigation. Paul is making two points: first, he says that the mediation of a mutual friend, ... should be sought before parties run off to the law courts.... I think we are too ready today to seek vindication or vengeance through adversary proceedings rather than peace through mediation.... Good Christians, just as they are slow to anger, should be slow to sue (Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, as quoted in, *The Peacemaker*, Second Edition, by Ken Sande, page 47).

F. Church Discipline/Accountability -- \_\_\_\_\_ (Matt. 18:17-20)

**Application:** What about your conflict? Where are you on the “slippery slope”?  
How do you typically respond to conflict? What would the Lord want you to do?  
What one or two skills do you need to work on? What could you do to work on them?  
When will you do it?

**SESSION 4**  
**Leading People to Please God<sup>1</sup>**  
*(Pursuing Peace, Lesson 1)*  
Dr. Robert Jones

**A. The Starting Point: Our Peacemaker God**

Our God is the God of Peace (Rom 15:33; 16:20; also Phil. 4:9)

Four biblical forms of peace:

1. Vertical Peace with God (Rom 1:7; 2:9–11; 3:17; 5:1–2; 8:6–8; also Num 6:24–26; Isa 57:18–21; Eph 2:11–18)
2. Horizontal Peace with Others (Rom 12:18; 14:17–19; 15:13; also Acts 24:16; Gal 5:22–23; Eph 4:3).
3. Inner Peace within Our Soul (Rom 8:6; 15:13; also John 14:27; Phil 4:6–9)
4. Final Peace on Earth (Rom 16:20 with Gen 3:15; also Rev 21–22)
  - *Genesis 3:15, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.”*
  - *Romans 16:20, The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.*

**B. Three Perspectives on Conflict**

Why must we have a working model of Christ-centered, biblical peacemaking, and why must we pursue peace?

1. Conflicts are \_\_\_\_\_; therefore \_\_\_\_\_ them.

We are fallen sinners living with fallen sinners in a fallen world (1 John 1:8, 10; James 3:2; 1 Tim 1:15)

2. Conflicts are \_\_\_\_\_; therefore \_\_\_\_\_ them.

God calls us to resolve conflicts actively, diligently, and quickly

- *Matthew 5:23–25, “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. Settle matters quickly....”*
- *Matthew 18:15, “If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over.”*

The Matthew 5/18 Dynamic

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<sup>1</sup> This lesson summarizes material from chapters 1–3 my book, *Pursuing Peace: A Christian Guide to Handling Our Conflicts* (Crossway, 2012).

- *Acts 24:16, So I strive always to keep my conscience clear before God and man.*
- *Romans 12:18, If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.*
- *Romans 14:19, Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification*
- *Ephesians 4:3, Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.*
- *2 Timothy 2:22, Flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.*
- *Hebrews 12:14, Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy. . . .*

3. Conflicts are \_\_\_\_\_; therefore \_\_\_\_\_ them.

Opportunities to know and please God, to become more like Jesus, and to love and minister to others.

Three Steps in Pursuing Peace:

Step #1 – Please God

Step #2 – Repent (on heart and behavior)

**C. Step #1 – Please God**

What does it mean to please God?

To bring God \_\_\_\_\_ by being and doing what God \_\_\_\_\_, in response to God’s grace (2 Cor 5:9–10; 5:14–15; 2 Tim 2:3–4; 1 Thess 4:1–2; Ps 19:14; Heb 13:20–21)

*2 Corinthians 5:9, So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home in the body or away from it.*

*2 Corinthians 5:14–15, And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again. <sup>15</sup> And he died for all, that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again.*

How can pleasing God change how we pursue peace amid conflict?

1. Failure to please God by you or the other person, or both of you, is the ultimate \_\_\_\_\_ of all conflict.
2. This goal keeps your focus on \_\_\_\_\_, not on the conflict issues or on the other \_\_\_\_\_.
3. In Christ, this goal is always \_\_\_\_\_, no matter how the other person behaves.
4. This goal will \_\_\_\_\_ your efforts.
5. God \_\_\_\_\_ bless your efforts by bringing reconciliation.

*Proverbs 16:7, When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, he makes even his enemies live at peace with him.*

6. If you \_\_\_\_\_ please God, God will bring full reconciliation
7. Even if the other person does not seek to please God, *you* can experience God's \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
8. You must \_\_\_\_\_ your commitment to please God, even if the other person does not or if the relationship gets worse.
9. When this goal governs you, the other person's sins, offenses, failures, etc. become \_\_\_\_\_, not \_\_\_\_\_, to please God and grow as a Christian.

The Pleasing God Prayer

My goal in life, at all times, must be to *Please God*, not myself or others.  
Father, help me to please you in all my thoughts, words, actions, and desires.

**Pleasing God Bible Study**  
A Personal Growth Assignment by Dr. Robert Jones

STEP #1: Read each passage and record one or two observations on what it teaches about pleasing God.

2 Corinthians 5:9-10

2 Corinthians 5:14-15 (note: this text uses synonymous language)

Ephesians 5:8-10

Colossians 1:10-12

1 Thessalonians 4:1-2

John 5:30

John 8:28-29

2 Timothy 2:3-4

Romans 14:17-18

Hebrews 13:20-21

STEP #2: Write a two-to-four-sentence prayer in which you summarize of how these truths personally apply to you in your current circumstances or a prayer to God along the same lines:

STEP #3: Copy the following on a 3 x 5 card, then memorize it, meditate it, and pray over it daily. Be prepared to recite it at our next session or class.

My goal in life, at all times, must be to <i>Please God</i> , not myself or others. Father, help me to please you in all my thoughts, words, actions, and desires.
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STEP #4: On the bottom or back of the same card, copy the words of 2 Corinthians 5:9 and 5:15. Then memorize and meditate on these verses daily. Be prepared to recite them at our next session or class.

**SESSION 5**  
**Leading People to Repent on the Heart Level<sup>2</sup>**  
*(Pursuing Peace, Lesson 2)*  
Dr. Robert Jones

**A. God's Target: Our Hearts**

The heart = the seat or control center of your inner person—what rules, drives, and controls you—your beliefs, motives, will, desires, affections, intentions, etc.

- *Psalm 51:10, Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me.*
- *Proverbs 4:23, Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life.*
- *Proverbs 23:26, My son, give me your heart. . . .*
- *Jeremiah 17:5,7, Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength and whose heart turns away from the LORD. . . .<sup>7</sup>But blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, whose confidence is in him.*
- *Ezekiel 14:5, "I will do this to recapture the hearts of the people of Israel, who have all deserted me for their idols."*
- *Joel 2:12–13, "Even now," declares the LORD, "return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning." Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love, and he relents from sending calamity.*
- *Matthew 12:34b, "For out of the overflow of the heart the mouth speaks."*
- *Matthew 15:19-20a, "For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander."<sup>20</sup> These are what make a man 'unclean'. . . ."*
- *Galatians 5:16–24, So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature.<sup>17</sup> For the sinful nature desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want.<sup>18</sup> But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under law.<sup>19</sup> The acts of the sinful nature are obvious. . . .<sup>22</sup> But the fruit of the Spirit is. . . .*
- *Hebrews 3:12–13, See to it, brothers, that none of you has a sinful, unbelieving heart that turns away from the living God.<sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.*
- *Hebrews 4:12–13, For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.<sup>13</sup> Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*

**B. Repent of Heart Demands -- James 4:1-3**

*What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you?<sup>2</sup> You want something but 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.<sup>3</sup> When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

James addresses the problem of conflicts, especially their cause.

