

I. Introduction: How do these principles apply in our relationships with unbelievers?

- A. Conflict is unavoidable. Rom. 12:18
- B. Conflict brings opportunity (to display the gospel). 1 Cor. 10:31
- C. Overlook minor offenses. 1 Pet. 4:8 Prov. 19:11
- D. First get the log out of your own eye – seek forgiveness. Mt. 7:1-5 5:23-24
- E. Practice personal peacemaking by seeking to gently restore the other person before involving others. Mt. 18:15-20 Gal. 6:1
- F. Always have an attitude of forgiveness and graciously grant relational forgiveness when asked. Eph. 4:32 Mt. 18:21-35
- G. While unbelievers are not able to apply the gospel in pursuing peace, they can, through common grace, make progress towards reconciliation. Rom. 12:17

II. Promote peace by having a Christlike heart attitude towards others. Eph. 4:1-3,31-32

Pr. 4:23 Mt. 15:18-19 Col. 3:12-17

- A. Peace and unity are founded on the gospel. Eph. 4:1
- B. Peace is promoted by humility and destroyed by pride. Eph. 4:2 Js. 4:6 Phil. 2:3-8 Mark 10:45
- C. Peacemaking requires effort. Eph. 4:3
- D. Peacemaking requires patience and grace. Gal. 5:22-23 Col. 3:12ff Js. 1:19 Pr. 16:32 Eph. 4:31-32 Rom. 15:7

III. Follow biblical approaches to conflict resolution.

- A. Many engage in destructive unbiblical approaches to conflict – fighting and fleeing. Gal. 5:15,20
- B. Try to work out your differences with the other party(parties)– discussion, negotiation, conflict coaching. Pr. 12:15
- C. If you can't work out your conflicts together, invite others to mediate. Phil. 4:2-3
 - 1. The sad situation in Philippi.
 - 2. In mediation the mediator(s) helps the two parties work out their own solution – a voluntary agreement. Pr. 11:14 15:22
 - 3. What are the advantages of mediation?
 - 4. Who is qualified to mediate? *Can I trust you? Do you care? Can you help?* Ex. 23:3 Dt. 16:19 Js. 2:1ff Pr. 25:2 18:17,13 Gal. 6:1
 - 5. The process of mediation (*from Peacemaker Ministries*).
 - a. Greeting and ground rules.
 - b. Opening statements.
 - c. Story telling.
 - d. Problem identification and clarification.
 - e. Explore solutions.
 - f. Lead to agreement.
 - 6. Blessed are the mediators who help others to make peace. Mt. 5:9
- D. If mediation doesn't work, you may choose to submit to binding arbitration.
 - 1. The situation in Corinth and the situation today. 1 Cor. 6:1-8
 - 2. In binding arbitration the two parties in conflict agree to let a third party (parties) settle their dispute.
 - 3. The process of arbitration is similar to that of mediation. The difference is that the arbitrators render a decision at the end.

4. Sometimes it is the duty of the church to take jurisdiction in a matter. 1 Co. 6:5
5. Sometimes it is worth giving up your rights to have peace. 1 Cor. 6:6-8
6. If a crime has been committed, the government may need to get involved.
1 Pet. 2:13-14 Ro. 13:1-7
7. If one party refuses to listen to the church, then he is no longer to be considered a believer and one may go to court against him. Mt. 18:17

IV. Using the PAUSE principle in negotiating/peacemaking (from *The Peacemaker*).

- A. Prepare for peacemaking— pray and plan. I Co. 4:13 Pr. 21:5 Heb.12:14 Mt.5:23-24
- B. Affirm. I Co. 13:7 Phil. 4:2-3
 1. Affirmation is powerful and healing. Pr. 12:18 16:21,24 Eph. 4:29
 2. What is the difference between biblical affirmation and building up pride and self-esteem? Pr. 31:28-30 Mt. 25:21,23 Heb. 11:1-2,39 Ruth 3:11 Lu. 7:2-5,28 21:3-4 Jo. 1:47 Mark 14:6 Ro. 16:1-2 13:7 2 Ti. 1:16-18 Phil. 4:8
 3. Affirmation is acknowledging the good work God is doing in others. 1 Co. 1:4 4:5 11:2 15:10 Rom. 11:35-36 Js. 1:17 2 Thess. 1:3-4 1 Thess. 1:2-10
 4. How can we affirm unbelievers? Luke 7:2-5
 5. Also affirm your relationship with the other person. Phil. 4:2-3
- C. Understand the interests of others. Phil. 2:3-4 Js. 1:19 I Pe. 3:7 Pr. 20:5 18:2,13
 1. Whose thoughts and feelings matter most to you? Phil. 2:3-4 Js. 1:19
 2. Learn to listen (without interrupting). Pr. 20:5 18:13 31:11 Js. 1:19
 3. Can you repeat back their side? A communication exercise. Phil. 2:3-4
 4. Have compassion for how the other person feels.
 5. Speak with care and grace to build others up. Eph. 4:29 Pr. 15:28
 6. Is your attitude Christlike? Phil. 2:5-8
 7. Be humble enough to admit you may be wrong.
 8. Assume the best (instead of judging). I Co. 13:7 Mt. 7:1ff
- D. Search for creative solutions. Dan. 1:8-20 Ecc. 9:16 1 Ki. 3:16-28 Rom. 12:18-21
- E. Evaluate options objectively and reasonably.

V. Concluding applications: True hope and change! Rom. 5:10-11

Discussion questions

1. What heart attitudes promote peace?
2. What heart attitudes cause division?
3. In what ways do people sinfully respond to conflict?
4. What is mediation and when might it be appropriate?
5. What is arbitration and when might it be appropriate?
6. What is the biblical basis for mediation and arbitration?
7. How can one prepare for peacemaking?
8. What kind of affirmation is biblical?
9. Why is it hard to understand the interests of others in a conflict?
What can you do to better understand them?
10. What would you say to a couple who have lost hope for their marriage?
11. How can these principles be applied in conflicts involving unbelievers?