

PEACEMAKER

Not Keeping the Peace – Making It

Table of contents

[PEACEMAKER](#)

[Not Keeping the Peace – Making It](#)

[Introduction: The Peacekeeper's Trap](#)

[Chapter 1: What Peacekeeping Is](#)

[Chapter 2: What Peacemaking Is](#)

[Chapter 3: The Cross – The Ultimate Peacemaking](#)

[Chapter 4: Why We Avoid Conflict](#)

[Chapter 5: When to Speak, When to Be Silent](#)

[Chapter 6: How to Confront in Love](#)

[Chapter 7: The Hardest Peace – Confronting Sin in the Church](#)

[Chapter 8: The Hardest Peace – Marriages and Family](#)

[Chapter 9: The Hardest Peace – Enemies](#)

[Chapter 10: The Blessing of the Peacemaker](#)

Introduction: The Peacekeeper's Trap

There's a difference between keeping the peace and making it.

Peacekeeping avoids conflict. It keeps the mouth shut. It swallows feelings. It lets things slide.

And it calls that "keeping the peace."

But the peace it keeps isn't real. It's just silence. And underneath the silence, things are rotting.

Resentment grows. Relationships get shallow. Problems never get solved. And eventually, the silence breaks—usually in an explosion that makes everything worse.

That's not peacemaking. That's peacekeeping.

And there's a world of difference.

What's the difference?

A peacekeeper avoids conflict to maintain the appearance of peace.

A peacemaker enters conflict to create genuine peace.

Peacekeeping is fear disguised as virtue. Peacemaking is courage rooted in love.

Peacekeeping says "let's just get along" while problems fester underneath.

Peacemaking says "let's work through this" even when it's hard.

Peacekeeping buries the hatchet but leaves the body.

Peacemaking digs up the root.

We avoid hard conversations. We let sin go unchallenged. We let relationships grow cold and distant. We call it "grace" or "patience" or "letting God handle it."

But mostly, we're just afraid.

Afraid of conflict. Afraid of anger. Afraid of rejection. Afraid of being wrong. Afraid of losing relationships.

And our fear masquerades as spirituality.

Jesus didn't avoid conflict. He entered it. He confronted the Pharisees. He cleared the temple. He spoke hard truths to His disciples. He went to the cross—the ultimate confrontation with sin and evil—to make peace.

Peacemaking cost Him everything.

Peacekeeping costs nothing but gives nothing.

It's time to learn the difference. It's time to stop keeping the peace. It's time to start making it.

Chapter 1: What Peacekeeping Is

Let's start with a clear picture of peacekeeping.

Not to shame anyone. But because you can't leave a prison until you know you're in one.

The Peacekeeper's Playbook

Peacekeeping looks like:

- Avoidance. You change the subject. You leave the room. You don't answer the call. You hope the problem goes away on its own.
- Appeasement. You give in just to keep the peace. You say "you're right" when you don't believe it. You apologize when you did nothing wrong.
- Pretending. You act like everything is fine when it's not. You smile when you're hurting. You say "I'm okay" when you're drowning.
- Swallowing. You push down your anger, your hurt, your frustration. You tell yourself it doesn't matter. You stuff it deeper and deeper.
- Silence. You don't say what needs to be said. You let things slide. You watch problems grow while you stay quiet.
- Fawning. You try to make everyone happy. You become whatever people need you to be. You lose yourself in the process.
- Postponing. You tell yourself "I'll deal with it later." But later never comes. Or when it does, it's too late.

Does any of this sound familiar?

The Fruit of Peacekeeping

Peacekeeping has a cost. A heavy one.

- Festering wounds. Unaddressed offenses don't go away. They grow. They poison. They infect everything.
- Fake unity. You're "getting along" but you're not connected. The relationship is shallow. There's no trust. No depth.
- Resentment. You told yourself you were fine. But you weren't. And now you're bitter. At them. At yourself. At God.
- Emotional exhaustion. Keeping the peace is exhausting. You're constantly monitoring, adjusting, suppressing. There's no rest.

- Explosions. Stuffing things down works until it doesn't. Eventually, the pressure builds too high. And you explode. Often over something small. Often at the wrong person.
- Loss of self. You've become whatever everyone else needs you to be. You don't even know what you think or feel anymore.
- Spiritual stagnation. You can't grow while you're pretending. And you can't pretend your way into holiness.

This is the peacekeeper's trap. It looks peaceful. It feels safe. But it's a prison.

The Fear Underneath

Why do we peacekeep?

At the root, it's fear.

- Fear of conflict. We've seen conflict go badly. People get hurt. Relationships end. We want no part of it.
- Fear of anger. We're afraid of making someone angry. Or afraid of our own anger. So we avoid anything that might trigger it.
- Fear of rejection. If I say what I really think, will they still want me around? What if they leave?
- Fear of being wrong. Maybe I'm the problem. Maybe I don't see clearly. Better to stay quiet.
- Fear of losing control. Once conflict starts, who knows where it will go? Better to keep the lid on.
- Fear of failure. What if I try to address it and make things worse? What if I'm not good at this?

Peacekeeping feels safer than peacemaking. But it's not safe. It's just quiet. And quiet isn't peace.

Chapter 2: What Peacemaking Is

Now let me paint a different picture.

Not the false peace of avoidance. The real peace of reconciliation.

This is peacemaking.

The Peacemaker's Playbook

Peacemaking looks like:

- Courage. You face conflict instead of running from it. Not because it's easy. Because it's necessary.
- Honesty. You say what needs to be said. With love. With humility. But you say it.
- Listening. You seek to understand before you speak. You assume you might be missing something.
- Confrontation. When sin has damaged a relationship, you address it. Not to win. To heal.
- Reconciliation. You don't just want quiet. You want restoration. You want things actually made right.
- Absorption. Sometimes, making peace means absorbing the cost. Forgiving when you've been wronged. Taking the hit.
- Follow-through. You don't just have the conversation and walk away. You stay. You work. You rebuild.

Peacemaking is active. It's risky. It's hard. But it's real.

The Fruit of Peacemaking

Peacemaking produces something beautiful.

