

A Peacemaker's Checklist

Whenever you are in a conflict, you may apply the four basic principles of peacemaking by asking yourself these questions:

Glorify God

How can I please and honor the Lord in this situation?

Get the log out of your eye

How have I contributed to this conflict and what do I need to do?

Go and show your brother his fault

How can I help others to understand how they have contributed to this conflict?

Go and be reconciled

How can I demonstrate forgiveness and encourage a reasonable solution to this conflict?

The following checklist is designed to help you answer these four questions.

Glorify God

With God's help, I will seek to glorify him by:

- Striving earnestly, diligently, and continually to live at peace with those around me.
- Remember that Jesus' reputation is affected by the way I get along with others,
- Guarding against Satan's schemes and false teachings which are designed to promote selfishness and incite conflict.
- Trusting that God is in control and working for my good and the good of others, even when I must undergo suffering.
- Giving God praise and thanks for his goodness and His help.
- Obeying God's Commands, even when doing so is difficult and requires sacrifice.
- Using conflict as an opportunity to serve others: by helping them to find godly solutions to their problems; helping to bear their emotional, spiritual, or material burdens; helping them to see where they have been wrong and need to change; encouraging them to put their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and teaching and encouraging them by my example.
- Cooperating with God as He prunes me of sinful attitudes and habits, and helps me to grow and be more like Christ.
- Seeing myself as a steward and managing myself, my resources, and my situation in such a way that God would say, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

Get the Log out of Your Eye

To decide whether something is really worth fighting over, with God's help I will:

- Define the issues (personal and material), decide how they are related, and deal only with issues that are too important to be overlooked, beginning usually with personal issues.
- Overlook minor offenses.

- Change my attitude by: recalling how much God has forgiven me; being gentle towards others; replacing anxiety with prayer and trust; deliberately thinking about what is good and right in others; putting into practice what God has taught me through the Bible.
- Carefully consider how much it will cost (emotionally, spiritually, financially) to continue the conflict instead of simply settling it.
- Use my rights only to advance God's kingdom, to serve others, and to enhance my ability to serve and grow to be like Christ.

Before talking to others about their wrongs, with God's help I will ask myself:

- Am I guilty of reckless words, falsehood, gossip, slander, or any other worthless talk?
- Have I kept my word and fulfilled all my responsibilities?
- Have I abused my authority?
- Have I respected those in authority over me?
- Have I treated others as I would want to be treated?
- Am I being motivated by: lust of the flesh, pride, love of money, fear of others, or wanting good things too much?

When I see that I have sinned, with God's help I will:

- Repent – that is, change the way I have been thinking so that I turn away from my sin and turn toward God.
- Confess my sin by using the Seven A's namely: addressing everyone I have affected; avoiding *if, but* and *maybe*; admitting specifically what I did wrong; apologizing for hurting others; accepting the consequences of my actions; explaining how I will alter my attitudes and behaviors in the future; and asking for forgiveness.
- Change my attitudes and behaviors by: praying for God's help; focusing on the Lord so that I can overcome my personal idols; studying the Bible; and practicing the godly character qualities in a manner that is both planned and spontaneous.

Go and Show Your Brother His Fault

- When I learn that someone has something against me, I will go to that person to talk about it, even if I don't believe I have done anything wrong.

A sin is too serious to overlook if it:

- Is dishonoring God.
- Has damaged our relationship.
- Is hurting or might hurt other people.
- Is hurting the offender and diminishing that person's usefulness to God.

When I need to confront others, with God's help I will:

- Listen responsibly by waiting patiently while others speak, concentrating on what they say, clarifying their comments through appropriate questions, reflecting their feelings and concerns with paraphrased responses, and agreeing with them whenever possible.
- Choose a time and place that will be conducive to a productive conversation.

- Believe the best about others until I have facts to prove otherwise.
- Talk in person whenever possible.
- Plan my words in advance and try to anticipate how others will respond to me.
- Use “I” statements when appropriate.
- State objective facts rather than personal opinions.
- Use the Bible carefully and tactfully.
- Ask for feedback.
- Offer solutions and preferences.
- Recognize my limits and stop talking once I have said what is reasonable and appropriate.

If I cannot resolve a dispute with someone in private, and if the matter is too serious to overlook, with God’s help I will:

- Suggest that we seek help from one of more spiritually mature advisors who can help both of us see things more objectively.
- If necessary, ask one or two others to talk with us.
- If necessary, seek help from our respective churches and respect their authority.
- Go to court only if I have exhausted my church remedies; if the rights I am seeking to enforce are biblically legitimate; and if my action has a righteous purpose.

Go and Be Reconciled

When I forgive someone, with God’s help I will make these promises:

- I will no longer dwell on this incident.
- I will not bring up this incident again and use it against you.
- I will not talk to other about this incident.
- I will not allow this incident to stand between us or to hinder our personal relationship.

When I am having a difficult time forgiving someone, with God’s help I will:

- If necessary, talk with that person to address some unresolved issues and to confirm repentance.
- Renounce the desire to punish the other person, to make that person earn my forgiveness, or demand guarantees that I will never be wronged again.
- Assess my contribution to the problem.
- Recognize the ways that God is using the situation for good.
- Remember how much God has forgiven me, not only in this situation but in the past.
- Draw on God’s strength through prayer, Bible study, and if necessary, Christian counseling.

With God’s help I will demonstrate forgiveness and practice the replacement principle by:

- Replacing painful thoughts and memories with positive thoughts and memories.
- Saying positive things to and about the person whom I have forgiven.
- Doing loving and constructive things to and for the person whom I have forgiven.

When I need to negotiate an argument on material issues, with God's help I will PAUSE:

- Prepare thoroughly for our discussions.
- Affirm my respect and concern for my opponent.
- Understand my opponent's interests as well as my own.
- Search for creative solutions that will satisfy as many of our interests as possible.
- Evaluate various options objectively and reasonably.

When others continue to mistreat or oppose me, with God's help I will:

- Control my tongue and continue to say only what is helpful and beneficial to others.
- Seek counsel, support, and encouragement from spiritually mature advisors.
- Keep doing what is right no matter what others do to me.
- Recognize my limits by resisting the temptation to take revenge and by remembering that being successful in God's eyes depends on *faithfulness*, not results.
- Continue to love my enemy by striving to discern and meet his or her deepest spiritual, emotional, and material needs.