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<sup>2</sup> This lesson summarizes material from chapter 4 in my book, *Pursuing Peace: A Christian Guide to Handling Our Conflicts* (Crossway, 2012).

Two ways a desire can be sinful:

- When we desire something that \_\_\_\_\_
- When we desire something \_\_\_\_\_ (an inordinate, ruling, selfish desire)

In James 4:1–3, these conflict-causing desires are not necessarily desires for evil things but inordinate, ruling desires for even good things.

### **C. Discerning Heart Demands**

1. Three simple criteria to discern if a desire has become inordinate desire/demand:

- Does it consume my thoughts?
- Do I sin to get it?
- Do I sin when I don't get it?

2. Use searching questions to move toward the heart

Biblical Examples

- *Genesis 3:9,11* But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" ...And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"
- *Isaiah 55:1–2*, "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost. Why spend money on what is not bread, and your labor on what does not satisfy?"
- *Ezekiel 18:31*, "Why will you die, O house of Israel?"
- *Matthew 7:3*, "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye?"
- *Luke 24:5*, "Why do you look for the living among the dead?"

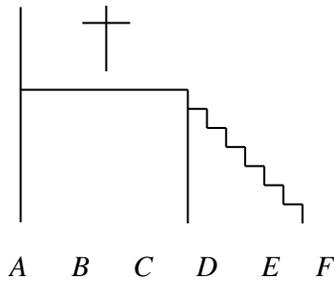
Personal Ministry Examples (see also Appendix 3 below):

- Where do you see God in this situation?
- How do you think God looks at you (or the situation)?
- What do you think God thinks about what you are doing?
- What were you hoping to accomplish by that?
- What was going on in your mind?
- If you could change your situation (or the other person) in some way, how would you?
- What do you most want to happen in this situation?
- What do you most fear in this situation?
- How would you like people to pray for you?

3. See David Powlison's X-Ray Questions in his *Seeing with New Eyes* (P&R, 2003), 129-143

4. Use a Journaling a Problem Incident form

## D. Throne-Staircase Heart Diagram and Four Response Steps



1) R \_\_\_\_\_

- “I must have (need,<sup>3</sup> deserve, demand) a \_\_\_?\_\_\_ who \_\_\_?\_\_\_”
- “What I think I need, or what I desperately want, from this person is \_\_\_\_?\_\_\_\_\_.

2/) R \_\_\_\_\_

*James 4:6, But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”*

*Joel 2:12–13, “Even now,” declares the LORD, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting and weeping and mourning. Rend your heart and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and compassionate. . . .”*

3) R \_\_\_\_\_ on God and his grace, provisions, and promises

*Philippians 2:1–4, Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion,<sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.<sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,<sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.*

*Philippians 4:11–13, I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength.*

4) R \_\_\_\_\_ with godly graces and behavior

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<sup>3</sup> For a biblical view of “needs,” study 2 Peter 1:3; Luke 10:38-42; Psalm 27; 73:23-28; Matthew 4:4; etc.

## **Journaling a Problem Incident**

Personal Growth Assignment by Dr. Robert Jones

Select a recent incident in which you displayed or felt anger, conflict, worry, depression, anxiety, discontentment, or similar problematic attitudes, actions, or emotions. Then summarize the situation and your response to it below.

**1. Your Situation.** Summarize the circumstances. What was happening? Who was involved? When? Where?

**2. Your Behavior.** What did you say, do, or feel in response to what happened? Summarize your words, actions, and emotions, especially the negative or problematic ones.

**3. Your Beliefs and Motives.** What were you thinking or wanting in the midst of this situation? Summarize your attitudes, thoughts, desires, motives, beliefs, etc., that might have motivated your behavior. Note especially any “good desire, bad master” or “I must have \_\_\_\_\_” dynamics (inordinate or ruling desires).

**4. God’s Answers.** How might God would want you to handle this kind of situation now or next time? What changes in behavior, and beliefs and motives, seem needed? What steps should you now take? Include a written prayer asking God to help you, forgive you, guide you, strengthen you, etc., as needed (and pray that prayer).

**SESSION 6**  
**Leading People to Repent on the Behavioral Level<sup>4</sup>**  
*(Pursuing Peace, Lesson 3)*  
Dr. Robert Jones

Introduction: Two problems:

1) We fail to \_\_\_\_\_ ourselves, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_

*Luke 18:9–14, To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: <sup>10</sup> “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. <sup>11</sup> The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other men—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. <sup>12</sup> I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’*

*<sup>13</sup> “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’*

*<sup>14</sup> “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”*

*James 4:6, But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:  
“God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.”*

2) Even when we do, our confessions are \_\_\_\_\_

**A. Christ’s Call to Examine Ourselves and Our Part in a Conflict**

*Matthew 5:23–24, “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.*

*Matthew 7:3–5, “Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother’s eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? How can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when all the time there is a plank in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother’s eye.”*

1) By a “plank” (or “log”) Jesus refers to our sinful \_\_\_\_\_.

2) Jesus presents the proper order: You must start with \_\_\_\_\_. Jesus uncovers our tendency to ignore our sinful offenses and dwell on how *others* have wronged us.

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<sup>4</sup> This lesson summarizes material from chapters 5–6 of my book, *Pursuing Peace: A Christian Guide to Handling Our Conflicts* (Crossway, 2012).

- 3) Jesus assigns a greater \_\_\_\_\_ to our sins than to the other person’s sins by calling ours “planks” and his “specks.” You must \_\_\_\_\_ upon your offenses as more serious.
  
- 4) Humbly dealing with our planks first puts you in a better position to minister to the other person and to help him deal with his sin.

**B. Confessing Our Behavioral Offenses:**

**Step #1: Identify your offenses and write a plank list.**

Start with prayerful, self-examination, before God, in light of Scripture, and record a specific, for-your-eyes-only “plank list.”

