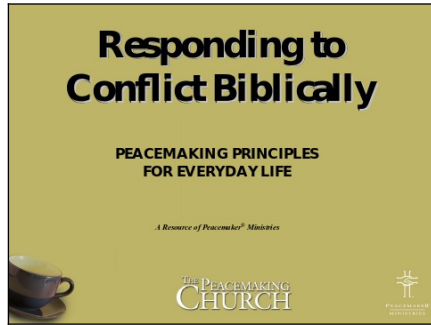
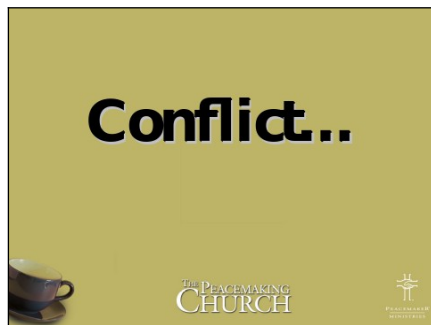


Slide 1



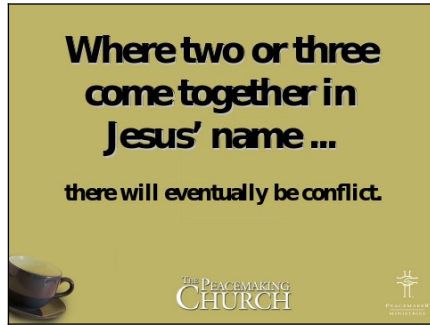
Welcome the participants. Open with prayer. If people are not acquainted with each other or with the presenter, you may want to have each person take a minute to introduce himself or herself to the group (this can vary depending on the size of the class. Generally it is effective to create class interaction as early as possible. Take a few minutes to explain the coffee cup theme used throughout the presentation.

Slide 2



Begin the discussion by asking the group what words come to mind when they hear the word "conflict." Gather feedback from the participants. Most people have what are generally thought of as negative associations, such as "war," "anger," or "frustration." Some people will think of a synonym for conflict, such as "disagreement," or "dispute." Much more rarely, people have "positive" associations, such as "opportunity." As we will see, conflict provides opportunities to glorify God, serve others and grow to be like Christ. Asking this question briefly at the outset helps people begin to recognize their typical responses when in conflict with others.

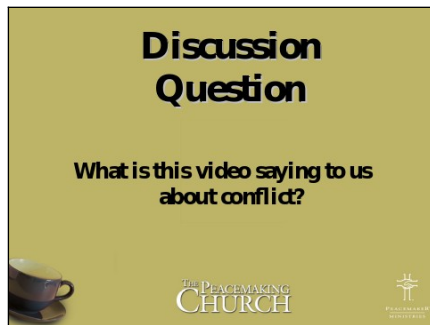
Slide 3



A wise man once said “Where two or three come together in Jesus’ name.....there will eventually be conflict.”

If there will be conflict, we need to understand what that means and how we, as believers and members of our church, should react.

Slide 4



After viewing the Peacemaking Parable video *Repentance*, ask the participants to turn to someone next to them and respond to this question. Emphasize that they should be in groups of two, but no more than three. Give the participants three to four minutes to discuss the question and then ask several people to share their responses with the entire class.

This type of general question is an excellent way to get people thinking about conflict and how much it impacts our relationships – even when we least expect it.

Slide 5



Using the power point slides, overhead transparencies, or chart paper and markers, display the question and give people time to respond with their own definitions.

Let’s use the following definition: **Conflict is a difference in opinion or purpose that frustrates someone’s goals or desires.**

We believe we are called to respond to conflict in a remarkably different way from how the world deals with

conflict.

Biblical Basis: *Share as many Scriptures as appropriate.*

Luke 6:27-36




Gal 5:19-26

Matt 5:9

Slide 6

On your note cards write..

1. One word that describes how I've responded to conflict in the past
2. One word that describes how I currently deal with conflict
3. One word that describes how I would like to respond to conflict

WARM-UP ACTIVITY

Each participant should be given a pen and three post-it notes (or index cards) upon which to write.




Ask them to read the instructions to themselves and tell them they have three minutes to complete the task. After the time is up, have each team member share their words with the group. (One way to share is one question at a time, another way is to have each team member share all three at one time).

You could provide a wall or board area in the room upon which are the labels Past, Present, and Future are posted. After sharing, each person can place their post-it under the appropriate label, and then use it as a means of prayer for each other.

Slide 7

Causes of Conflict..

