

Do you want to resolve a relational problem?



QUICK START GUIDE

First, choose the one role that best describes your situation.



You feel that you have been personally hurt or offended by someone.



You believe that a person has offended or hurt someone else other than you.



It appears that you have offended or hurt someone.



Someone has come to you to talk about a conflict between two people, but you are not one of the two people in the conflict.

Next, follow your icon.

STAGE 1

Meet with God

Pray and complete these steps for your role before you decide to talk or not talk with the other person.

Avoid gossip



Do not speak to anyone inappropriately about any other person.

Proverbs 16:28, 25:8-10, 26:20

Analyze



What is the nature of the relational problem? Is it a cultural or personality difference? Miscommunication? A legitimate disagreement? Can it be called a sin? How can you state the problem in terms of unmet, unclear, or unequal expectations? Are these expectations clearly understood, legitimate, loving, and reasonable?

Proverbs 23:23, Ephesians 4:25

Evaluate



If you can overlook a personal offense, you may decide not to bring it up. But consider how serious the offense might be. How might the person or other people be negatively affected by those words or behavior? Is it harmful to the name of Christ or the church? Is the offense clearly described as a sin in the Bible? Is it a habit or just a one-time mistake? The more serious the offense and its effects, the more you should consider talking with the person.

Proverbs 19:11, 1 Peter 4:8, Colossians 3:12-14, Galatians 6:1-2, James 5:19-20, Titus 1:7-9, Matthew 18:15, Philippians 2:2-4

Judge rightly



Have you pre-judged or made premature conclusions? Are you partial toward any of the parties? Have you either denied or exaggerated the truth about any legitimate offenses?

Proverbs 17:15, 18:17; Leviticus 19:15; 1 Timothy 5:21; John 7:24; Matthew 7:1-2

Take the plank out of your eye



How might you have contributed to the problem? What might be in your heart or mind that could keep you from seeing the problem, yourself, or the other person objectively and from God's perspective?

Matthew 7:3-5, 1 Peter 2:1

Forgive



Have you forgiven the other person in your heart and before God? Are you prepared to grant them forgiveness if they confess and repent to you? Can you honestly pray prayers like these to God? "I want to forgive them as you in Christ forgave me." "I want to see them with your eyes of grace and mercy." "Help me renew my mind; I don't want to keep reliving the offense." "Help me to never speak inappropriately to the person or others about the offense." "Please bless them with your love."

Ephesians 4:31-32; Proverbs 17:9; Colossians 3:13; Philippians 4:8; Matthew 6:14-15, 18:35

Seek appropriate counsel (optional)



How might a wise and impartial person help you process your role more thoroughly?

Proverbs 1:5, 12:15, 19:20

Search your heart



Ask God to reveal your motives to you. How can you describe in biblical terms your motive for choosing to either talk or not talk with the other person? Do not go in anger, to shame the other person, or just to clear your own conscience. Do not let unfounded fear, your pride, or lack of love keep you from talking with them.

Psalms 139:23-24

Repent of your part



If you have contributed to the problem, prepare to confess what you understand to God and the other person. How can you humble yourself, honor the other person, and be honest about what you did? Consider including these elements in your confession: take personal responsibility, name the specific offense, do not excuse yourself or blame others, show sincere sorrow and contrition. If it is sin, describe it with biblical terms. Show you are aware of and sorry for the pain and cost you caused them. Ask them if there is more you need to take responsibility for.

Matthew 5:23-24, 2 Corinthians 7:8-11, Proverbs 28:13, James 4:6

Question your role



Are you the most appropriate person to approach the other party? If you are not, who may be?

Proverbs 26:17, Matthew 7:12

Consider your responsibility



What are the real or potential consequences for you, the other party, and for others if you don't talk with them?

Galatians 6:1-2, Leviticus 19:17-18, Hebrews 10:24

Prepare with love



If you decide to talk with the person, how would you want to be approached if you were in their place? Review your plan and motive for going.