*Jeremiah 17:9, The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure. Who can understand it? (also Eph. 4:22–24; Heb. 3:12–13)*

*Psalm 139:23–24, Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

*James 1:22–25, Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it—he will be blessed in what he does.*

Sins of Commission and Omission Chart

	<u>Commission</u> (What I said/did that I <i>should not</i> have said/did)	<u>Omission</u> (What I did not say/do that I <i>should</i> have said/did)
W o r d s		
A c t i o n s		

## Step #2: Confess your sins to God and seek his forgiveness and help

Always begin with God. Confess and renounce your sins to God to receive his \_\_\_\_\_ in Christ (*Gen. 39:9; Ps. 51:1–4; 32:1–5; 103; 130:3–4; Prov. 28:13; 1 John 1:9; etc.*) and to seek his help to \_\_\_\_\_ (*Romans 6; Galatians 5; 2 Peter 1; Ephesians 4; etc.*)

**Step #3: Confess your sins to the other person and seek his forgiveness.** Use Ken Sande's 7 A's of Confession:<sup>5</sup>

1. A \_\_\_\_\_ everyone involved
2. A \_\_\_\_\_ “if,” “but,” and “maybe” language
3. A \_\_\_\_\_ specifically
4. A \_\_\_\_\_ the hurt (= express regret over how your sin hurt, embarrassed, provoked, or inconvenienced the other person).
5. A \_\_\_\_\_ consequences<sup>6</sup>
  - Restitution (*Luke 19:8–9; Exod. 21:18–35; 22:1–15; Lev. 6:1–5; etc.*)
  - Loss of privileges or possessions (*2 Sam. 12*)
  - Slowness by the person to forgive or trust you (*Prov. 18:19, An offended brother is more unyielding than a fortified city, and disputes are like the barred gates of a citadel.*)
6. A \_\_\_\_\_ your behavior (or at least explain how you intend to do so)

What is your practical plan to deal with temptation and avoid recurrence?

7. A \_\_\_\_\_ for forgiveness, and allow time
  - Don't *demand* forgiveness. Allow time, especially if . . . .
  - You may need to clarify what forgiveness means
  - Beware if his response might minimize your sin

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<sup>5</sup> See Sande, *Peacemaking for Families*, chap. 4; Sande, *The Peacemaker*, chap 6; and my use and application in *Pursuing Peace*, chap. 6.

<sup>6</sup> Note: Christians must not confuse *consequences* with *punishment*. God punished *Jesus* our substitute for our sins (*Rom 8:1,31-34; 1 Pet 2:24; 3:18*). However, there could be remaining *consequences* that *we* must bear for our sins (*2 Sam 12*)

**SESSION 7**  
**Leading People to Love by Forgiving**<sup>7</sup>  
*(Pursuing Peace, Lesson 4)*  
Dr. Robert Jones

**A. Cultivate Grace Attitudes and Actions**

*Colossians 3:12–15, Therefore, as God’s chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.<sup>13</sup> Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.<sup>14</sup> And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.<sup>15</sup> Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.*

Our identity as God’s people:

God’s desired relational graces for his people:

**B. Including Forgiveness**

Two biblical categories of forgiveness: God’s forgiveness of us (vertical) and our forgiveness of others (horizontal), but not “forgiving yourself”<sup>8</sup>

**1. God’s Forgiveness of Us in Christ**

1) God’s forgiveness is his \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_ to not hold our sins against us, because of Jesus Christ

*Hebrews 8:12, “For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more.” (from Jer. 31:34; also Isa. 43:25)*

Pictures of God’s Forgiveness:

- *Psalm 103:11-12, For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;<sup>12</sup> as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.*
- *Psalm 130:3-4, If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? <sup>4</sup>But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared.*
- *Micah 7:19, You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.*
- *Isaiah 1:18, “Come now, let us reason together,” says the LORD. “Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool.”*
- *Isaiah 38:17b, “In your love you kept me from the pit of destruction; you have put all my sins behind your back.”*
- *Isaiah 44:22, “I have swept away your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for I have redeemed you.”*
- *Jeremiah 50:20, “In those days, at that time,” declares the LORD, “search will be made for Israel’s guilt, but there will be none, and for the sins of Judah, but none will be found, for I will forgive the remnant I spare.*

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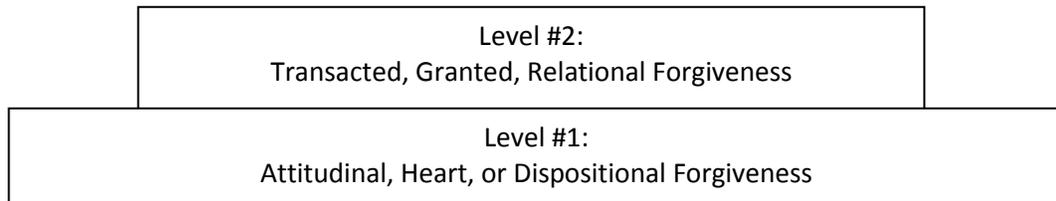
<sup>7</sup> This lesson summarizes material from chapters 7–9, and Appendix A, of my book, *Pursuing Peace: A Christian Guide to Handling Our Conflicts* (Crossway, 2012).

<sup>8</sup> See my booklet, *Forgiveness: “I Just Can’t Forgive Myself”* (P&R, 2000)

2) God’s forgiveness is our \_\_\_\_\_ and model for forgiving others

*Ephesians 4:32, Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.*

**2. Our Forgiveness of Others – On Two Levels**



<b>Level #1: Attitudinal</b>	<b>Level #2: Transacted</b>
Jesus’s command in Mark 11:25, <i>“And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive you your sins.”</i>	Jesus’s command in Luke 17:3b–4, <i>“If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. <sup>4</sup> If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, ‘I repent,’ forgive him.”</i>
Jesus’s prayer in Luke 23:34a, <i>Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing.”</i>	God’s answer in Acts 2:36-41, esp. 2:38, <i>Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.”</i>
Vertical, in God’s presence, between God and me	Horizontal, in the offender’s presence, between him and me
Unconditional; independent of offender repenting	Conditional; dependent on offender repenting
My commitments to God:  1) Entrust the offender to God and release him from my judgment ( <i>Jas 4:12; Gen 50:19; 1 Pet 2:22-23; 4:19; Rom 12:19-21</i> ) 2) Repent and get rid of bitterness ( <i>Eph 4:31-32</i> ) 3) Be willing to grant transacted forgiveness and reconcile, if he repents ( <i>Matt 18:12-14 w/ 18:15-17; Luke 17:3-4</i> )	My commitments to the offender:  To not raise offense to . . . 1) Myself (not dwell on, brood over) 2) The Person (not use against later) 3) Others (not gossip)

### 3. Practical Steps in Applying the Two Levels:

1. Always start with Level 1 Attitudinal/Heart Forgiveness

2. If needed, go directly \_\_\_\_\_ the offender to “show him his fault” (*Matt 18:15*) or “rebuke him” (*Luke 17:3b*), w/ the goal of reconciliation (*Matt 18:15*, to win him over) and restoration (*Gal 6:1*, “restore him gently”).

*Lev 19:17-18, “Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt. Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.”*

3. If the person repents, grant him Level 2 Transacted/Granted Forgiveness.

*1 Cor 13:5, “[Love] is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.”*

4. Then seek to \_\_\_\_\_ any remaining issues and seek to \_\_\_\_\_ the relationship to its proper level

Red flag: “I forgive him but I . . .”

