



MAKING PEACE IN RELATIONSHIPS

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All Ministry is About Relationship

- **All life is about relationship.**
- 2 Great commandments: Love God & Love Neighbor
- The state of our relationships indicates which Gospel we follow.

For God is not a God of confusion but of peace (1 Cor. 14:33).



But, we have a
problem:

We don't "do"
relationships very
well.



Our Problem Began in the Garden

- We wanted to become “like Elohim,” being the judge of what is good and evil. **Idolatry**
- When faced with our sin and guilt - we hide and create fig leaves to cover ourselves. **Denial & False justification.**
- We point the finger of blame at God and others. **Failure to take responsibility, sacrificing others on the altar of our desires.**



Relationship on the vertical & horizontal planes were shattered.



CONFLICT!

The Gospel is the Key to Conflict

Ephesians 2:14-16 (ESV) 14 **For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility**

15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so **making peace,**

16 and might **reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.**

And yet, forgiven Believers:

- We justify ourselves, blame and attack others, we gossip about our opponent to others - longing to be vindicated in our righteousness, and we forget what Yeshua has done for us - **AND** what he has done for the person we are in conflict with.
- We operate in pride rather humility, and fail to glorify God and honor the other soul who is also made in the image of God.

Should the Gospel change how we relate to others?

New Creations

2 Corinthians 5:14-21 (NASB) 14 For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died;

15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.

16 Therefore **from now on we recognize no one according to the flesh**; even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know Him in this way no longer.

17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creature**; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.



18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and **gave us the ministry of reconciliation,**

19 namely, that God was in **Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.**

20 Therefore, **we are ambassadors for Christ**, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

In Conflict, We Forget

For you have died, and your life is hidden with Messiah in God. Put to death what is earthly in you... for that is idolatry.

Set aside anger, rage, malice, slander, and foul language out of your mouth. Do not lie to one another.

Clothe yourselves in tender compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience - bearing with one another and **forgiving each other**, if anyone has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord pardoned you, so also you must pardon others.

But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfect harmony. Let the shalom of Messiah rule in your hearts. (Colossians 3)



When Did Yeshua Forgive Us?

- While we were yet sinners.
- What caused us to repent and accept His work on our behalf?

“Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and tolerance and patience, not knowing that **the kindness of God leads you to repentance?**” (Romans 2:4, NASB)

- If the kindness of God is what causes us to repent, what will cause others to repent for what they have done to us?
- It will not be our righteous anger, rage, demand for justice, accusations, or our vengeance.

The 13 Attributes of Mercy

Compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth, who keeps **lovingkindness** for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression and sin... (Ex. 34)



The Gospel of Peace

There are three interrelated dimensions of peace (and the Gospel):

- **Peace with God** (Col. 1:19-20) - Gospel to mankind.
- **Peace within ourselves** (Isa. 32:17; Isa. 48:18) - set free from sin, condemnation, shame, and guilt.
- **Peace with others**, also known as “unity” (Rom. 12:18, Eph. 2) - Gospel restores relationships and removes the enmity between men.



3D - God, Self, Others:

A Return to Eden

7th Beatitude

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”

(Matthew 5:9, NASB)

“We all agree that forgiveness is a beautiful idea until we have to practice it.”

— *C. S. Lewis*

What Causes Conflict?

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



“Where do quarrels and conflicts among you come from? Don’t they come from this, **namely your passions that battle within your body parts?** You crave and have not. You murder and you envy, yet you cannot get it. You fight and you wage war. You do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives **so you may spend it on your passions.**”

(James 4:1-3, TLV)

Relationships & Emotions

- Relationships are fueled by and often governed by emotions.
- Emotions were designed by God, but were not meant to be our Governor. Only God and His Word should have that position.
- Our interests, passions, and desires are also often fueled by our emotions.
- **Discerning our emotions and the emotions of others is key to resolving conflict**, being a good witness of Messiah, bringing glory to God, and living in shalom.