- Genuine reconciliation. Not just quiet. Actual healing. Real trust. Deep connection.

- Freedom. You're not walking on eggshells anymore. You've said what needed to be said. You've cleared the air.
- Growth. Conflict, handled well, makes relationships stronger. You learn. You change. You get closer.
- Clarity. Problems get solved. Sin gets addressed. Patterns get broken.
- Peace. Real peace. Not the peace of avoidance. The peace of things being actually right.
- Honor to God. Peacemaking reflects His heart. He is the ultimate peacemaker.

The Cross – The Ultimate Peacemaking

To understand peacemaking, look at the cross.

Jesus didn't avoid conflict. He entered it.

- He confronted the Pharisees. He called them whitewashed tombs. He didn't keep the peace with them. He told the truth.
- He cleared the temple with a whip. He didn't pretend everything was fine. He acted.
- He confronted Peter: "Get behind me, Satan." He didn't let sin slide.
- He went to the cross. The ultimate confrontation with sin and evil. He didn't run.

And through that confrontation, He made peace.

"For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."
(Colossians 1:19-20)

Peace came through conflict. Through confrontation. Through the cross.

Not around it. Through it.

That's peacemaking.

The Difference in One Sentence

Peacekeeping says: "I'll do anything to avoid conflict."

Peacemaking says: "I'll do anything to achieve genuine reconciliation, even if it means conflict."

Peacekeeping is fear. Peacemaking is love.

Peacekeeping is passive. Peacemaking is active.

Peacekeeping buries the problem. Peacemaking solves it.

A Story

Let me tell you about two couples.

The peacekeepers: They never fight. At least, not out loud. They swallow their frustrations. They let things slide. They smile at dinner parties and post happy pictures online. But underneath, they're distant. Resentment has grown. They sleep in separate rooms. They haven't had a real conversation in years. They're "keeping the peace." But they're dying.

The peacemakers: They fight. Not cruelly. Not destructively. But they address things. When something bothers one of them, they talk about it. When one sins against the other, they confront—gently, honestly. It's hard sometimes. There are tears. There are difficult conversations. But they come through it stronger. Closer. More connected. They don't avoid conflict. They enter it, work through it, and find peace on the other side.

Which couple would you rather be?

Peacemaking Is Not Being a Doormat

Let me clarify something important.

Peacemaking does not mean letting people walk all over you. It does not mean always giving in. It does not mean absorbing abuse.

Jesus was a peacemaker. He also turned over tables.

Peacemaking means seeking genuine reconciliation. That sometimes means saying "no." That sometimes means setting boundaries. That sometimes means walking away from someone who refuses to change.

Peacemaking is not weakness. It's strength under control. It's the courage to pursue what's right, even when it's hard.

The Goal: Shalom

The Hebrew word for peace is *shalom*. It doesn't just mean the absence of conflict. It means wholeness, completeness, flourishing.

Shalom is everything being as it should be.

Peacekeeping aims for the absence of conflict. Peacemaking aims for shalom.

- Not just "we're not fighting." But "we're genuinely connected."
- Not just "we're not angry." But "we trust each other."
- Not just "we're quiet." But "we're healed."

That's the goal. That's peacemaking.

Chapter 3: The Cross – The Ultimate Peacemaking

If you want to understand peacemaking, you have to look at the cross.

Because the cross is not a peacekeeping mission. It's not God avoiding conflict. It's not God pretending sin doesn't matter.

The cross is God entering conflict. Confronting sin. Absorbing the cost. And making peace.

This is the model. This is the standard.

The Conflict That Needed Resolving

Before the cross, there was a problem.

A real problem. Not a misunderstanding. Not a minor offense.

Sin.

Humanity had rebelled against God. We had broken His law. We had worshipped other gods. We had loved darkness rather than light.

And God is just. He cannot simply ignore sin. He cannot pretend it didn't happen. Justice demands a payment.

That's the conflict. Holy God. Sinful humanity. Separation. Wrath. Judgment.

Peacekeeping would have said: "Let's just pretend it's fine." But God cannot pretend. He is true.

Peacekeeping would have said: "Let's lower the standards." But God cannot lower His holiness. He is holy.

Peacekeeping would have said: "Let's just agree to disagree." But sin is not a disagreement. It's rebellion.

The conflict was real. And it needed a real solution.

God Didn't Avoid Conflict – He Entered It

Here's what's stunning.

God didn't stay distant. He didn't stay silent. He didn't just hope things would work out.

He entered the conflict.

He became flesh. He dwelt among us. He lived the life we couldn't live. And then He went to the cross.

On the cross, Jesus confronted sin head-on. Not by ignoring it. By absorbing it.

- He became sin for us (2 Corinthians 5:21).
- He bore our sins in His body (1 Peter 2:24).
- He took the curse we deserved (Galatians 3:13).

This was not avoidance. This was full-on, direct, costly engagement with the problem.

The Cross Was Not Peaceful

Sometimes we romanticize the cross. We make it calm. Serene. Gentle.

It was not.

The cross was violence. Suffering. Torture. Death.

Jesus sweat blood in Gethsemane. He was betrayed by a friend. Denied by another. Mocked. Beaten. Stripped. Nailed to wood.

And worst of all—He cried out: *"My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"* (Matthew 27:46)

The Father turned His face away. The Son experienced separation. The Trinity was torn.

That's not peaceful. That's the ugliest, most painful moment in history.

And it was necessary.

Through Conflict, Peace

Here's the paradox.

The cross was the most intense conflict in history. God confronting sin. Judgment being poured out. Darkness covering the land.

And through that conflict, peace was made.

"For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross."
(Colossians 1:19-20)

Making peace by the blood of the cross.

Not avoiding conflict. Not pretending. Not appeasing.

Making peace through blood.

That's peacemaking. It's costly. It's painful. It's direct. And it's the only thing that actually works.

What This Means for Us

If Jesus made peace through confrontation and sacrifice, we cannot make peace through avoidance and silence.

Peacemaking will cost you.

- It may cost you your comfort.
- It may cost you your reputation.
- It may cost you a relationship.
- It may cost you your pride.
- It may cost you the satisfaction of being right.

But it's the only path to real peace.