- Misunderstandings
- Differences in values, goals ...
- Competition over resources
- Sinful attitudes and desires
- Stress caused by change

Start by asking for suggestions from the group regarding the major causes of conflict. Use a board or chart paper to record responses, then use this slide to share the major causes and compare them to the group's ideas. How similar are the two lists?

Give each person a copy of the *Peacemaking Principles* pamphlet. Encourage them to browse through the brochure before proceeding to the next slide.

Slide 8



Inside your *Peacemaking Principles* pamphlet, you will find what Peacemaker Ministries calls the Slippery Slope.

Note there are three major areas that represent responses to conflict. The three responses found on the left side of the slope are directed at escaping from the conflict, rather than dealing with it.

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

The six responses in the center are peacemaking responses. Of the six Peacemaking responses on the Slippery Slope, the first three responses usually are undertaken by the individual, sometimes with behind the scenes coaching from other Christians. The second three Peacemaking responses are used if talking to the other side has not worked, or is not appropriate.

The next slides will more fully explain each response on the Slippery Slope.

Slide 9



There are three general ways we can respond to conflict:

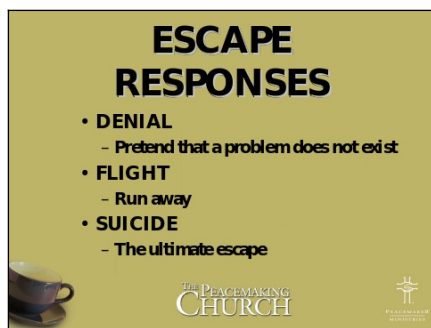
Escape responses

People tend to use escape responses when they are more interested in avoiding or getting away from a conflict than in resolving it.

Attack responses

People tend to use attack responses when they are more interested in winning a conflict than in preserving a relationship or honoring God.

Slide 10



Peacemaking responses

Of the six peacemaking responses on the Slippery Slope, the first three responses usually are implemented by the individual, sometimes with the behind the scenes coaching from other Christians. The last three peacemaking responses are used if talking to the other party alone is not appropriate, or has not been successful.

There are three major escape responses: denial, flight and suicide. People tend to use escape responses when they are more interested in avoiding or getting away from a conflict than in resolving it.

DENIAL

Pretend that a problem does not exist (ignore an irritation, but harbor anger inside; promise yourself you'll handle it later, but never get around to it).

FLIGHT

Run away (end a friendship, leave churches, quit a commitment, or make up an excuse to not participate).

SUICIDE

The ultimate escape.

After introducing each response and sharing it's definition from the pamphlet, share a related Bible verse, or have someone read the verse. Refer to your booklet for expanded definitions.

People can also contribute their examples, if there is time.

Slide 11



There are three major attack responses: assault, litigation, and murder. People tend to use attack responses when they are more interested in winning a conflict than in preserving a relationship, or honoring God.

ASSAULT

Use force or verbal attack (intimidation, gossip, slander, shoving or striking another).

LITIGATION

Take before a civil judge. We often “litigate” in the courtroom of our mind. We prosecute by gathering and presenting mental evidence, then act as both judge and jury, all without saying a word.

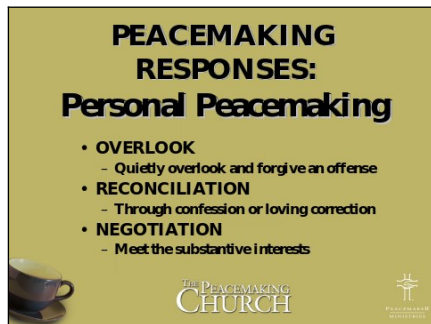
MURDER

“Kill” the opponent. Does not only refer to physical violence. As Jesus reminds us, words and actions that reflect anger, bitterness or contempt toward a teammate can also be thought of as “murder.”

After introducing each response and sharing it’s definition, share a related Bible verse or have someone read the verse. Refer to the booklet for expanded definitions.

Participants can also suggest other examples, if there is time.

Slide 12



Of the six peacemaking responses, the first three responses usually are implemented by the individual, sometimes with behind the scenes coaching other Christians. The coach does not resolve the problem, but acts as an unbiased third party that can coach those involved to help them resolve their own differences.

OVERLOOK

Quietly overlook and forgive an

offense.

Overlooking and denial are next to each other on the Slippery Slope . Overlooking recognizes a conflict and chooses to quietly walk away. Denial pretends there is no conflict. In our culture, it is easy to confuse the two.