5. As needed, continually \_\_\_\_\_ your promises and \_\_\_\_\_ of any violations

### 4. Dealing with Resentment and Bitterness

Remember God’s forgiveness, mercy, and compassion in your life and let that move you toward attitudinal forgiveness (*Hebrews 8:12; Exodus 2:23-25; 3:7-10; Nehemiah 9:16-21; Matthew 18:21-35*).

Why must you forgive offenders attitudinally, in your heart?<sup>9</sup> Because, if you do not . . .

1. You are forgetting the massive size of the sin debt that God forgave you (*Matt. 18:21-35; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:13*)
2. You are declaring that you do not need God's forgiveness in your life (*Mark 11:25; Matt. 6:12-15; 18:21-35*)
3. You are declaring that you don't need God's mercy on the Day of Judgment (*Matt. 5:7; James 2:13; Luke 6:36; Micah 6:8*)
4. You are assuming God's role as Judge and Executioner (*James 4:12; Rom. 12:19; Gen. 50:19*).
5. You are forgetting that the offender, as a sinner, is in one sense deceived and enslaved by his sin. You lack compassion (*Luke 23:34a; John 8:34; Matt. 9:36; Col. 3:12-13; Eph. 4:30-5:2; 1 Cor. 2:7-8; 2 Pet. 2:19*).
6. You are forgetting the fact that, as a sinner, *you* are capable of the same sins, and that the same root sins may already reside in you (*Jer. 17:9; 1 Cor. 10:12; Prov. 16:18; Heb. 3:12-13*).

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<sup>9</sup> See chapter 9 in Pursuing Peace or similar contents in my booklet version, *Freedom from Resentment: Stopping Hurts from Turning Bitter* (New Growth Press, 2010).

**Pictures of God's Forgiveness of His People**  
 A Personal Growth Bible Study by Robert Jones

1. The Old Testament often provides us with rich imagery of gospel truths. For each passage below, prayerfully read and reflect on it, list the word pictures of God's forgiveness, and note insights or personal applications.

<i>Passage</i>	<i>Word Picture and Your Insight or Application</i>
Psalm 103:8-14	
Psalm 130:3-4	
Isaiah 1:18	
Isaiah 38:17	
Isaiah 43:25	
Isaiah 44:21-22	
Jeremiah 31:31-34	
Jeremiah 50:20	
Micah 7:18-20	

2. On a separate page, based on the above passages, summarize what God says to you about his forgiving grace, along with any specific struggles you might face concerning forgiving others. Include a prayer (and pray it!) that reflects these gospel truths.

## Battling Resentment or Bitterness with the Gospel

A Personal Growth Bible Study by Robert Jones

1. For each passage below, prayerfully read and reflect on it and then note insights or applications about forgiving your offender in your heart before God

<i>Passage</i>	<i>Your Insight or Application</i>
Genesis 50:19-20	
Micah 6:6-8	
Matthew 6:9-15	
Matthew 18:21-35	
Mark 11:20-25	
Luke 6:32-36	
Luke 23:32-34	
Acts 7:54-60	
Romans 12:17-21	
Ephesian s 4:30-5:2	
Colossian s 3:12-14	
James 2:12-13	
James 4:11-12	

2. On a separate page, based on the above passages, list reasons why God wants you to forgive your offender attitudinally and write a prayer (and pray it!) that reflects these gospel truths.

**SESSION 8**  
**Leading People to Love by Confronting** <sup>10</sup>  
*(Pursuing Peace, Lesson 5)*  
Dr. Robert Jones

**A. When to Overlook and When to Confront an Offender**

1. The dilemma:

- ❖ Many texts call you to \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ over someone's sin:

*Prov 10:12, Hatred stirs up dissension, but love covers over all wrongs.*

*Prov 12:16, A fool shows his annoyance at once, but a prudent man overlooks an insult.*

*Prov 17:9, He who covers over an offense promotes love, but whoever repeats the matter separates close friends.*

*Prov 17:14, Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.*

*Prov 19:11, A man's wisdom gives him patience; it is to his glory to overlook an offense.*

*Matt 5:39, But I tell you, Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.*

*1 Cor 13:5, It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs.*

*1 Peter 4:8, Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins.*

- ❖ Many texts call you to \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_ his sin:

*Lev 19:17-18, "Do not hate your brother in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not share in his guilt. <sup>18</sup> Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD."*

*Prov 9:8, Do not rebuke a mocker or he will hate you; rebuke a wise man and he will love you.*

*Prov 19:25, Flog a mocker, and the simple will learn prudence; rebuke a discerning man, and he will gain knowledge.*

*Prov 27:5-6, Better is open rebuke than hidden love. <sup>6</sup> Wounds from a friend can be trusted, but an enemy multiplies kisses.*

*Prov 28:23, He who rebukes a man will in the end gain more favor than he who has a flattering tongue.*

*Matt 7:5, You hypocrite, first take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye.*

*Matt 18:15, "If your brother sins against you, go and show him his fault, just between the two of you. If he listens to you, you have won your brother over."*

*Luke 17:3b-4, "So watch yourselves. If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him. <sup>4</sup> If he sins against you seven times in a day, and seven times comes back to you and says, 'I repent,' forgive him."*

*1 Cor 5:1-5, 11-13, It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that does not occur even among pagans: A man has his father's wife. <sup>2</sup> And you are proud! Shouldn't you rather have been filled with grief and have put out of your fellowship the man who did this? <sup>3</sup> Even though I am not physically present, I am with you in spirit. And I have already passed judgment on the one who did this, just as if I were present. <sup>4</sup> When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present, <sup>5</sup> hand this man over to Satan, so that the sinful nature may be destroyed and his spirit saved on the day of the Lord.... <sup>11</sup> But now I am writing you that you must not associate with anyone who calls himself a brother but is sexually*

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<sup>10</sup> This lesson summarizes material from chapter 10, of my book, *Pursuing Peace: A Christian Guide to Handling Our Conflicts* (Crossway, 2012).

*immoral or greedy, an idolater or a slanderer, a drunkard or a swindler. With such a man do not even eat.<sup>12</sup> What business is it of mine to judge those outside the church? Are you not to judge those inside?<sup>13</sup> God will judge those outside. “Expel the wicked man from among you.”*

*Gal 6:1-2, Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. <sup>2</sup> Carry each other’s burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.*

*1 Tim 5:20, Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that the others may take warning.*

*Titus 3:10, Warn a divisive person once, and then warn him a second time. After that, have nothing to do with him.*

*James 5:19-20, My brothers, if one of you should wander from the truth and someone should bring him back,<sup>20</sup> remember this: Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover over a multitude of sins.*

2. Which do we do when? Wrong approaches:

- Iron-clad rules, simplistic answers, and unbiblical extremes:
- “Devotional theology”
- Do neither: Neither \_\_\_\_\_ nor \_\_\_\_\_, but \_\_\_\_\_ it

3. Our normal response should be to overlook offenses. But there are times when confronting is wise and loving:<sup>11</sup>

- 1) When the person is “caught” (trapped) in a sin or a pattern of sin (Gal 6:1-2).
- 2) When the offense is serious (as suggested by sin lists like 1 Cor 5; 6; Gal 5; Rom 1; Rev 22)
- 3) When the person’s Christian testimony or ministry usefulness is jeopardized by his sin.
- 4) When your relationship with person is strained or undermined.
- 5) When the reputation of God, Christ, or his church is threatened or injured
- 6) When the unity of Christ’s church is disrupted

*Rom 16:17, I urge you, brothers, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them..*

7) When others are harmed by the person’s sin

*Prov 24:11, Rescue those being led away to death; hold back those staggering toward slaughter.*

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<sup>11</sup> Ken Sande, *The Peacemaker* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 150–153, offers four helpful guidelines: An offense is too serious to overlook when (1) it dishonors God, (2) damages your relationship, (3) hurts other people, or (4) hurts the offender. Alfred Poirier, *The Peacemaking Pastor*, 139, suggests two questions: (1) Is the offense a persistent sin, a habitual sin, or the result of bondage to a particular sin? (2) Is the offense hindering my relationship?