Emotions & Using the Law Unlawfully

- Most of us find it easier to bring “the law” to people rather than the gospel.
- We use the Law to tell other people how they should live or how they’re falling short, and to **justify ourselves**.
- We often use the commandments to vindicate ourselves and critique others.



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RESPONDING TO CONFLICT

“To be a Christian means to forgive the inexcusable because God has forgiven the inexcusable in you.”

— *C. S. Lewis*

Gospel of Peace - Something Pursued

Behold, on the mountains the **feet** of him who brings **good news**, who announces **peace**! (Nahum 1:15, NASB)

“How lovely on the mountains are the **feet** of him who brings **good news**, who announces **peace**...” (Isaiah 52:7, NASB)

“and having shod your **feet** with the preparation of the **gospel** of **peace**;” (Ephesians 6:15, NKJV)



Depart from evil and do good; **seek peace and pursue it.** (Psalms 34:14, NASB)

Hebrews 12:11-14 (NASB) All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, **afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.**

[12] Therefore, strengthen the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, [13] and **make straight paths for your feet**, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be healed.

[14] **Pursue peace with all men**, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

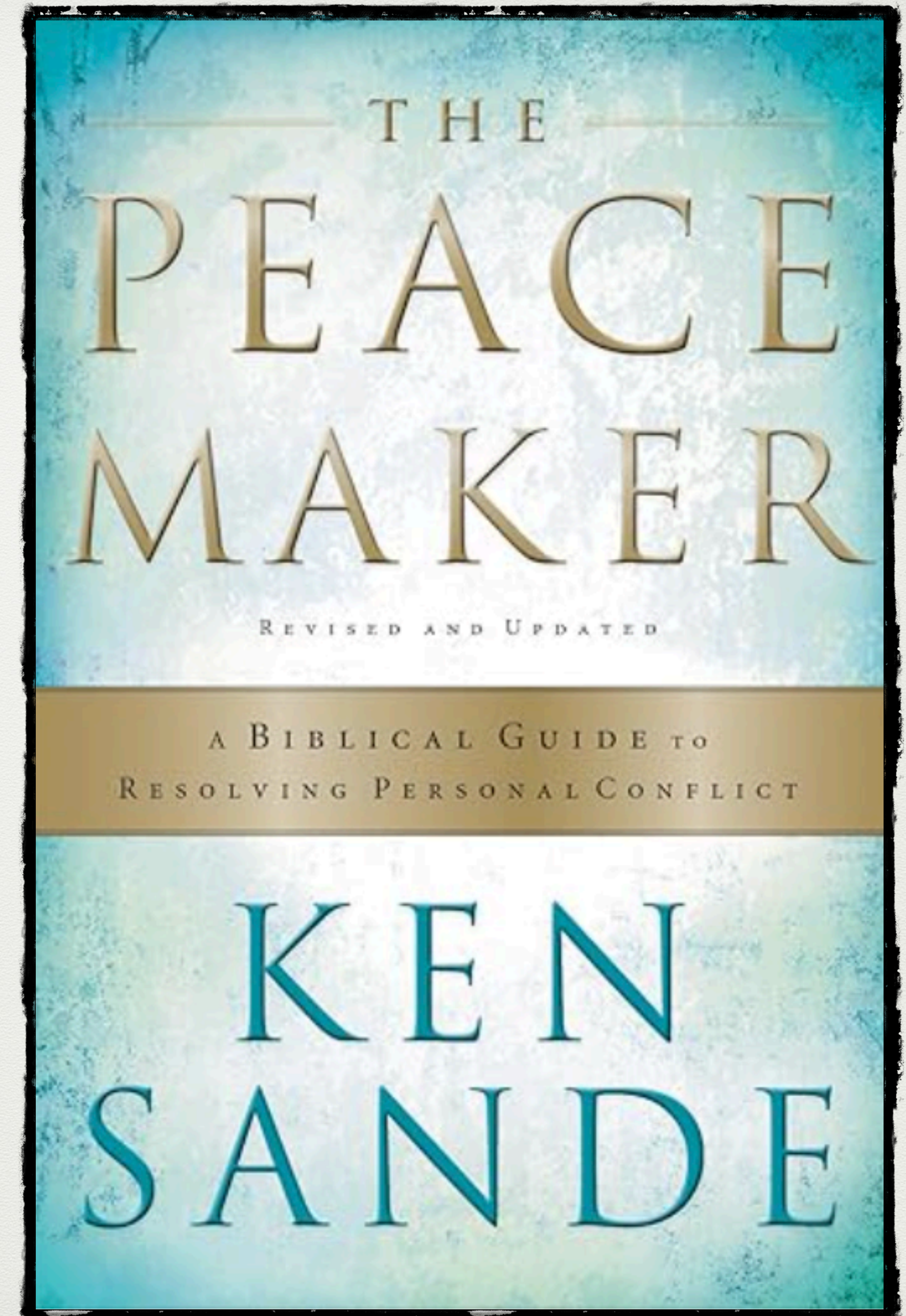


The Peacemaker

by Ken Sande

See also RW360.org

Course: Relational Peacemaking



Conflict Provides Opportunities

- Opportunity #1: Glorify God
- Opportunity #2: Serve other people
- Opportunity #3: Grow to be like Messiah

**Conflict is an opportunity to reflect the reconciling power of Yeshua
and his gospel. - Ken Sande**

Without Conflict, There is No Story

- A story begins with a person, in a place, with a problem. **All good stories are driven by conflict.** Without conflict, there is no story.
- Conflict keeps the story moving. It is what drives the character's forward motion.
- Conflict is the obstacle that the character must overcome. It changes the trajectory of the character's life; it is what causes him or her to grow.
- By understanding what stands between characters and their goals, we can begin to grasp what their stories are about.



Without a test, there is no testimony.

“And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and **because of the word of their testimony**, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.”