RECONCILIATION

Confession or loving correction leads to resolving relational issues, such as anger, frustration, or bitterness.

Reconciliation occurs when conflict is too serious to overlook. It can result from confession of personal responsibility, from lovingly approaching a brother or sister about his or her behavior/attitude, or from both.

NEGOTIATION

A successful negotiation responds to the substantive interests of all involved. Negotiation may occur when money, property or other “rights” are at stake.

Slide 13

PEACEMAKING RESPONSES:
Assisted Peacemaking

- **MEDIATION**
- Ask someone to help
- **ARBITRATION**
- Appoint someone to decide
- **ACCOUNTABILITY**
- Team/ Church leaders intervene

THE PEACEMAKING CHURCH

If a personal peacemaking response isn't appropriate or has not been successful, it is important to ask another to assist you (Matt 18:16).

MEDIATION

Mediation means asking another to help resolve the conflict through a facilitated discussion. Often effective mediation requires more formal training.

ARBITRATION

Arbitration is more formal and involves both sides presenting their concerns and asking the arbitrator to decide what should be done.

ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability refers to oversight by church leaders (see Matt. 18:17).

Slide 14



Now that we have summarized the Slippery Slope, let's look at what the Bible says about how to respond to conflict.

Slide 15



As you introduce each distinctive, show the word on the screen while you state the distinctive and its foundation. Before moving to the next word, use as many of the scripture references as time allows.

Biblical peacemaking is based on Four Distinctives:

The Centrality of Christ (John 14:27; 2 Cor. 5:18-19; Col. 3:15-16; 2 Tim. 3:16)

Genuine peace is found only through Jesus.

The Responsibility of the Church (Matt. 18:17; 1 Cor. 6:4; Eph. 3:10; Heb. 13:17)

Peacemaking is an essential ministry of all believers.

The Necessity of Biblical Counseling (James 4:1-3; Gal. 2:20; Prov. 28:13; Rom 15:14)

Heart issues and reconciliation are addressed in God's Word.

The Comprehensiveness of God's Word (2 Tim. 3:16-17)

The Bible is a Christian's total authority and sufficient for all aspects of life.

Slide 16



The biblical pattern for responding to conflict can be summarized by using the “Four G’s”.

The slide is automated to allow you to present one G at a time.

In the remainder of the presentation, we will take a deeper look at each of the G’s.

Slide 17



You may use these concepts to further discuss ways we can bring glory and honor to God. Instead of focusing on our own desires or dwelling on what others may do, we should always seek to please and honor God—by depending on His wisdom, power, and love; by faithfully obeying His commands; and by seeking to maintain a loving, merciful and forgiving attitude.

Bible verses to use, as appropriate:

1 Cor. 10:31
James 4:1-3
Psalm 37:1-6
Phil. 4:2-9
Col. 3:1-4
1 Peter 2:12
John 14:15
James 3:17-18
Rom. 12:17-21
Mark 11:25

Slide 18

Peacemaking is Not Optional

- *Peace with God, others, and self*
- *Peacemaking is crucial to our testimony*
- *We must work hard at Peacemaking*

THE PEACEMAKING CHURCH

PEACEMAKING MINISTRIES

Peacemaking is not optional. We are commanded to make peace with God, others and ourselves. Peacemaking is crucial to our testimony as Christians. Peacemaking is hard work, but well worth it as it glorifies God.

Slide 19

Conflict provides opportunities to...

Glorify God
Serve other people
Grow to be like Christ

THE PEACEMAKING CHURCH

PEACEMAKING MINISTRIES

For the Christian, conflict can be seen as an opportunity to glorify God, serve Him, and grow to be like Christ.

Bible verses to use, as appropriate:

1 Cor. 10:31-11:1

Rom. 8:28-29

James 1:2-4

Slide 20

The Second G:

Get the Log out of Your Eye

Examine my attitude, then evaluate my shortcomings and responsibilities

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PEACEMAKING MINISTRIES

Instead of attacking others or dwelling on their wrongs, we take responsibility for our own contribution to conflicts—confessing our sins, asking God to help us change any attitudes and habits that lead to conflict, and seeking to repair any harm we have caused.