- 8) When the person seems willing to be confronted or might welcome your help

*Prov 23:9, Do not speak to a fool, for he will scorn the wisdom of your words.*

*Matt 7:6, "Do not give dogs what is sacred; do not throw your pearls to pigs. If you do, they may trample them under their feet, and then turn and tear you to pieces."*

### **B. Prerequisites for Wise, Loving Confrontation**

Examine yourself. It may be wise to invite a mature Christian friend to help you assess your readiness.

- 1) Have you \_\_\_\_\_ your sins to God and the other person and received their respective forgiveness (*Matt 7:1-5*)?
  
- 2) Do you have the proper Christlike \_\_\_\_\_ attitudes (consider the "grace" qualities in passages like *Gal 5:22-23; 6:1-2; Eph 4:1-3; Col 3:12-17; 1 Pet 3:8; 1 Cor 13:4-7; Matt 5:3-12; Jas 3:17-18*) and are already forgiving him \_\_\_\_\_ (Level 1 Forgiveness), in your heart (*Mark 11:25; Luke 23:34a*)? .
  
- 3) Do you know \_\_\_\_\_ goal?  
  
To "show him his fault" to "win" the person (*Matt 18:15*), to "rebuke him" (*Luke 17:3*), and "restore him gently" (*Gal 6:1*).
  
- 4) Do you really believe – are you convinced – that this is the most \_\_\_\_\_ action you can take (*Gal 6:1-2; Lev 19:17-18; Prov 27:5-6; Jas 5:19-20*)?
  
- 5) Are you willing to take any or all of the \_\_\_\_\_ step(s) in Matthew 18:15-17 (and other texts) that God might require?
  
- 6) Are you seeking to please and \_\_\_\_\_ God more than people (*Ps 56:3-4; Prov 29:25; John 12:42-43; Gal 2:11-13*)?
  
- 7) Are you \_\_\_\_\_ for the other person and for yourself as you consider confronting him?
  
- 8) Do you need any biblical \_\_\_\_\_ first about these matters?

### **C. Steps in Approaching and Confronting the Person**

- 1) Contact the person to express your desire to talk to him privately about something very important, either at that time of contact or at a scheduled time that is mutually convenient. Seek and secure his willingness to talk.
- 2) Talk with him privately, alone. (Only use postal mail, email, or telephone to set up a face-to-face meeting.) If he prefers someone else present, accommodate him within reason.
- 3) State your concern humbly, using “I” messages. “John, I’m concerned about something and it’s been on my mind....”
- 4) Ask about the apparent offense; don’t *assume* and don’t accuse. Even if you have evidence, start by asking so as to give him opportunity to voluntarily repent.
- 5) Listen well, with Christlike compassion and wisdom.
- 6) If he repents, grant him Level 2 Transacted Forgiveness. Like God, you too decide, declare and promise to not raise the matter again...
  - ⇒ To yourself (dwell, brood)
  - ⇒ To others (gossip)
  - ⇒ To the person (use against, raise later)
- 7) Encourage him to deal properly with this sin area with Jesus’ help, offer to help in appropriate ways, suggest helpful people and resources, “breathe grace” (Sande), etc.
- 8) Then seek to resolve any remaining issues between you and to restore the relationship to its proper level. Note: Beware of an “I forgive him, but I don’t want to have anything to do with him” attitude.
- 9) If he is unwilling to meet with you, or to repent, or if he needs more time, don’t despair. Rejoice, you have sought to please God and served as God’s instrument to restore the other person. Pray for him. Be patient.
- 10) Consider making second or third efforts to talk with him. Give God time to soften his heart. Pray.
- 11) If things still remain unresolved, ask or appeal to him about involving a third party (Matt 18:16). Note: While his agreement to this is ideal, it is not required; you unilaterally can (and may need to) invite a third party. (See Ken Sande, *The Peacemaker*, pp. 188-189)

## SESSION 9

### Description of the Premediation Process

Dr. Robert Jones, Lead Conciliator (robertdjones.bob@gmail.com)

Thank you for your interest in Christ-centered, Bible-based relationship mediation. The following outlines the approach I take as a Certified Christian Conciliator with the Institute for Christian Conciliation. I routinely involve one or more co-conciliators to assist me.

#### **A. Initial Contact and Premediation Preparation**

##### **1. Initial contact**

While occasionally, and ideally, both parties jointly recognize the need for mediation and jointly agree to contact me, usually one party initiates the contact with me. I gather basic (not detailed, at this point) information and explain the premediation and mediation process. If that one party is interested, we then discuss how that one party or I can invite the other party to contact me to have the same initial conversation.

##### **2. Joint Informational and Planning Discussion with Both Parties**

If both parties show interest, I meet with both parties together in person or on a phone conference call (typically 60-90 minutes) to explain the premediation and mediation process and to discuss details such as co-conciliators, financial costs, location, agreement forms, others to be present, etc. If both parties agree to move forward, then we schedule the premediation and mediation sessions (typically 3-5 weeks down the road) and I send them a preparation assignment.

##### **3. Preparation Assignment**

Once each party commits to mediation, I send them each an individual preparation assignment and forms to complete. Completing the assignment and forms is prerequisite to the next step. (I and other experienced conciliators regularly find that the quality of the parties' premediation preparation is often the single most important factor in determining the success of mediation.) *Typical* assignments involve the following kinds of items but can vary according to the parties and the situation:

- (a) Complete and return to me the Personal Information Form as soon as possible, *before* we meet for the Premediation Coaching Sessions below.
- (b) Read and meditate on two or three key Scripture passages that I will assign, usually with some questions to guide each party in application. Passages might include Matthew 7:1-5; Matthew 18:21-35; 2 Corinthians 5; Colossians 3:1-17; or James 3:13-4:12.
- (c) Read Robert D. Jones, *Pursuing Peace: A Christian Guide to Handling Our Conflicts* (Crossway, 2012), at least chapters 1-7, and complete some selected application questions after each chapter.
- (d) Review the "Mediation Agreement Form" and "The Rules for Conciliation of the Institute for Christian Conciliation."