Jesus Confronted

Look at Jesus's life. He was not a peacekeeper.

- He confronted the Pharisees again and again. Called them whitewashed tombs. Sons of snakes. Hypocrites.
- He cleared the temple with a whip. Flipped tables. Drove out the money changers.
- He told His disciples hard truths. Called Peter "Satan" when Peter tried to keep Him from the cross.
- He didn't shy away from conflict with His own family. They thought He was crazy. He kept teaching.

Jesus was not rude. He was not cruel. He was not looking for fights. But He did not avoid conflict when conflict was necessary.

He made peace. And making peace required confrontation.

Jesus Also Absorbed

But here's the other side.

Jesus didn't just confront. He also absorbed.

- When Peter denied Him, He didn't demand an apology. He restored him.
- When the soldiers mocked Him, He didn't call down angels. He prayed for them.
- When the religious leaders plotted His death, He didn't retaliate. He went to the cross.

Peacemaking requires both. Confrontation when sin needs to be addressed. Absorption when offense can be overlooked.

Knowing the difference is wisdom.

The Peacemaker's Path

The cross is the path.

- Enter the conflict. Don't run.
- Speak the truth. Don't hide.
- Address the sin. Don't pretend.
- Absorb the cost. Don't retaliate.
- Seek reconciliation. Don't just win.

This is the way of the cross. It's hard. It's costly. It's not natural.

But it's the only way to make real peace.

Chapter 4: Why We Avoid Conflict

We've seen the difference between peacekeeping and peacemaking. We've looked at the cross.

Now let's get honest about ourselves.

Why do we avoid conflict?

Because we don't avoid it for no reason. There are real fears underneath. Real reasons.

And until we name them, we can't overcome them.

The Fear of Conflict Itself

Some people are afraid of conflict. Period.

They've seen conflict go badly. Parents who screamed. Friends who stopped talking. Churches that split. Marriages that ended.

And they've sworn: *"I will never be part of that."*

So they avoid. They keep silent. They let things slide. They do whatever it takes to keep the peace.

The problem is, the fear of conflict becomes its own prison. You're not free. You're controlled by the thing you're afraid of.

"For God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control." (2 Timothy 1:7)

Fear is not from God. The fear of conflict is not from God.

But it's real. And it needs to be addressed.

The Fear of Anger

Many of us are afraid of anger. Either our own or someone else's.

Fear of others' anger: What if I say something and they explode? What if they yell at me? What if they punish me? What if they leave?

Fear of our own anger: What if I lose control? What if I say something I regret? What if I become someone I don't want to be?

So we avoid. We swallow. We stuff it down. We tell ourselves we're being "patient" or "gracious" or "letting it go."

But sometimes, we're just afraid of anger.

"Be angry and do not sin." (Ephesians 4:26)

Anger is not the enemy. Uncontrolled anger is. Misplaced anger is. Sinful anger is.

But anger itself? It's an emotion God gave you. It tells you something is wrong. It can be a signal that something needs to be addressed.

Avoiding anger doesn't make it go away. It just drives it underground, where it festers.

The Fear of Rejection

This is a big one.

"If I say what I really think, will they still want me around? What if they leave? What if they stop loving me?"

So we stay quiet. We become what others want us to be. We lose ourselves in the process.

But here's the truth: If a relationship can't handle honesty, it's not a real relationship. It's a performance.

And you were not made to perform.

"The fear of man lays a snare, but whoever trusts in the Lord is safe." (Proverbs 29:25)

The fear of rejection is a snare. It traps you in silence. It keeps you from the very conversations that could lead to deeper connection.

The Fear of Being Wrong

What if I'm the problem? What if I don't see clearly? What if I confront someone and it turns out I'm the one who's wrong?

So we stay quiet. We doubt ourselves. We assume the other person must be right.

And sometimes, we are wrong. That's possible. That's why peacemaking involves listening. That's why we seek to understand before we speak.

But the fear of being wrong shouldn't keep you silent forever. Sometimes, you're not wrong. Sometimes, something needs to be said.

And even if you are wrong, you can learn. You can apologize. You can grow.

But avoidance teaches you nothing.

The Fear of Losing Relationships

This is the deepest fear for many.

"What if I speak up and they walk away? What if I lose this friendship? What if my marriage ends? What if my family disowns me?"

So we stay silent. We protect the relationship by avoiding anything that might threaten it.

But here's the hard truth: If a relationship can't survive honesty, it's not a healthy relationship.

And avoiding conflict doesn't protect the relationship. It just slowly kills it.

- Peacekeeping leads to distance.
- Peacekeeping leads to resentment.
- Peacekeeping leads to shallow connection.
- Peacekeeping leads to eventual explosion.

The very thing you're trying to protect by avoiding conflict is destroyed by avoidance.

Peacemaking is risky. You might lose the relationship. But peacekeeping guarantees you'll lose it slowly.

The Fear of Failure

What if I try to make peace and make things worse?

What if I say the wrong thing? What if I don't know what I'm doing? What if I'm not good at this?

So we don't try. We stay quiet. We tell ourselves we're being wise.

But wisdom is not the same as avoidance.

Yes, you might fail. You might make things worse. Peacemaking is hard. It takes practice. You'll get it wrong sometimes.

But the alternative is guaranteed failure. Because avoidance never produces peace. It just postpones the explosion.

The Fear of Pain

Conflict hurts. Even when it goes well, it hurts.

- It hurts to hear that you've hurt someone.
- It hurts to confront someone you love.
- It hurts to be misunderstood.
- It hurts to absorb an offense.

So we avoid the pain. We stay in the shallow end. We keep things surface-level.

But avoidance doesn't prevent pain. It just delays it. And delayed pain is often worse.

A wound that gets cleaned out hurts in the moment but heals clean. A wound that's ignored festers and becomes infected.

Peacemaking is the cleaning of the wound. It hurts. But it heals.

The Hidden Fear: What If I'm the Problem?

Let me name one more.

Sometimes we avoid conflict because we're afraid of what we might find out about ourselves.

What if they're right? What if I am the one who needs to change? What if I've been the problem all along?

That's a terrifying thought.

But it's also a growth opportunity.