(Revelation 12:11, NASB)

How Do You Respond to Conflict?

- Avoid - run away? Deny?
- Attack it head on?
- Hate it? Love it?



How we resolve (or fail to resolve) conflict greatly affects our witness for Messiah, our testimony, and our relationships.

Let's look at the ideal:

Characteristics of a Peacemaker	Imagebearer of Messiah
Love	Da'at - Sacrificial love for others.
Forgiveness	Extends forgiveness & overlooks minor offenses.
Humility	Godly wisdom is humble, gentle & gives deference to others.
Compassion	Has empathy for lost, hurting, and marginalized.
Shalom	Actively pursues reconciliation and unity. Shares Gospel.
Righteousness	Disciplines and corrects with wisdom of the Torah and lovingkindness.

The Fake or False Image

“Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, **idolatry**, sorcery, **enmities**, **strife**, **jealousy**, **outbursts of anger**, **disputes**, **dissensions**, **factions**, **envying**, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you, just as I have forewarned you, that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

(Galatians 5:19-21, NASB)



“For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?”

(1 Corinthians 3:3, NASB)

The Escape Responses

- **Denial** - Pretending the conflict doesn't exist, not wanting to talk about it, or refusing to take measures necessary for a resolution. (Gen. 16:1-6; 2 Sam. 2:22-25)
- **Flight** - pulling away from (leaving) the relationship, leaving a job, filing for divorce, changing assemblies, etc. (Gen. 16:6-8; 1 Sam. 19:9-10)
- **Suicide** - taking one's life, or completely isolating from others. (1 Sam. 31:4) - literally & figuratively

The Attack Responses

- **Assault** - using intimidation, such as verbal attacks (gossip/slander) or physical violence in order to damage the other person's reputation, finances, livelihood, or body. (Acts 6:8-15)
- **Litigation** Suing/lawsuits in violation of 1 Cor. 6:1-8 with other Believers. (Matt. 5:25-26; also Acts 24:1-26; Rom. 13:1-5)
- **Murder** - killing one who opposes you in the literal or in the figurative sense - hating them in your heart. (Acts 7:54-58; 1 John 3:15; Matt. 5:21-22)

- In cases where there is violence or abuse, fleeing or divorce is the the proper response.
- Sometimes, parting in peace is also helpful (i.e. Paul & Barnabas).
- Likewise, due to hard hearts, sometimes it is necessary to move to litigation to resolve a dispute.