##### **4. Premediation Coaching Sessions**

My co-conciliator(s) and I meet with each party individually in person before the mediation to discuss their preparation assignments, help them prepare for the mediation, answer any questions, and pray for them. We usually allow 90-120 minutes for each coaching session.

**SESSION 9**  
**Forms, Legalities, and Premediation**  
**Premediation – Session by Session (generally speaking/ideal world)**  
Dr. Ernie Baker

**Before meeting:** I have answered concerns, given them a general idea of what mediation involves and if they are ready had them sign a mediation agreement form, consent to counsel (informed consent) and filled out the mediation version of a PDI which includes their STOREE after reading the ICC's rules of Procedure (ICCpeace.com/rules).

**Session One:** Relationship building, giving hope, clarifying STOREE gathering data, Gospel, get Commitment (ACCEPT). **Please remember to stay neutral on issues so you do not become a party to the conflict. You must hear both sides.**

- Homework--- Chaps 1-2 of *Peacemaking for Families* with homework at the end of chapter 2 (this homework is intended to help each to start taking ownership). Hope giving homework if needed. Maybe reviewing ACCEPT if they are uncertain.

**Session Two:** Relationship building, giving hope, STOREE (more data gathering and clarifying), more Gospel, get commitment (ACCEPT, if not done in first session). If time, introduce the “three opportunities” from *The Peacemaker*. Read 4 G's of conflict resolution “The Peacemaker's Pledge” from the brochure all together. I'm praying for each party to start seeing his or her own contribution to the conflict (the 2<sup>nd</sup> “G”).

- Homework---first seven of heart questions, Start compiling “issues” list. Continue reading in the book. Gospel homework as needed. “Log” list---ten ways you have contributed to the conflict.

**Session Three:** Hope, Gospel presentation if needed, Introduce the triangle diagram. I'm now endeavoring to help each see heart themes that have contributed to the relationship dynamics. Introduce slippery slope to see which side each leans toward. Start identifying heart idolatry.

- Homework---reading in the book (assign chapters as needed but the goal is to read it completely before mediation. In other words, I may skip to the chapter on forgiveness or confession if that is the most needful for this individual). Continue compiling “issues” list. Last seven heart questions.

**Session Four:** Hope, introduce what will happen the day of mediation (I want to eliminate as many surprises as possible. The parties are already uncomfortable with the idea of being in the same room together). Continue teaching the triangles and identify heart idolatry. Who do they want in the room for the mediation?

- Homework—reading the book and appropriate homework (probably on confessions) and starting to work on confessions using the 7 A's. I ask them to send them to me ahead of the next session so I can give suggestions (you have to be careful here!). Trace up the triangles how heart idolatry has affected the relationship. This is to help them take personal ownership.

**Session Five:** Hope, Repentance/confession/forgiveness—see where they are struggling and encourage and teach. Show how heart idolatry has influenced the relationship so they can practice the Second “G.” Deal with concerns about the time or process of mediation. Introduce the need to prepare and opening statement for the mediation.

- Homework: Continue with identifying how heart idolatry has affected the relationship. Fine tune confessions. Fine tune issues list.

**Session Six:** Hope, review and finalize confessions, Introduce the PAUSE principle (this often gets introduced as one of the solutions in the mediation process), talk about opening statements, more on forgiveness as necessary, last minute concerns. Talk details of meals, etc.

- Homework: finish book, finalize confessions, write opening statement and send confessions and opening statement to me.

## **Important Sections and Examples of the Rules of Procedure of The ICC ([ICCpeace.com/rules](http://ICCpeace.com/rules))**

### **16. Confidentiality**

A. Because of its biblical nature, Christian conciliation encourages parties to openly and candidly admit their offenses in a particular dispute. Thus, conciliation requires an environment where parties may speak freely, without fear that their words may be used against them in a subsequent legal proceeding.

Moreover, because conciliation is expressly designed to keep parties out of court, conciliators serving on behalf of the Administrator would not do so if they believed that any party might later try to force them to testify in any legal proceeding regarding a conciliation case. Therefore, all communications that take place during the conciliation process shall be treated as settlement negotiations and shall be strictly confidential and inadmissible for any purpose in a court of law, except as provided in this Rule.

B. This Rule extends to all oral and written communications made by the parties or by the Administrator, and includes all records, reports, letters, notes, and other documents received or produced by the Administrator as part of the conciliation process, except for those documents that existed prior to the conciliation process and were otherwise open to discovery apart from the conciliation process. The parties may not compel the Administrator to divulge any documents or to testify in regard to the conciliation process in any judicial or adversarial proceeding, whether by personal testimony, deposition, written interrogatory, or sworn affidavit.

C. Mediated settlement agreements reached by the parties and arbitration decisions shall be confidential, except as provided in Rule 17, unless the parties agree otherwise in writing, or unless an agreement or decision must be filed with a civil court for purposes of enforcement. If an arbitration decision is contested or appealed pursuant to statute, the Administrator, upon written request from a party, shall furnish to such party, at the party's expense, copies of the conciliation agreement and the arbitration decision.

D. The Administrator may divulge appropriate and necessary information under the following circumstances, and the parties agree to waive confidentiality and hold the Administrator harmless for doing so: (1) when, as part of its normal office operations, the Administrator consults with its staff members or outside experts regarding particular issues or problems related to a case; (2) when compelled by statute or by a court of law; (3) when an arbitration agreement or decision has been contested or appealed; (4) when an action has been brought against the Administrator as a result of its participation in a conciliation case; (5) when the Administrator deems it appropriate to discuss a case with the church leaders of parties who profess to be Christians; and (6) when the Administrator deems it necessary to contact appropriate civil authorities to prevent another person from being harmed.

E. In spite of these confidentiality protections, some of the information discussed during conciliation may not be confidential as a matter of law or may be discoverable outside the conciliation process and used in other legal proceedings, and the Administrator shall have no liability therefore.

### **17. Church Involvement**

Unless agreed otherwise, the Administrator and the conciliators may discuss a case with the church leaders of parties who profess to be Christians. If a party who professes to be a Christian is unwilling to cooperate with the conciliation process or refuses to abide by an agreement reached during mediation, an advisory opinion, or an arbitration decision, the Administrator or the other parties may report the matter to the leaders of that person's church and request that they actively participate in resolving the dispute. If a church chooses to become actively involved, it may, at its discretion, review what has transpired during conciliation, obtain such additional information as it deems to be helpful, and take whatever steps it deems necessary to facilitate reconciliation and promote a biblical resolution of the dispute (see Matt. 18:15-20). The Administrator may disclose to the church any information that may have a bearing on its investigation or deliberations

**SESSIONS 10 & 11**  
**Introduction to Mediation (GRACEE) - Part 1**  
Dr. Ernie Baker

**Introduction:** The power of the Gospel

Isa. 61:1-2a

I'm assuming as a basis for this presentation some basic knowledge of principles *The Peacemaker* or *Peacemaking for Families* by Ken Sande or *Pursuing Peace: A Christian Guide to Handling Our Conflicts* by Robert Jones.