Peacemaking isn't just about confronting others. It's about being willing to be confronted. To be wrong. To change.

And that requires humility.

What Fear Produces

Fear produces peacekeeping.

- Fear says: "Stay quiet."
- Fear says: "Let it slide."
- Fear says: "You can't handle this."
- Fear says: "It's not worth it."
- Fear says: "They'll reject you."
- Fear says: "Protect yourself."

Peacemaking requires courage. And courage is not the absence of fear. It's acting in spite of fear.

"Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go." (Joshua 1:9)

The fear may still be there. But you act anyway.

Because He is with you.

Chapter 5: When to Speak, When to Be Silent

We've talked about the fear that keeps us silent. Now we need to talk about wisdom.

Because not every offense needs to be addressed. Not every conflict needs a confrontation.

Sometimes, the most peacemaking thing you can do is *nothing*.

The trick is knowing the difference.

The Wisdom of Overlooking

The book of Proverbs says something striking:

"Good sense makes one slow to anger, and it is his glory to overlook an offense."
(Proverbs 19:11)

Glory to overlook an offense.

Not weakness. Not cowardice. *Glory*.

There is a time to be silent. There is a time to let it go. There is a time to absorb the offense and move on.

This is not peacekeeping. This is wisdom.

The Small Stuff

Most offenses are small.

- A rude comment.
- A forgotten promise.
- A thoughtless word.
- A bad mood.
- An insensitive joke.
- A minor slight.

These things happen every day. If you addressed every single one, you'd have no time for anything else. And you'd exhaust everyone around you.

The small stuff? Let it go.

- It's not worth the energy.
- It's not worth the relationship strain.
- It's probably not even about you (they're having a bad day).
- You'll forget about it tomorrow.

Glory. Not failure. Wisdom.

The Test: Does This Really Matter?

Before you decide to speak, ask yourself:

- Will this matter in a week? A month? A year?
- Is this a pattern, or a one-time thing?
- Is my judgment clouded by my own fatigue, hunger, or emotion?
- Am I being overly sensitive?
- Could I just let this go?

If the answer is "no, it won't matter," "it's a one-time thing," "I'm probably tired," or "yes, I could let it go"—then let it go.

That's not peacekeeping. That's wisdom.

When Silence Is Not Wisdom

But sometimes, silence is not wisdom. Sometimes, silence is cowardice.

Here's when you need to speak.

When there's a pattern. It's not a one-time thing. It's the same offense over and over. And it's damaging the relationship.

When it's serious. Not small. Big. Betrayal. Abuse. Dishonesty. Sin.

When your silence is enabling. By not saying anything, you're allowing the behavior to continue. You're protecting them from the consequences that might lead to change.

When the relationship matters. If this is someone you love—a spouse, a child, a close friend—the relationship is worth the hard conversation.

When the Holy Spirit is prompting you. Sometimes you just know. There's a nudge. A weight. A sense that you need to speak.

"Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear." (Ephesians 4:29)

As fits the occasion. Sometimes the occasion calls for silence. Sometimes it calls for speech.

Wisdom is knowing the difference.

The Matthew 18 Principle

Jesus gave a clear process for when sin needs to be addressed.

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." (Matthew 18:15-17)

Notice the progression. It starts private. It escalates only when necessary.

And the goal is always restoration: *"You have gained your brother."*

This is not about winning. It's about healing.

The Danger of Speaking Too Much

Some people speak too much. They confront every little thing. They're always offended. They're always "just being honest."

That's not peacemaking. That's being difficult.

"When words are many, transgression is not lacking, but whoever restrains his lips is prudent." (Proverbs 10:19)

Sometimes the most peacemaking thing you can do is shut up.

The Danger of Speaking Too Little

But some people speak too little. They never confront. They let everything slide. They call it "grace" but it's really fear.

That's not peacemaking either. That's avoidance.

And avoidance doesn't produce peace. It produces festering wounds.

The Wisdom of Timing

Sometimes the issue needs to be addressed, but not right now.

- Not in the heat of anger.
- Not in public.
- Not when you're exhausted.
- Not when they're defensive.

"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (Proverbs 15:1)

Timing matters. Tone matters. Setting matters.

Pray. Wait. Choose the right moment.

But don't wait forever.

The Goal Is Not to Be Right

Whether you speak or stay silent, the goal is not to be right.

The goal is reconciliation. Shalom. Things being as they should be.

- Sometimes that means overlooking.
- Sometimes that means confronting.
- Sometimes that means waiting.
- Sometimes that means acting.

Wisdom is knowing which is which.

Chapter 6: How to Confront in Love

We've talked about when to speak and when to be silent. Now let's talk about *how* to speak when it's time.

Because you can be right about needing to confront, and still do it all wrong.

Confrontation without love is just attack. And attack doesn't make peace. It makes enemies.

The Goal Is Restoration, Not Winning

Before you say a word, get your heart right.

Why are you confronting?

- To win the argument? That's not peacemaking.
- To prove you're right? That's pride.
- To make them feel bad? That's cruelty.
- To get revenge? That's sin.

The goal is restoration. *"You have gained your brother."* (Matthew 18:15)

You're not trying to defeat them. You're trying to win them back. To heal the relationship. To make things right.

If your heart isn't there, wait. Pray. Get your heart right. Then speak.

Speak the Truth in Love

Paul gives the clearest instruction:

"Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ." (Ephesians 4:15)

Two things. Truth *and* love.

Truth without love is harsh. It's a sledgehammer. It tears down instead of building up.

Love without truth is shallow. It's a bandaid on a wound that needs stitches. It avoids what needs to be said.

Truth and love together. That's peacemaking.

- Truth says: "This is wrong. This hurt me. This needs to change."
- Love says: "I'm telling you this because I care about you. I want our relationship to be right. I'm not going anywhere."

Truth without love is cruelty. Love without truth is cowardice.

Practical Steps for a Peacemaking Conversation

1. Pray first.

Don't go into a hard conversation without praying. Ask God for wisdom. Ask Him to soften your heart. Ask Him to prepare their heart. Ask Him to give you the right words.

2. Choose the right time and place.

Not in public. Not in the heat of anger. Not when you're exhausted. Not when they're defensive.