Matthew 7:12, Galatians 6:1, Proverbs 25:8-10, Philippians 2:2-4



When someone comes to you to talk about a conflict not directly involving you, first decide if you are an appropriate person to help this person. If you are, pray and help them identify their role. Then follow these points:

Avoid gossip

Do not speak to anyone inappropriately about any other person.
Proverbs 16:28; 25:8-10; 26:20

Be objective and impartial

Help this person see the other party's perspective as well as their own. Speak the truth in love.
Proverbs 18:17, Ephesians 4:15, 1 Timothy 5:21

Counsel wisely

Wisely guide this person through all relevant steps of Stage 1 for their role. "Wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere." James 3:17

God's expectations for all believers to one another

- **Be at peace** with one another (Mark 9:50)
- **Love** one another (John 13:34)
- **Be devoted** to one another (Romans 12:10)
- **Honor** one another (Romans 12:10)
- **Live in harmony** with one another (Romans 12:16)
- **Do not pass judgment** on one another (Romans 14:13)
- **Accept** one another (Romans 15:7)
- **Teach** one another (Colossians 3:16)
- **Admonish** one another (Colossians 3:16)
- **Exhort** one another (Hebrews 10:25)
- **Serve** one another (Galatians 5:13)
- **Bear** one another's **burdens** (Galatians 6:2)
- **Forebear (put up with)** one another, in humility (Ephesians 4:2)
- **Be kind and compassionate** to one another (Ephesians 4:32)
- **Forgive** one another (Ephesians 4:32, Colossians 3:13)
- **Submit** to one another (Ephesians 5:21)
- **Don't lie** to one another (Colossians 3:9)
- **Comfort** one another (2 Corinthians 13:11)
- **Build up** each other (1 Thessalonians 5:11)
- **Don't speak evil** of one another (James 4:11)
- **Don't grumble** against each other (James 5:9)
- **Confess your faults** to one another (James 5:16)
- **Pray** for one another (James 5:16)
- **Have fellowship** with one another (1 John 1:7)
- **Encourage** one another (1 Thessalonians 4:18)
- **Seek to do good** to one another (1 Thessalonians 5:15)
- **Do not provoke** one another (Galatians 5:26)
- **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)

STAGE 2

If appropriate, meet with the other person

(You may need to do this more than once to achieve peace.)



▲ **Approach in love** Go at the time and place and with the attitude you would want to be approached if your roles were reversed.
Matthew 7:12, Galatians 6:1, Proverbs 25:8-12

▲ **Use God-honoring speech** Use "I" statements and non-accusatory comments. Use calm, non-threatening body language. State any offenses in clear, biblical terms. Ephesians 4:29; Proverbs 15:1, 25:11-12

◆ **Make an honest, humble, honoring confession** Be specific, thorough, and contrite. 2 Corinthians 7:8-11, Proverbs 28:13

▲ **Listen** Be quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. Listen to the other person with sincere attention. James 1:19; Proverbs 18:17, 25:12

▲ **Grant forgiveness** If the other person repents of an offense toward you, give them your personal forgiveness. Luke 17:3-4

◆ **Receive forgiveness and cleansing, if they grant it** 1 John 1:9

◆ **Make right any wrongs you can** Matthew 3:8, Hebrews 12:11, Galatians 6:7-8

Why Peace Pursuit?

- **Pursue** the things that make for peace and the building up of one another. Romans 14:19
- **Strive** for peace with everyone. Hebrews 12:14
- **Make every effort** to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. Ephesians 4:3
- **Do everything in your power**, as long as it depends on you, to be at peace with all. Romans 12:18

Peace Pursuit: The Five Pillars

- 1 God wants you to be at peace with all people.
- 2 Your relationships with people reflect and affect your relationship with God.
- 3 Treat everyone as a unique person created and loved by God.
- 4 Treat everyone alike, without prejudice or partiality.
- 5 Everyone is blessed when you pursue peace biblically.