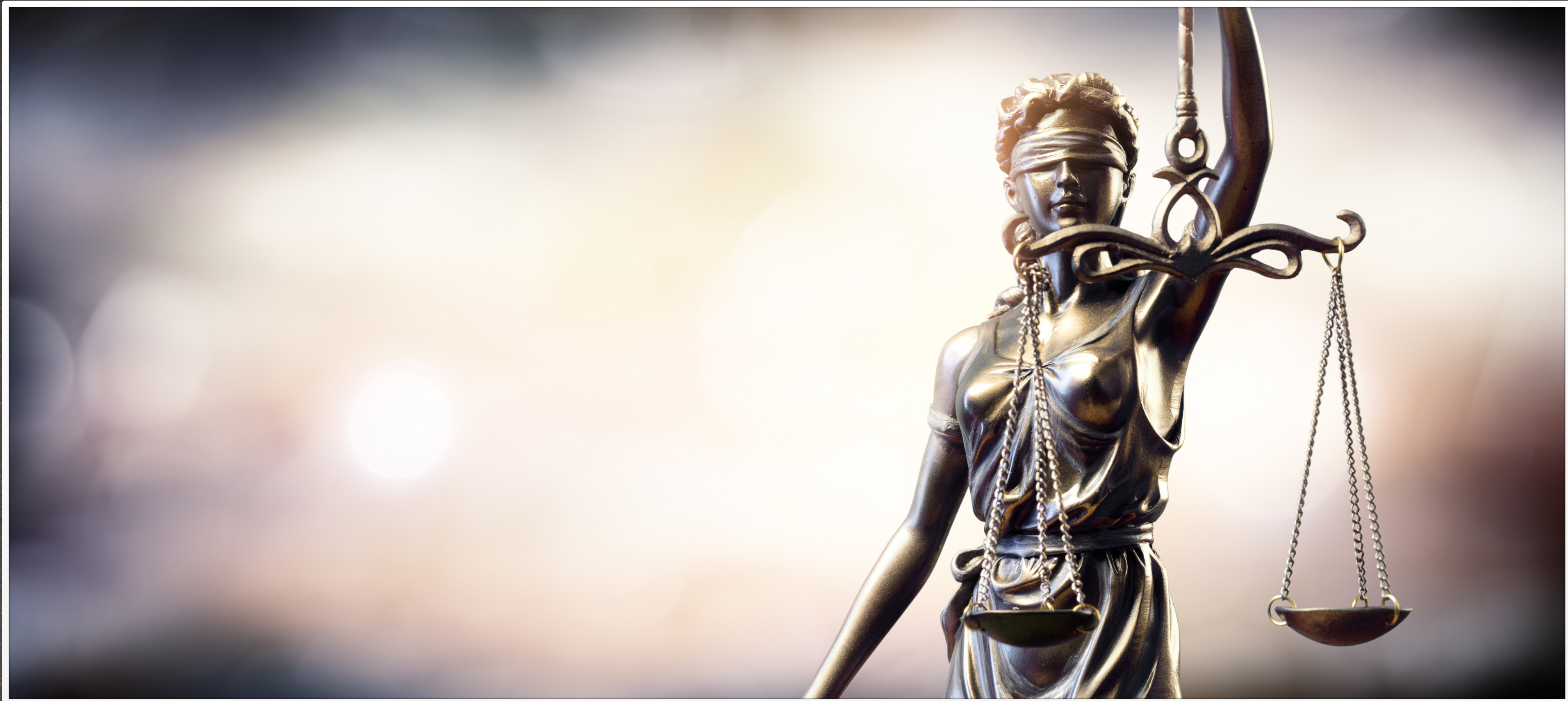
Peacemaking Responses

Personal Peacemaking

- **Overlooking an offense** - “A person's wisdom yields patience; it is to one's glory to overlook an offense.” (Proverbs 19:11, see also (Prov.12:16; 17:14; 1 Pet. 4:8; Col. 3:13)
This is a form of forgiveness, a deliberate decision not to talk about it, dwell on it, or let it turn into anger or bitterness.
- **Reconciliation** - when damage has occurred we resolve through confession, loving correction, and forgiveness. (Gal. 6:1-3; Matt. 18:15; 5:23-24; Prov. 28:13)
- **Negotiation** - working through material issues related to money, property, or other rights. This should be done through a cooperative bargaining process in which you and the other person seek to reach a settlement that satisfies the legitimate needs of each side. (Phil. 2:3-4)