Bible verses to use, as appropriate:

Matt:7:3-5

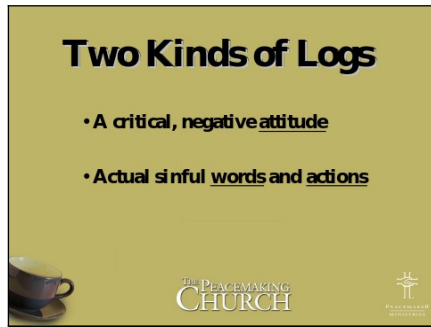
1 John 1:8-9

Prov. 28:13

Col. 3:5-14

Luke 19:8

Slide 21



Attitudes can be critical, negative, or oversensitive. Our attitudes underlie our words and actions and “fan” the flames of conflict.

Words that “feed” a conflict would include: grumbling, complaining, gossiping, unloving criticism, lies, or exaggerations.

Actions include: failing to do those things we should do, failing to keep commitments or responsibilities, resisting godly advice, or withholding mercy and forgiveness.

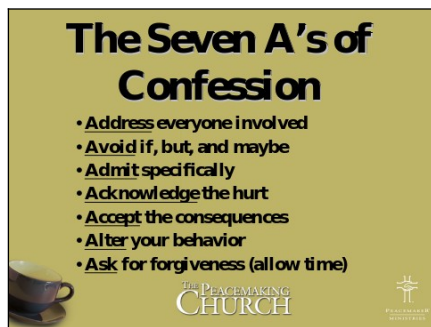
Slide 22



After viewing the Peacemaking Parable video *But I'm Really Sorry*, ask the participants to turn to someone next to them and respond to this question. Emphasize that they should be in groups of two, but no more than three. Give the participants three to four minutes to discuss the question and then ask several people to share their responses with the entire class.

This type of question elicits a list of observations which can be referred to and built on as you unpack the Seven A's.

Slide 23



We can remove the log from our eye through confession. One way to confess is to follow the pattern established in the 7 A's:

Address—all those whom you affected.

Avoid—don't try to excuse your wrongs by using words that shift the blame, or minimize your role.

Admit—both attitudes and actions.

Acknowledge—express sorrow for

hurting someone.

Accept—willingly do what it takes to restore the other person to wholeness, such as making restitution.

Alter—change your attitudes and actions.

Ask—and allow time for healing to occur.

Bible verses to use, as

appropriate:

Matt. 7:3-5

1 John 1:8-9

Prov. 28:13

Slide 24



Instead of pretending that conflict doesn't exist or talking about others behind their backs, we can choose to overlook minor offenses, or talk directly and graciously with those whose offenses seem too serious to overlook. When a conflict cannot be resolved in private, we can ask a peacemaking team member to help us understand how to settle it in a biblical manner.

Bible verses to use, as

appropriate:

Matt 5:15-20

James 5:9

Prov. 19:11

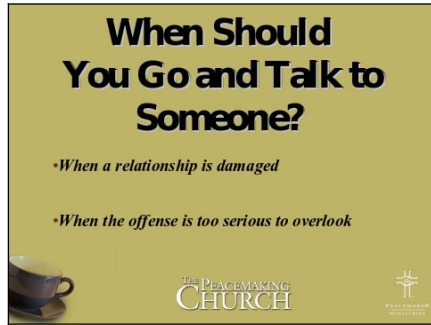
Gal. 6:1-2

Eph. 4:29

2 Tim. 2:24-26

1 Cor. 6:1-8

Slide 25

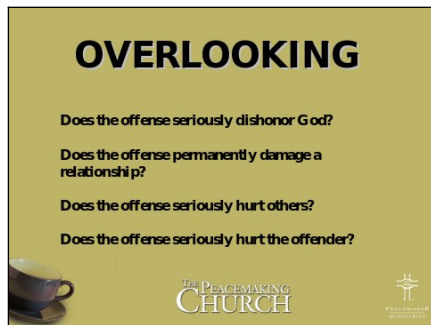


We know to talk to someone when...

A relationship is damaged.
The offense is too serious to overlook.

Some guides for determining when an offense is serious are offered on the next slide.

Slide 26



Before we approach someone, we should consider overlooking the offense (Pro. 19:11).

How do we determine whether to cover over the offense with love and let it go (I Pet. 4:8), or whether to address it?

Consider these four questions:

Does the offense seriously dishonor God?

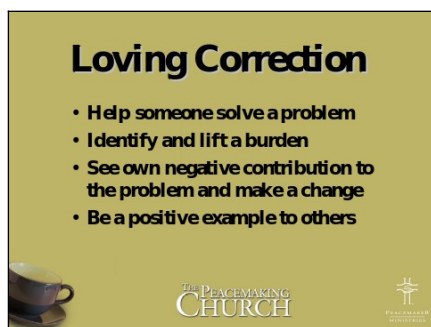
Does the offense permanently damage a relationship?