"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (Proverbs 15:1)

Choose a time when you're both calm. Choose a private place. Give yourselves time to talk.

3. Start with "I" not "You."

"You" statements sound like accusations.

- *"You always do this."*
- *"You never listen."*
- *"You're so selfish."*

Those will put the other person on the defensive immediately.

Instead, use "I" statements.

- *"I felt hurt when that happened."*
- *"I've been struggling with something and I wanted to talk to you about it."*
- *"I love our relationship, and I want to make sure we're good."*

"I" statements share your experience without attacking.

4. Assume the best.

Start by assuming they didn't mean to hurt you. Assume there's more to the story. Assume they love you and want things to be right.

"Love... believes all things, hopes all things." (1 Corinthians 13:7)

Give them the benefit of the doubt.

5. Be specific, not general.

Don't say: *"You always hurt me."* That's vague and overwhelming.

Say: *"Last Tuesday when you said X, I felt hurt. Can we talk about that?"*

Specific. Clear. Manageable.

6. Own your part.

Before you point out their log, check your own eye. (Matthew 7:3-5)

- *"I know I'm not perfect in this either."*
- *"I've probably done things that hurt you too."*
- *"I'm sorry for my part in this."*

Owning your part disarms defensiveness. It shows you're not just attacking. You're seeking mutual healing.

7. Listen.

After you speak, stop. Listen. Really listen.

Don't plan your next response while they're talking. Don't interrupt. Don't defend.

Just listen.

"Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger." (James 1:19)

Quick to hear. Slow to speak. That's peacemaking.

8. Seek understanding, not just agreement.

You may not agree on everything. That's okay. But you can seek to understand.

- *"Help me understand where you're coming from."*
- *"I want to see this from your perspective."*
- *"Tell me more about that."*

Understanding doesn't mean agreeing. But it does mean caring.

9. Aim for resolution, not revenge.

What would make this right?

- An apology?
- A change in behavior?
- Forgiveness?
- A plan to move forward?

Focus on what will heal the relationship, not what will punish them.

10. Know when to stop.

If the conversation is going nowhere, pause. Take a break. Come back later.

"A soft answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (Proverbs 15:1)

Sometimes the most peacemaking thing you can do is stop talking and come back when you're both calmer.

What If They Get Defensive?

Sometimes, no matter how gently you speak, they get defensive. They lash out. They blame you. They shut down.

What then?

Stay calm. Don't match their defensiveness with your own. Take a breath.

Reaffirm your love. *"I'm not trying to attack you. I'm telling you this because I care about our relationship."*

Give them space. *"I can see this is hard to hear. Maybe we can talk about it later when we've both had some time."*

Pray. Silently. *"Lord, help."*

Don't give up. If the relationship matters, try again. Maybe not right away. But don't let one hard conversation be the end.

What If You're the One Being Confronted?

Sometimes you're on the other side. Someone comes to you with a concern.

How do you respond?

Listen. Don't interrupt. Don't defend. Just hear them out.

Thank them. *"Thank you for telling me. I know that wasn't easy."*

Don't get defensive. Your first instinct will be to explain, justify, or counter-attack. Resist.

Ask questions. *"Can you help me understand more?"*

Own your part. Even if you think they're overreacting, there's probably *something* you can own. *"I'm sorry I hurt you. That wasn't my intention, but I see how it came across that way."*

Take time to process. You don't have to agree with everything in the moment. *"I need some time to think about what you've said. Can we talk more later?"*

Change if you need to. If they're right, change. Repent. Grow.

Being confronted is hard. But it's also a gift. Someone cares enough to tell you the truth. That's rare. Don't waste it.

A Story

I knew a man who had a hard conversation with his friend. His friend had been distant. Short. Critical.

The man prayed. He chose his words carefully. He said: *"I love you. I miss our friendship. Lately, I've been feeling like you're distant. Is something going on?"*

His friend broke down. He had been struggling with depression. He hadn't even realized he was pushing people away.

The conversation didn't fix everything. But it opened the door. The friendship was restored.

That's peacemaking. Not attacking. Inviting. Not demanding. Asking. Not winning. Healing.

Chapter 7: The Hardest Peace – Confronting Sin in the Church

We've talked about peacemaking in relationships. Now let's talk about the place where peacekeeping is most common and most damaging.

The church.

Because here's the truth: the church is filled with peacekeepers. We avoid conflict. We let sin slide. We pretend everything is fine when it's not. And we call it "grace" or "unity" or "not judging."

But that's not grace. That's cowardice.

And it's destroying the body of Christ.

The Cost of Peacekeeping in the Church

When we avoid confronting sin in the church, here's what happens:

- Sin spreads. A little leaven leavens the whole lump (1 Corinthians 5:6). Unconfronted sin doesn't stay contained. It grows. It infects others.
- The innocent get hurt. When we protect the offender instead of confronting them, the victims suffer. They're told to "forgive and forget" while the offender continues unchanged.
- The church loses its witness. The world watches us ignore sin and calls us hypocrites. And they're right.
- People leave wounded. Unconfronted sin drives people away from the church. Sometimes from Jesus.
- Leaders become untouchable. When no one will confront those in authority, pride grows. Abuse happens. And the church becomes a dangerous place.

This is not God's design for His church.

The Biblical Pattern for Confronting Sin

Jesus gave us a clear process.

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." (Matthew 18:15-17)

Notice the progression. It's not harsh. It's not quick to exclude. It's patient, step by step, always seeking restoration.

Step 1: Go alone. Private. Gentle. One-on-one.

Step 2: Take one or two others. Not to gang up. For clarity and accountability.

Step 3: Tell the church. Bring it into the open.

Step 4: Treat them as an outsider. Not with cruelty. But with honesty. They've chosen to remain outside the fellowship.

The goal throughout is restoration: *"You have gained your brother."*

Not winning. Not punishing. *Gaining.*

Why We Don't Follow This Pattern

Let me be honest about why we avoid this.