Assisted Peacemaking Responses

- **Mediation** -If two people cannot reach an agreement in private, they should ask one or more objective outside people to meet with them to help them communicate more effectively and explore possible solutions. (Matt. 18:16)
- **Arbitration** - When you and an opponent cannot come to a voluntary agreement on a material issue, you may appoint one or more arbitrators to listen to your arguments and render a binding decision to settle the issue. (1 Cor. 6:1-8)
- **Accountability** - AKA church discipline. Assembly exercises its authority in a healthy & restorative way to bring about a resolution, correction, or discipline. Goal is restoration. (Matt. 18:17-20, See 1 Cor. 5:1-13 & the restoration in 2 Cor. 2:5-8)



THE FOUR G'S

A God-centered Approach to Conflict Resolution from Peacemakers by
Ken Sande

Glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31). How can I please and honor God in this situation? - Not: how can I vindicate myself? This is a radical shift from worldly perspective.

Get the log out of your own eye (Matt 7:5) How can I show Yeshua's work in me by taking responsibility (confessing) for my contribution to this conflict? What's going on with my emotions and in my heart?

Gently restore (Gal. 6:1) How can I lovingly serve others by helping them take responsibility for their contribution to this conflict? How do I communicate this constructively and properly give correction?

Go and be reconciled (Matt 5:24) How can I demonstrate the forgiveness of God and encourage a reasonable solution to this conflict? This involves negotiating substantive issues and forgiveness.

Glorify God

- The last thing most of us want to do in a conflict is glorify God. In conflict, we get very horizontal.
- It's "my righteousness" against "your sin."
- I focus on everything you've done wrong, and everything I've done right.
- But, the godly response is to ask, "How can I glorify God in this conflict?" & "How can I demonstrate that He has changed me - that I am a new creation in Him?"
- **Impossible without humility.**



Serve Other People

- Help to carry their burdens (Gal. 6:2, 10)
- Help them to change through constructive confrontation (Gal. 6:1)
- Teach and encourage others by example (1 Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7)
- Learn to receive constructive criticism and correction from fellow Believers.
- **Impossible without humility.**



Galatians 6:1-10 (TLV) 1 Brothers and sisters, **if someone is caught doing something wrong, you who are directed by the Ruach, restore such a person in a spirit of gentleness**—looking closely at yourself so you are not tempted also. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you fulfill the Torah of Messiah...

9 So let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we don't give up.

10 Therefore, **whenever we have an opportunity**, let us do good toward all—especially those who belong to the household of faith.

DON'T QUIT



**EVERY DIFFICULTY IS AN
OPPORTUNITY IN DISGUISE**

“Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, **being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.**” (Ephesians 4:1-3, NASB)

“Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.”
(James 5:9, NASB)

**Get the Log Out of
Your Own Eye**



Removing Logs

- A critical, negative attitude that leads to unnecessary conflict.
- Actual sinful desires, words or actions.
- Overlook minor offenses - imitate God. Something that doesn't dishonor God, hasn't damaged relationship, isn't hurting others.
- Attitude Adjustment - Imagine Yeshua is sitting with you as you confront your neighbor.
- Count the Cost - What will this cost me and my opponent both relationally and spiritually?



Progression of an Idol

- **I desire**
- **I demand – The birth of an idol!**
An idol is anything apart from God that we depend on to be happy, fulfilled, or secure.
- **I judge**
“There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?” (James 4:12; 3:14-15).
- **I punish**



A Good Desire Can Become An Idol



- We learn from a young age how to manipulate others to get our way or what we want. We will use guilt or fear tactics to control others.
- Many of our congregational splits occur because someone or a group within the assembly had a good desire that turned into a demand, then a judgment, and eventually a punishment for those who opposed them.