**I. Overview: Biblical basis of mediation, why be involved, and what facilitates mediation:**

A. Christ as Mediator—the Gospel (I John 2:1; I Tim. 2:5, a mesites [an arbitrator, mediator])

B. Reconciliation: “ministers of reconciliation” (2 Cor. 5: 18-21; Eph. 4:1-6)

**The idea of two followers of Christ being unreconciled with each other is antithetical to the Gospel!**

C. Phil. 2:1-15—serving one another/washing feet (John 13).

D. Discipleship/shepherding opportunity.

E. God’s sovereignty (Psalm 139): It is not a mistake that you are the one aware of this conflict.

F. Creating a climate for conflict resolution (a culture of peace/reconciliation, a Gospel culture) instead of a conflict/firestorm/red flags warnings atmosphere—**What kind of climate will there be in your church or home?**

- **Model a Peacemaker demeanor and principles yourself (for example, deals with things quickly, don’t let them fester).**
- **Teach and enforce these principles regularly**

G. The concept of neutrality. You are “for” each party.

**II. Preparation for the mediation** (see also the “PAUSE” principle in *The Peacemaker* pages 227-246, chapter 11)

**Trying to set them up for success and create a climate conducive to reconciliation. This happens as each own his or her own sin and better understands his or her own heart.**

A. Pray

B. Your own holiness: “...a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work” (2 Tim 2:21).”

C. Conflict coaching:

The goal is NOT extended counseling—the goal is reconciliation. How can we get these people ready to meet each other as soon as possible since they are unreconciled? Issues requiring more extended counseling may come up. Conflict coaching is about getting them ready for the mediation

(probably five meetings, maybe more, sometimes less depending on how well they understand Peacemaker principles).

What barriers need to be broken down so that it safe for him or her to “come to the table?” What are his or her fears/concerns?

Give hope—the LORD can help them. I often use Isa. 61:1-2a along with the “signs” that the Lord did that show His deity to demonstrate how powerful He is!

Teach each how to use the Peacemaker brochure

The “three opportunities” from *The Peacemaker* (To: Glorify God, Serve others and Grow in Christlikeness).

Help him/her understand her own or his own heart (Prov. 4:23; James 4:1-2).

Prep them for what to expect during the mediation meeting and get agreement to follow the rules. People feel safe with process.

Get them to agree to confidentiality—that is, they will not talk to others unless they are part of the reconciliation process.

**Homework:** See premediation session by session notes

### **III. The mediation itself:**

G-R-A-C-E-E

**GRACE is about ...**

Phil. 2:1-10

Location—neutral, ideally with proper facilities (bathrooms, kitchen)

Length—I’ve done week by week mediations but prefer 1 ½ day or more depending on the amount of issues.

**G**ospel welcome and atmosphere (devotional to set tone)/getting commitment to abide by rules

Remind of opportunities to Glorify God, Serve others, Grow to be like Christ.

Confidentiality—we will not talk to people outside of the circle of those trying to resolve these issues.

Your role, roles of all in the room (introduce others such as pastors, lawyers—all should have agreed ahead of time on who will be in the room).

Honesty/openness

Respectful communication

No “assumicide”

No interrupting but do take notes (mediators can interrupt to get clarification or address issues)

Get agreement

No disruptive departures

Private meetings—will give report afterwards

Breaks as necessary—anyone can call for these.

Any other rules they would like to add

## **R**eaffirming relationships and stating hopes for the mediation

Brief statement of what each believes needs to be accomplished to come to agreement and their hopes for the relationship. Summarize what you are hearing with them.

**A**llowing all to unfold the story and allowing issues to be clearly stated (confession and forgiveness are mixed through the process here and anywhere during the GRACEE process).

What got them to this point?

Who goes first?

You clarify as they go (facts and feelings).

You listen for heart themes—what seems to be motivating them? What are their desires? Wants?

Loves? What are they serving?

Ask them to be specific. We need to deal with facts not assumptions.

What to do with disruptive parties.

## **C**larifying issues and turning issues into questions to be answered

What are the **issues**—put them in question form.

What is his or her **position** on these issues? Ask questions until it is clearly understood.

What is his or her **interest**? Fear? Concerns? Underlying motivations

Create an issues list with each issue turned into a key question or questions to be answered. This takes time.

## **E**xploring answers to the questions (Let's brainstorm as a team!)

I start with the easiest issue to show how the process works and then go to the hardest.

Eph. 4:29-32

Be wild—the sky's the limit (quantity not quality)

No judging/criticizing

Hitchhiking is encouraged

Ending with agreement on the best answers to the questions.

Writing up a record of what transpired and the agreements into a “Redemptive Agreement” (Memorandum of Understanding [MOU])

Out of all the options these seem like they will work

A “redemptive” agreement—write it up if necessary/appropriate (see example)

Address all issues. Don’t ignore the seemingly impossible issue!

What can I do to help restore you?

What can you do?

What can I do to help resolve the pain?

What actions can I take that would help you know I am serious about reconciliation?

#### **IV.A successful mediator:**

- Understands the role of the mediator—a facilitator, a reporter, a suggester, a servant, neutral, listener.
- Is willing to get involved in the messy affairs of others out of love for Christ and others.
- Practices good listening skills (asks good questions and restates and clarifies the person’s statements).
- Practices turning issues into questions to be answered biblically
- Practices understanding the real “interests”/motivations/heart of others. “What’s the real issue here?” is on his/her mind regularly.
- Endeavors to understand his or her own heart worship/motivation issues and seeks to understand these with others.
- Follows up out of a desire to shepherd/disciple people—are they keeping their commitments.
- Is willing to put issues “on the table” that others are reluctant to bring up so as to seek resolution.

**SESSION 12**  
**Dealing with Those Who Won't Reconcile** <sup>12</sup>  
*(Pursuing Peace, Lesson 6)*  
Dr. Robert Jones

Common Scenarios:

- 1) Professing Christians
- 2) Unbelievers

Counsel to give the counselee:

**A. Keep your relationship with God central**

**B. Review, renew, and re-do your personal peacemaking efforts**

**C. Seek help**

**D. Frame and follow a practical, Christ-centered, ongoing plan to minister to the other party**

How should we seek to demonstrate \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ love toward unrepentant offenders?

*Luke 6:27–28, 35–36 “But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,<sup>28</sup> bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. . . .*

*<sup>35</sup> But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. <sup>36</sup> Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.*

*Romans 12:17–21, Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody. <sup>18</sup> If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. <sup>19</sup> Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: “It is mine to avenge; I will repay,” says the Lord. <sup>20</sup> On the contrary:*

*“If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink.*

*In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.”*

*<sup>21</sup> Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.*

*1 Peter 2:21–23, To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.*

*<sup>22</sup> “He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in his mouth.”*

*<sup>23</sup> When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.*

*1 Peter 4:19, So then, those who suffer according to God’s will should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.*

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<sup>12</sup> This lesson summarizes material from chapter 12, of my book, *Pursuing Peace: A Christian Guide to Handling Our Conflicts* (Crossway, 2012).