Does the offense seriously hurt/offend others?

Does the offense seriously hurt the offender?

If the answer is yes to any of the questions, then the matter should not be overlooked.

Slide 27



Talking with another about his or her contribution to the conflict in a loving and helpful manner can actually help in a number of ways. Resolve an important or troublesome problem.

Identify and lift a burden, such as bitterness or unforgiveness.

Help others see their contributions to the problem and make changes in behaviors or attitudes.

Provide a model, as you

Slide 28



demonstrate how to resolve conflicts in a biblical way.
Introduce and discuss each point one at a time.

If an incident cannot be overlooked, then it should be dealt with in a manner that seeks to restore.

As you seek to restore a relationship, the following are worth noting:

Avoid lecturing. Lecturing builds walls, not bridges.

Use good listening skills, such as paraphrasing, clarifying, and patiently permitting others to express their concerns.

Focus on what God has done through Jesus to forgive and deliver you.

Slide 29



Words can be extremely powerful weapons and the way we use them can make or break any attempt to resolve a conflict (Eph. 4:29). God helps us address difficult situations through prayer, preparation and the application of grace. So as you prepare to talk to another, remember these guidelines:

Pray for humility and wisdom.

Plan words carefully (think of how you would want to be corrected).

Anticipate likely reactions and plan appropriate responses.

Choose the right time and place (talk in person whenever possible).

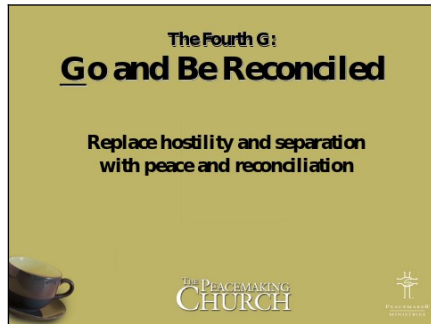
Assume the best about the other person until facts prove otherwise (Prov. 11:27)..

Listen carefully (Prov. 18:13).

Speak only to build others up (Eph. 4:29).

Ask for feedback from the other

Slide 30



person.

Recognize personal limits (only God can change people; Rom. 12:18; 2 Tim. 2:24-26).

Instead of accepting premature compromise or allowing relationships to wither, we can actively pursue genuine peace and reconciliation. We can forgive others as God, for Christ's sake, has forgiven us. Then, we can seek just and mutually beneficial solutions to our differences.

Bible verses to use, as appropriate:

Matt. 5:23-24

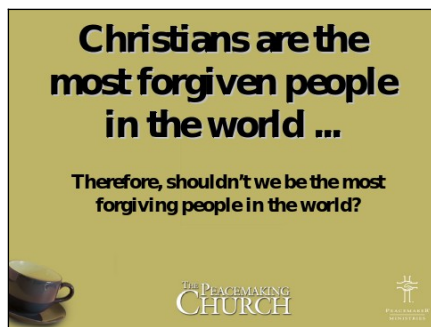
Matt. 6:12

Eph. 4:1-3, 32

Matt. 7:12

Phil. 2:3-4

Slide 31



By God's grace, we apply these principles as a matter of stewardship, realizing that conflict is an assignment, not an accident. We remember success, in God's eyes, is not a matter of specific results but of faithful, dependent obedience. We pray that our service as peacemakers brings praise to our Lord and leads others to know His infinite love.

Bible verses to use, as appropriate:

Matt. 25:14-21

1 Peter 2:19, 4:19

Rom. 12:18

John 13:34-35

Slide 32



**Forgive as
God Forgave You**

- How do we develop a spirit of forgiveness?
- Forgiveness is a decision involving four promises...

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PEACEMAKING CHURCH

We need to remember that God first forgave us.

Forgiving requires a spirit of humble recognition that Jesus set our example of forgiveness. Forgiveness is a decision with four promises, as the next slide illustrates.

Slide 33



Forgiveness is a Decision to Make Four Promises:

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

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PEACEMAKING CHURCH

We can think of forgiveness as a decision that makes four promises: I will not dwell on this incident.

I will not bring this incident up and use it against you.

I will not talk to others about this incident.

I will not allow this incident to stand between us or hinder our personal relationship.

Making these promises can change our whole outlook on the words “I forgive you”. It certainly can impact our behavior afterwards!