1. Fear of conflict. We don't want the awkwardness. The tension. The potential blow-up.
2. Fear of being wrong. What if we're misreading the situation? What if we're the problem?
3. Fear of losing relationships. What if confronting costs us a friendship?
4. Fear of being labeled divisive. In some churches, anyone who confronts is seen as a troublemaker.
5. Fear of leadership. What if the person is a pastor or elder? What if they have power over us?
6. Comfort. It's easier to do nothing. To look the other way. To hope it works itself out.

But easier is not faithful. And comfort is not obedience.

The Example of Paul Confronting Peter

In Galatians 2, Paul tells a story.

Peter, the apostle, leader of the church, was acting hypocritically. He ate with Gentile believers until some Jewish leaders showed up. Then he separated himself, fearing the circumcision party.

Others followed his example, including Barnabas.

And Paul confronted him. To his face.

"But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he stood condemned." (Galatians 2:11)

Paul didn't go behind Peter's back. He didn't gossip. He didn't write a letter to the church.

He confronted him. Face to face. In love. For the sake of the gospel.

And Peter received it. There's no record of a feud. No split. Just correction and restoration.

That's peacemaking in the church.

The Example of Jesus and the Pharisees

Jesus confronted sin constantly. Not because He was looking for fights. Because the truth mattered.

He called the Pharisees "whitewashed tombs" (Matthew 23:27). "Sons of snakes" (Matthew 23:33). He didn't keep the peace with them. He told the truth.

And it cost Him His life.

Peacemaking in the church may cost you. Your reputation. Your friendships. Your position.

But it's better than letting sin fester.

When Leaders Need Confronting

This is the hardest one.

What if the person sinning is a pastor? An elder? A worship leader? Someone with power and influence?

Here's what the Bible says:

"Do not admit a charge against an elder except on the evidence of two or three witnesses. As for those who persist in sin, rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear." (1 Timothy 5:19-20)

Leaders are not above confrontation. They are held to a higher standard (James 3:1).

But the process protects both sides. Two or three witnesses. Evidence. And if they persist, public rebuke.

This is not easy. It may cost you everything. But it's faithful.

What About "Don't Judge"?

People often quote Matthew 7:1 to avoid confrontation: *"Judge not, that you be not judged."*

But Jesus wasn't saying "never confront sin." He was saying "don't be a hypocrite." The very next verse: *"For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged."*

Before you confront anyone—especially a leader—you must examine yourself.

Jesus said:

"Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye." (Matthew 7:3-5)

This is not a command to never confront. It's a command to confront without hypocrisy.

Jesus doesn't say "ignore the speck." He says, "Remove the log first." The goal is clear vision. The goal is restoration. The goal is to see clearly enough to help your brother.

Confrontation from a place of pride, self-righteousness, or hidden sin is not confrontation. It's an attack.

Confrontation from a place of humility, honesty, and genuine love is healing.

Jesus also said: *"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault."* (Matthew 18:15)

We are not to judge hypocritically. We are not to condemn. But we are called to lovingly confront sin in the body.

The difference is the heart. Are you confronting to help or to hurt? To restore or to destroy? To gain your brother or to prove you're right?

What About Grace?

Some say: "We should just extend grace. We shouldn't confront."

But grace doesn't ignore sin. Grace confronts sin for the sake of the sinner.

- Grace says: "I love you too much to let you destroy yourself."
- Grace says: "Your sin is hurting you and others, and I care enough to tell you."
- Grace says: "I want you to be free."

Confrontation, done in love, is an act of grace.

"Faithful are the wounds of a friend; profuse are the kisses of an enemy." (Proverbs 27:6)

A wound from a friend is better than a kiss from an enemy. The enemy flatters you while you self-destruct. The friend hurts you to save you.

That's grace.

A Story

There was a church where a leader was living in sin. Everyone knew. But no one said anything. They were afraid. They didn't want to cause division. They kept the peace.

Years went by. The sin continued. More people got hurt. The church's witness was destroyed.

Finally, a small group of people went to the leader. They confronted him in love. It was hard. Tears were shed. Accusations were made.

But eventually, the leader repented. He stepped down. He got help. And over time, trust was rebuilt.

The church didn't die. It was purified. It became healthier. Stronger.

That's the fruit of peacemaking. It's hard. But it's worth it.

A Warning

Peacemaking in the church is not easy. You will be misunderstood. You may be accused of being divisive, judgmental, or unloving.

Some will reject you. Some will leave.

But the alternative is worse. A church that doesn't confront sin is a church that slowly dies. And it takes others down with it.

"If anyone sees his brother committing a sin not leading to death, he shall ask, and God will give him life." (1 John 5:16)

Chapter 8: The Hardest Peace – Marriages and Family

We've talked about confronting sin in the church. Now let's talk about the place where peacekeeping does some of its deepest damage.

Marriage and family.

Because here's what I've noticed. Many of us are peacekeepers at home. We avoid conflict with our spouse. We let things slide with our kids. We swallow our feelings to keep the peace.

And we call it "love."

But it's not love. It's fear. And it's slowly killing our closest relationships.

The Marriage of Peacekeepers

Let me describe a marriage that's being destroyed by peacekeeping.

They don't fight. At least, not out loud.

When something bothers one of them, they swallow it. They tell themselves it's not a big deal. They change the subject. They go silent.

They think they're being patient. They think they're being gracious. They think they're keeping the peace.

But here's what's really happening.

- Resentment is building.
- Distance is growing.
- Intimacy is dying.
- Small issues that could have been resolved are becoming festering wounds.
- And eventually, the pressure builds too high. They explode. Often over something small. Often at the wrong person. Often in ways that cause real damage.

Then they apologize. They make up. And the cycle starts again.

This is not peacemaking. This is a ceasefire. And it never lasts.

What Peacemaking Looks Like in Marriage

Peacemaking in marriage is different. It's harder. But it's healing.

Peacemaking means speaking honestly. Not cruelly. Not to wound. But honestly.

- "When you said that, I felt hurt."
- "I've been struggling with something and I want to talk about it."
- "Can we talk about what happened last night?"

Peacemaking means addressing issues before they fester. Don't let the sun go down on your anger (Ephesians 4:26). Not because you have to resolve everything by midnight. Because you shouldn't let resentment build.