**The Luke 6:27–36 Ministry Game Plan**

A Personal Ministry Planning Chart for Ministering to Unrepentant Offenders



*Love*, v. 27a

*Mercy*, v. 36

<i>Do Good</i> , v.27b (Practical acts of service for the other person)	<i>Bless</i> , v.28a (Speak well to, and about, the other person)	<i>Pray</i> , v.28b (Specific ways to pray for yourself and the other person)
1	1	1
2	2	2
3	3	3
4	4	4

Note: Doing good might include:

1) Setting firm limits on evil (*Prov 19:19; Rom 13:1-6*)

2) Godly confrontation—active efforts to make peace, not settle for truce or appeasement (*Lev 19:17-18, Matt 5:9; 5:21-26; 7:5; 18:15-18; Prov 27:5-6*).

The key here is having a godly, loving motive. A person can do the right actions from the wrong motives (e.g., fear, not faith; revenge, not love).

**E. Keep a God-centered, balanced perspective for your life.**

*Psalm 6:5 –8; 73:23 –28; Philippians 4:11 –13; Romans 12:18; Matthew 5:9*

**SESSION 13**  
**Preparing for and Handling Church Conflict**  
Dr. Robert Jones

“I don’t know a church in my county that has not been in conflict.” (One North Carolina Pastor)

Introduction: Beyond the personal peacemaking resources below, these focus on church conflict:

- Tara Klena Barthel and David V. Edling, *Redeeming Church Conflicts: Turning Crisis Into Compassion and Care* (Baker, 2012)
- Ken Sande, “Transforming Your Church: Cultivating a Culture of Peace,” *Journal of Biblical Counseling* 20:1 (Fall 2001), 46–54.
- Alfred Poirier, *The Peacemaking Pastor: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Church Conflict* (Baker, 2006)

**A. Resolve Your Personal Conflicts: Apply Biblical Peacemaking to Your Own Relationships**

You must model biblical peacemaking in all your dealings with people. (See 1 Peter 5:1–4 and Hebrews 13:7 on the importance of leaders’ examples.)

**B. Equip Your Members: Teach Your Congregation and Encourage Biblical Peacemaking**

1. Promote helpful resources for personal peacemaking activities:

- Jay E. Adams, *How to Help People in Conflict: Becoming a Biblical Peacemaker* (Timeless Texts, 2005)
- Ernie Baker, *Help! I’m in a Conflict* (Shepherd Press, 2015)
- Robert D. Jones, *Pursuing Peace: A Christian Guide to Handling Our Conflicts* (Crossway, 2012)
- Ken Sande, *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Baker, 2004)
- Ken Sande and Kevin Johnson. *Resolving Everyday Conflict*. (Baker, 2011).

2. Additional specialize resources for married couples, parents, and families

- Married couples and parents: Ken Sande with Tom Raabe, *Peacemaking for Families: A Biblical Guide to Managing Conflict in Your Home* (Tyndale, 2002).
- Children: Corlette Sande, *The Young Peacemaker*. Teacher’s manual and reproducible student booklets. Aimed at grades 3–6. Can be used in school classroom (public, private, home), church Sunday School (age-graded or intergenerational family Sunday School), family devotions, and VBS (or Family Bible School with an adult emphasis)
- Students: Ken Sande, *The Peacemaker: Student Version* (Baker, 2008)

3. Preach on biblical peacemaking

4. Teach biblical peacemaking in adult education settings (Sunday School classes, discipleship classes, small groups, support groups, etc.)

5. Host biblical peacemaking training events

### **C. Prepare Your Church: Securing Commitment to Pursuing Peace and Managing Risk**

1. Study and implement best practices of church-based legal risk management.
2. Study, practice, and approve as leaders (officers and ministry staff) these key concepts and lead the congregation to formally adopt these concepts by officially incorporating “The Peacemaker’s Pledge” and the *Relational Commitments* document into your bylaws. (For convenience, your bylaws can simply reference the latter documents as part of your bylaws.):
  - Peacemaker Ministries’ “The Peacemaker’s Pledge”
  - The principle of informed consent. Matt 7:12
  - Peacemaker Ministries’ *Relational Commitments*
  - Formal membership<sup>13</sup>
3. Educate the congregation about these concepts in various ways. How and when?
  - Orientation and new member classes
  - New member interviews
  - Recite the “The Peacemaker’s Pledge” aloud in worship a couple of times a year (e.g., when receiving new members or preaching on peacemaking or relational subjects)
  - Premarital training/counseling courses
  - Counseling agreement forms (part of *Relational Commitments*)
  - Small group commitments
  - Committee and ministry team relationships
  - Pastoral search process. Are your potential candidates committed to biblical peacemaking?
  - Your church’s current or prospective missionaries, church planters, short-term teams, etc.
4. Use conciliation clauses.
  - Staff employment contracts and pastoral call agreements
  - Vendor contracts (lawn service, building programs, office equipment service)
5. Child protection measures (e.g., screening and supervising workers, reporting suspected abuse).

### **D. Lead Your Church Through Crises: Providing Wise Oversight in Difficult Conflict Cases**

An immediate leadership response is required in a crisis

1. Conflicts between You and Someone Else
  - Make yourself approachable
  - Take the initiative according to the biblical steps – the Matthew 5/18 dynamic!
    - Matthew 5:23–24 – You must go to the offended person (also Matt. 7:3–5)
    - Matthew 18:15 – You must go to the offending person

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<sup>13</sup> See my unpublished article, “The Wisdom of Practicing Formal Membership in a Local Church”

## 2. Conflicts between Others that Come to Your Attention

- Coach one or both parties to act diligently in biblical peacemaking. My article
- Follow-up on them and continue coaching
- Offer to mediate or to help them secure a mediator. Recommended resource: Ted Kober and Ken Sande, *Cultivating Lifestyles of Reconciliation*
- Be committed to both biblical formative and restorative church discipline, and work together with your fellow church leaders

### **E. If All Else Fails... Securing Outside Conciliation Assistance**

1. Determine, in advance, whom to contact and/or the rules of procedure (e.g., “according to the rules of procedure of the Institute for Christian Conciliation”)

2. Your local, state, and national associational or denominational leaders might provide assistance, although some of that help might be less than biblical/Christ-centered.

3. Is it a leader-only (or member-only) or is it a congregational-wide conflict?

- If leader-only or member-only, then mediation or mediation-arbitration
- If congregational-wide, then a full church conflict intervention. Components typically include:
  - Congregational involvement
  - Team approach
  - Teaching/training
  - Identify peacemakers in the body
  - Interviewing and conflict coaching,
  - Mediation
  - Oral and/or written reports

### **Conclusion: Philippians 4:2–3**

*I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to agree with each other in the Lord. <sup>3</sup> Yes, and I ask you, loyal yokefellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.*