Bible verses to use, as appropriate:

Matt. 6:12

1 Cor. 13:5

Eph. 4:32

Slide 34



Forgiveness Is Not...

- A sentimental concept
- A feeling
- Forgetting
- Excusing
- A temporary pardon

THE PEACEMAKING CHURCH

PEACEMAKING CHURCH

Let’s look at forgiveness as the Bible teaches it. We are told to forgive as the Lord forgives us (Col. 3: 12-14).

Therefore forgiveness is not:

A sentimental concept

A feeling (forgiveness is a decision to not count the other’s offense)

Forgetting (although we may forget the offense over time)

Excusing

Slide 35

Forgiveness means we must renounce sinful attitudes and expectations, not:

- Expect the offender to earn or deserve our forgiveness
- Desire to punish the offender
- Demand a guarantee that it won't occur again

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A temporary pardon (it is permanent)
We must rely on the Lord's strength to forgive, especially when the hurt or betrayal is serious.

Our forgiveness should have “no strings attached...”
We do not expect the offender to earn or deserve our forgiveness.
We do not desire to punish the offender or make him suffer for what his did to us.
We do not demand a guarantee that it won't occur again.

God models this kind of forgiveness. By His grace alone can we forgive others as He has forgiven us.

Slide 36

Discussion Question

What does this video say to us as brothers and sisters in Christ?

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After viewing the Peacemaking Parable video *Why Not Rather Be Wronged?*, ask the participants to reflect on the message of the video by sharing their response to this question with the class.

Slide 37

Dealing with Unreasonable People

- We have divine weapons (PRAY!)
- Control your tongue
- Seek godly advisors
- Keep doing what is right
- Recognize your limits
- The ultimate weapon: Love
 - Protects you from your own bitterness
 - Can lead others to repentance

THE PEACEMAKING CHURCH

If time permits, the use of the following three slides is helpful to close the teaching session. If not, skip to the last slide.
It is important to remember that we cannot force others to forgive, or apply the 4 G's in their lives.
Occasionally we have to deal with “unreasonable people.” When that happens it is good to remember: We have divine weapons. (PRAY

for the person.)
 Control your own tongue—don't talk to others about the person.
 Seek godly advisors—the Peacemaker Team members or Team Leader should be the only ones with whom you discuss your concerns.
 Keep doing what is right—you are answerable to God for your behavior, not the behavior of the other person.
 Recognize your limits—you are not a trained counselor or the Holy Spirit.
 The ultimate weapon is love—use it!
 It protects you from your own bitterness.
 Your model as a peacemaker can encourage change in the other person.

Slide 38

Do Not Merely Listen to the Word...

- Focus on improving one or two peacemaking skills
- Memorize key Bible passages on peacemaking
- Commit to reconcile with someone in your life



THE PEACEMAKING CHURCH




It is helpful to remember that we are called not merely to listen to God's Word, but to obey it. (And God give us his power to do it!)

That means you can apply biblical peacemaking in your own life by:
 Focusing on improving one or two peacemaking skills.
 Memorizing key Bible passages on peacemaking.
 Committing to reconcile with someone in your life.


Slide 39

Philippians 4:4-9 Tells Us To:

- Rejoice in the Lord always
- Let your gentleness be evident
- Replace anxiety with prayer
- See things as they really are
- Practice what you've learned



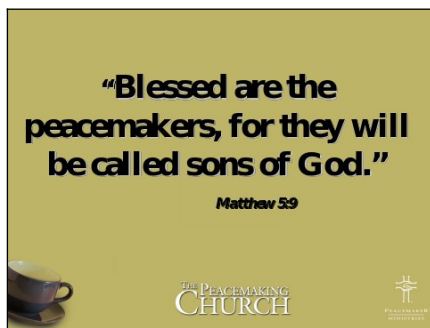
THE PEACEMAKING CHURCH



A helpful reminder from God's Word is found in Philippians 4:4-9:
Rejoice in the Lord always.
 Let your gentleness be evident.
Replace anxiety with prayer.
 See things as they really are (Note: we often define those opposed to us largely in terms of negative qualities, e.g., "she is full of

bitterness,” or, “he just does not know when to stop.” In the Philippians passage, Paul tells us that we must also “think” about the good qualities of those who oppose us, such as what is noble, right, or pure about their lives. Recognizing strengths as well as weaknesses in others helps us approach them from a more balanced perspective, as brothers and sisters in Christ whom we are called to love and serve.). Practice what you’ve learned.

Slide 40



Remember Jesus himself said: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.”

Close the session with prayer.