Peacemaking means listening. Not planning your response. Not defending. Just hearing.

Peacemaking means owning your part. "I'm sorry I snapped. I was tired and I took it out on you."

Peacemaking means forgiving. Not keeping score. Not bringing up past failures. Releasing the debt.

Peacemaking means staying engaged. Not walking away. Not shutting down. Not giving the silent treatment.

The High Cost of Peacekeeping in Marriage

What peacekeeping costs.

- Emotional distance. You stop sharing what's really going on. The marriage becomes shallow.
- Resentment. You tell yourself you're fine. But you're not. And the bitterness grows.
- Loss of trust. When you don't address issues, trust erodes. You can't trust someone who won't be honest with you.
- Affairs. This is the tragic one. Many affairs don't start because someone is evil. They start because the marriage has been dead for years. Peacekeeping killed it. And someone went looking for life somewhere else.
- Divorce. Eventually, the distance becomes too great. And two people who once loved each other become strangers.

Peacekeeping doesn't protect your marriage. It destroys it.

The Fear Underneath

Why do we peacekeep in marriage?

Fear of conflict. We don't want to fight. We've seen bad fights. We want to avoid that at all costs.

Fear of rejection. What if I tell them how I really feel and they leave?

Fear of being wrong. What if I'm the problem? What if I'm being unreasonable?

Fear of hurting them. I don't want to cause them pain. So I swallow mine.

Fear of losing control. Once we open the door to conflict, who knows where it will go?

These fears are real. But they're not from God. And they're not good reasons to stay silent.

A Better Way

Let me give you a picture of a marriage that practices peacemaking.

They fight. Not cruelly. Not destructively. But they address things.

When something bothers one of them, they bring it up. Not in the heat of the moment. Not in front of the kids. But they bring it up.

They listen to each other. They apologize when they're wrong. They forgive when they've been wronged.

They don't keep score. They don't bring up the past. They don't give the silent treatment.

They fight for their marriage, not against each other.

And because they address the small issues, they never become big issues. Because they clear the air regularly, resentment doesn't build. Because they're honest, trust grows.

This marriage isn't perfect. They still hurt each other sometimes. They still have hard conversations.

But they're growing. They're connected. They're at peace.

Not the peace of avoidance. The peace of things being actually right.

Peacemaking with Children

Peacekeeping with children is also destructive.

When we avoid conflict with our kids, we become permissive. We let things slide that shouldn't slide. We avoid hard conversations. We don't want to be the bad guy.

But children need boundaries. They need correction. They need to learn how to handle conflict.

If you never confront your children, you're not doing them a favor. You're raising adults who don't know how to handle conflict. Who run from hard conversations. Who peacekeep instead of peacemake.

Peacemaking with children means:

- Setting clear boundaries
- Following through with consequences
- Having hard conversations about behavior
- Listening to their side
- Apologizing when you're wrong
- Teaching them how to resolve conflict
- Modeling what it looks like to address issues directly

Your children will learn to peacemake by watching you peacemake.

Peacemaking with Extended Family

Family can be complicated. Parents. Siblings. In-laws.

And peacekeeping is common. We avoid topics. We let things slide. We swallow our feelings to keep the peace at Thanksgiving.

But sometimes, peacemaking is necessary.

- A parent who is controlling or manipulative
- A sibling who constantly criticizes
- In-laws who disrespect boundaries

Peacemaking doesn't mean being rude. It means speaking the truth in love. It means setting boundaries. It means having hard conversations.

Sometimes, peacemaking means saying: *"I love you, but I can't continue this pattern. We need to talk about what's happening."*

And sometimes, peacemaking means accepting that the other person won't change. And choosing to love them from a distance while protecting your own heart.

The Goal: A Home of Shalom

The goal is not a conflict-free home. That's not possible.

The goal is a home where conflict is handled well. Where people speak the truth in love. Where forgiveness flows. Where resentment doesn't take root.

A home of shalom. Not the silence of peacekeeping. The genuine peace of peacemaking.

That's worth fighting for.

Chapter 9: The Hardest Peace – Enemies

We've talked about peacemaking in marriage, family, and the church. Now let's go to the hardest place of all.

Peacemaking with enemies.

Not people who annoyed you. Not people who disagree with you.

Enemies. People who hate you. Who have set themselves against you. Who have hurt you deeply and intentionally.

This is where peacemaking gets truly costly. And where it becomes most like Jesus.

The Command We Can't Ignore

Jesus didn't suggest this. He commanded it.

"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:43-45)

Love your enemies. Pray for those who persecute you.

Not tolerate them. Not avoid them. *Love* them. *Pray* for them.

This is the hardest thing Jesus ever asked. And He didn't offer an exception clause.

What Loving Your Enemy Does NOT Mean

Before we go further, let me clear up some confusion.

Loving your enemy does NOT mean:

- Pretending they didn't hurt you. Forgiveness doesn't require amnesia. You can acknowledge the wrong and still choose love.
- Staying in an abusive situation. You can forgive someone and still set boundaries. You can love them from a distance.
- Trusting them automatically. Trust is earned. Love is given. You can love someone without trusting them.
- Being a doormat. Love is not weakness. Sometimes the most loving thing is to say "no" or to walk away.
- Reconciling when it's not safe. Reconciliation requires repentance and change from both sides. You can be at peace with someone without being in relationship with them.

Loving your enemy is not about ignoring wisdom. It's about choosing to reflect the heart of God.

What Loving Your Enemy Does Mean

Loving your enemy means:

- Wishing them well. Not "I hope they get what's coming to them." Genuinely wanting good for them.

- Praying for them. Not "God, get them." But "God, bless them. Save them. Change them. Help them."
- Doing good to them when you can. *"If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink."* (Romans 12:20)
- Speaking well of them. Not lying. But not gossiping. Not tearing them down.
- Forgiving them. Releasing the debt. Letting go of revenge. Choosing not to make them pay.
- Leaving justice to God. *"Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord."* (Romans 12:19)

The Example of Jesus

Jesus didn't just teach this. He lived it.

He was betrayed by a friend. Denied by another. Arrested illegally. Beaten. Mocked. Stripped. Nailed to a cross.