Slaying Others on the Altar of our Desires

- When others fail to meet our wants or **desires**, we begin making **demands**, threats, or we will manipulate them to get them to submit to our idol.
- Then, we **judge** them for not doing so, and **punish** in the form of withdrawing, not looking them in the eyes (disrespect), criticizing, slandering/gossiping, accusing, blaming/shaming, or even becoming physically violent.



Confession - Central to the Gospel

- **Address** everyone involved (Luke 19:8).
- **Avoid** if, but, and maybe (Ps. 51).

These words are used to justify our behavior. Confessions do not contain excuses! Nothing the other person did cancels or justifies your sin. “If” means that you don’t really know that you’ve done anything. Maybe/Perhaps implies the same thing. “But” essentially cancels everything that came before it.

- **Admit** specifically sinful desires/idols, words and actions (Matt. 15:19; James 4:11; Matt. 7:12).

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

- **Acknowledge** the hurt - the heart of confession. Prepare and pray for humility.
- **Accept** the consequences (Luke 15:19; 19:8).
- **Alter** (change) your behavior (Eph. 4:22-32).
- **Ask** for forgiveness.
- **Allow** time (Gen. 50:17).

Have a written plan to repent, repair the damage, and change your behavior. Otherwise, your sincerity is in question - an “I’m sorry - let’s move on,” is **NOT** true repentance. A plan shows real evidence of not only our wrong behavior, but our desire to truly change.

Four Promises of Forgiveness

- I promise I will not dwell on this incident.
(Not dependent on the repentance of the other party. The other three are promised if repentance occurs.)
- I promise I will not bring up this incident and use it against you.
- I promise I will not talk to others about this incident.
- I promise I will not allow this incident to stand between us or hinder our personal relationship.



Gently Restore

“If your brother sins, go and show him his fault in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.” (Matthew 18:15, NASB)

- The goal of Mt 18 is not punishment, but **restoration**.
- The goal of correcting others is — loving restoration, returning them to a fully functioning member of the Body of Messiah.



Speak the Truth in Love

- Bring hope through the gospel (1 John 1:7-9; John 4:7-26).
- Be quick to listen (James 1:19; Prov. 18:13)
- The tongue of the wise brings healing (Prov. 12:18).
- Breathe grace, only to build others up (Eph 4:29).
- Make **charitable judgments** by believing the best about others until facts prove otherwise (Matt. 7:12).
- Talk in person whenever possible (Matt. 18:15).
- Talk from beside not from above (Rom. 3:23).



Recognize Your Limits!!

“The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.”

(2 Timothy 2:24-26, NASB)

Our Job: Speak the truth in love, correcting with gentleness.

God's Job: To bring repentance and change people.

Negotiating for Peace

- Conflict narrows our focus, leading us to view matters in absolute terms – I’m right and she’s wrong; I want what is good, so she must want what is bad.
- Life is seldom this black and white, and such thinking can reveal a self-focus that has tipped into idolatry.

“Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but **also for the interests of others.**” (Philippians 2:3-4, NASB)



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



Negotiation: Take a Time Out

If hurt, offended, or disappointed by someone's actions, use the **three day rule**. After some time has passed, one might be able to overlook the offense. If the answer is yes to any of these questions, do not overlook.

- Is it dishonoring God? (Rom. 2:21-24)
- Is it damaging your relationship?
- Is it hurting others (including yourself)? (Luke 17:2-3; 1 Cor. 5:6)
- Is it hurting the offender?