And on that cross, He prayed:

"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34)

His enemies were killing Him. And He asked the Father to forgive them.

That's love for enemies. That's peacemaking at the highest cost.

The Example of Stephen

Stephen was the first Christian martyr. He was dragged before the religious council. Falsely accused. Stoned to death.

And as the stones were crushing his body, he cried out:

"Lord, do not hold this sin against them." (Acts 7:60)

Like his Lord. Love for enemies. Even as they killed him.

That's what the Holy Spirit produces in a person who has truly received peace.

The Example of David and Saul

King Saul tried to kill David multiple times. He hunted him. He threw spears at him. He chased him into the wilderness.

David had opportunities to kill Saul. He could have justified it as self-defense. As God's will.

But David refused.

"The Lord forbid that I should do this thing to my lord, the Lord's anointed, to put out my hand against him, seeing he is the Lord's anointed." (1 Samuel 24:6)

David didn't pretend Saul wasn't trying to kill him. He acknowledged the threat. But he left justice to God.

And later, when Saul died, David mourned. He didn't celebrate. He loved his enemy to the end.

Why This Is So Hard

Why loving your enemy is difficult.

1. It feels unfair. They hurt you. They don't deserve your love. And you're right. They don't. Neither did you.
2. It feels like losing. Our flesh wants to win. Wants to get even. Love for enemies feels like surrender. But it's actually victory. Victory over your own sinful nature.
3. It feels impossible. Some wounds are so deep, the idea of loving your enemy seems laughable. That's when you need the Holy Spirit.
4. It's countercultural. The world says "get revenge." "Don't get mad, get even." "Cut them off." Love for enemies goes against everything our culture teaches.

But you're not of this world. You're a citizen of a different Kingdom. And in that Kingdom, love wins.

The Freedom of Loving Your Enemy

Holding hatred toward an enemy doesn't hurt them. It hurts you.

- You're the one losing sleep.
- You're the one replaying the offense.
- You're the one carrying the weight.
- You're the one becoming bitter.

Love for your enemy isn't just for them. It's for you. It sets you free from the prison of hatred.

"Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Romans 12:21)

When you love your enemy, you break the cycle. You stop the escalation. You become the one who absorbs the offense instead of passing it on.

That's freedom.

The Blessing of Loving Your Enemy

Jesus promised a blessing for those who love their enemies.

"So that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven." (Matthew 5:45)

When you love your enemy, you are most like your Father. Because He loves His enemies every single day.

- He makes the sun rise on the evil and the good.
- He sends rain on the just and the unjust.
- He is kind to the ungrateful and the evil.

And when you do the same, you reflect His heart.

That's the blessing. Not comfort. Not ease. But the joy of being like your Father.

Chapter 10: The Blessing of the Peacemaker

We've talked about the difference between peacekeeping and peacemaking. We've looked at the cross. We've looked at our fears. We've learned when to speak and when

to be silent. We've practiced how to confront in love. We've talked about the hardest places—church, marriage, family, and even enemies.

Now we need to ask the question that matters most:

What's in it for you?

Because peacemaking is hard. It's costly. It's risky. Why would anyone choose it?

Jesus gives the answer.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:9)

Not peacekeepers. *Peacemakers*.

And the blessing is not comfort. Not ease. Not a conflict-free life.

The blessing is identity. *Sons of God*.

What Does "Sons of God" Mean?

In the ancient world, being called a "son" of someone meant you shared their character. You reflected their nature.

To be called a son of God means you look like your Father.

And what is the Father like?

- He is merciful (Luke 6:36)
- He is kind to the ungrateful and evil (Luke 6:35)
- He makes peace through the blood of the cross (Colossians 1:20)

When you make peace, you look like Him. You reflect His heart. You bear His family resemblance.

That's the blessing.

Not a paycheck. Not a promotion. Not an easy life.

But the privilege of being like your Father.

The Peacemaker's Reward

There are other rewards too. Not earned. Just... given.

Freedom. Peacekeepers are prisoners of fear. They're always walking on eggshells. Always monitoring. Always avoiding. Peacemakers are free. They're not afraid of conflict. They know how to handle it. They don't have to run.

Deep relationships. Peacekeeping produces shallow relationships. You never go deep because you never address what's really going on. Peacemaking produces deep, authentic, resilient relationships. You've been through the fire together. You've fought for each other. You trust each other.

Growth. Peacekeeping keeps you stuck. You never learn to handle conflict. You never grow. Peacemaking forces you to grow. To learn. To become wiser, stronger, more like Jesus.

Peace. Real peace. Not the peace of avoidance. The peace of things being actually right. The peace that comes from working through conflict, forgiving, reconciling, healing.

Honor from God. Jesus says peacemakers will be called sons of God. Not by men. By God. He sees. He knows. He honors those who reflect His heart.

The Peacemaker's Cost

But let me be honest. Peacemaking also has a cost.

- It costs your comfort. Hard conversations are never comfortable.
- It costs your pride. You have to admit when you're wrong.
- It costs your desire for revenge. You have to let go of making them pay.
- It costs your reputation. Some people will think you're too confrontational. Others will think you're too soft. You can't please everyone.
- It costs your relationships. Sometimes, even when you do everything right, the other person won't meet you. The relationship may end.

Peacemaking is not the easy path. It's the hard path. The narrow path.

But it's the path of Jesus.

The Peacemaker's Identity

You are not a peacekeeper. You were not made to avoid conflict, swallow your feelings, and pretend everything is fine.

You are a child of God. And your Father is a peacemaker.

He didn't avoid the conflict of sin. He entered it. He confronted it. He absorbed the cost. He made peace through the blood of the cross.

And He calls you to do the same.

Not to earn His love. Because you already have it. But to reflect His heart.

A Final Thought

Wherever you are—in your marriage, your family, your church, your workplace, your friendships—you have a choice.

You can keep the peace. Avoid conflict. Swallow your feelings. Let things slide. And live in the shallow end.

Or you can make peace. Enter conflict. Speak the truth in love. Address issues. Seek reconciliation. And reflect the heart of your Father.

One is easier. One is harder. One leads to a ceasefire. One leads to peace.

Choose peacemaking.