If Conflict is Still Present

Move into assisted peacemaking:

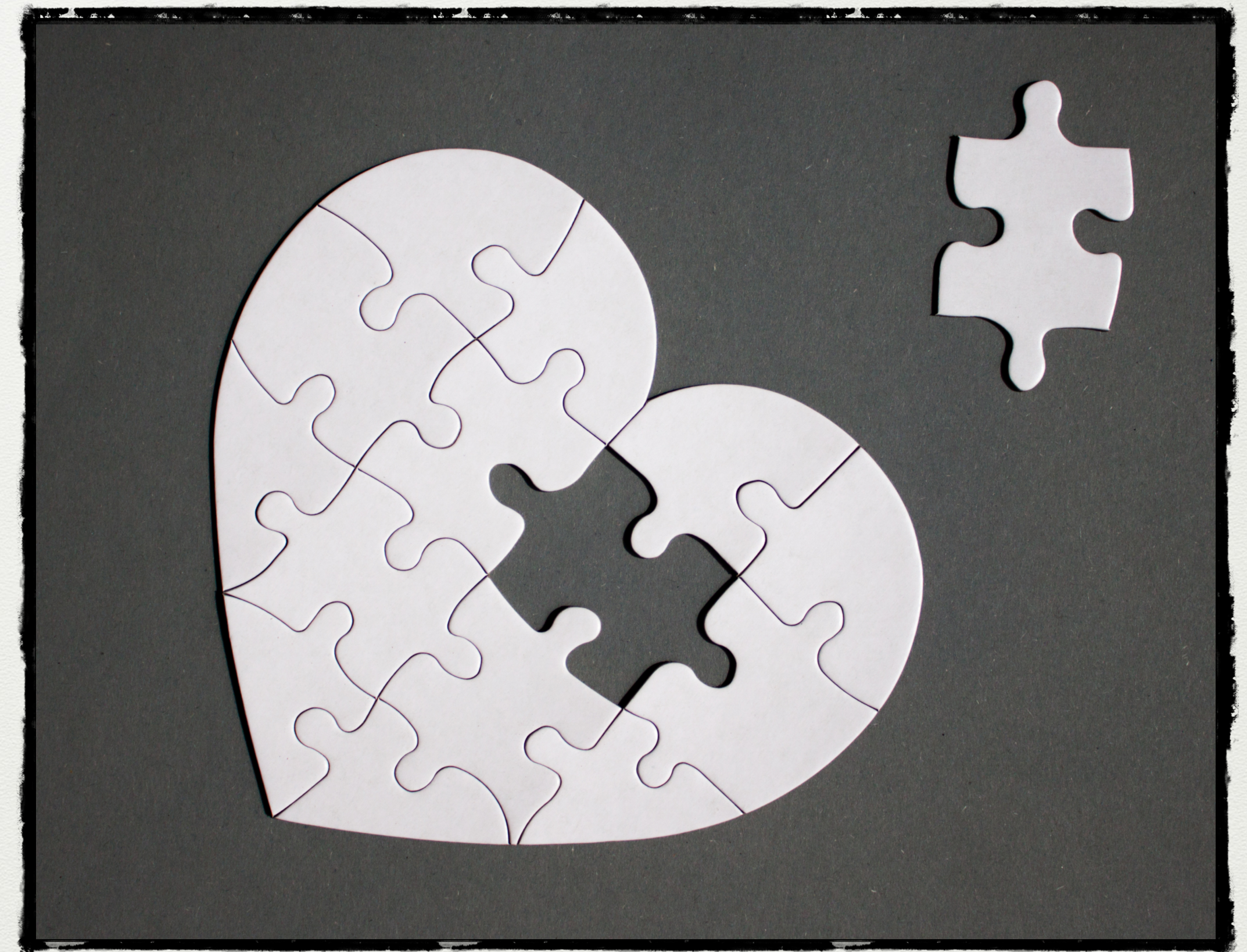
- **Mediation** (Matt. 18:16)
- **Arbitration** (1 Cor. 6:1-8)
- **Accountability** (Matt. 18:17-20)

When Nothing Works

It is God's job to change hearts, not ours. Only God can control outcomes.

Successful peacemaking means focusing not on *results*, but on *faithfulness* to God.

We can exercise love even with enemies. In this, we imitate Yeshua, who rescued us “while we were yet sinners.”



“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you.”

- John 14:27