

# Conflict Resolution

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[ 0 : 00 ] Romans chapter 12, verses 17 through 21.

! It depends on you. Live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord. To the contrary, if your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink.

For by doing so, you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. May God add a blessing to the reading of his word. Would you please be seated?

In a small village, there lived two men who got into a heated dispute with one another that neither of them was able to resolve. As time passed and it became clear that neither man was willing to budge on the issue or the dispute, others in their community convinced them to present their cases before the oldest and wisest man in the village to settle the dispute and to try to resolve this issue. The wise man welcomed the first man in the dispute into his home, and after hearing his version of what happened, said to him, You're absolutely right.

[ 1 : 50 ] About an hour later, the second man entered the wise man's home and gave his version of the story and pled his case, and after hearing him, the wise man said to him, You're absolutely right.

Well, unbeknownst to the wise man, his wife was in the other room hearing all that had transpired, and she walked in and she said to him, You told the first man that he was absolutely right.

You told the second man that he's absolutely right. That's impossible because they can't be both absolutely right. The wise man turned to his wife and he said to her, You're absolutely right.

That's how a lot of us handle conflict, though, isn't it? And confrontation. Like the wise man in the story, we avoid getting involved.

We think we can make peace by really doing nothing at all. Maybe the conflict, we hope, will just go away, or we'll try to sweep it under the rug and pretend as if it's not an issue.

[ 2 : 58 ] And in so doing, we are led to believe that that is wise action. But you know, not all of us are like that. Some people walk around with a proverbial chip on their shoulder.

They are sensitive to any perceived slight, and they aren't afraid to mix it up. They're not afraid of conflict and confrontation. But I think if we're honest, whether you are the kind of person who is afraid of conflict and confrontation or not, that all of us are easily entertained by other people's conflicts.

We enjoy watching conflict and confrontation just so long as it doesn't involve us. Remember the schoolyard fights that we used to have?

Maybe you were a part of one of those schoolyard fights. There'd be some kind of conflict, some kind of confrontation on the playground. And all the rest of us kids, you know what we would do? Say, oh, you guys shouldn't be fighting.

Please don't do that. No, we would circle around them and we would say, fight, fight, fight, fight, fight. You remember that? But nowadays, what people do when they see conflict and confrontation in public, they pull out their phone and they take pictures and they take videos and they record it and put it on social media so that thousands of people can watch this conflict or this confrontation.

[ 4 : 24 ] And you know, reality TV shows draw millions of viewers who tune in to watch the manufactured conflict and confrontations that they create.

But the Bible says and calls Christians to act differently than all of that. Confrontation and conflict are not things that we should avoid, neither are they things that we should delight in, but things that we should seek to resolve.

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus, as he was preaching, said in Matthew 5, 9, blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God. God is a peacemaker.

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament are abounding with statements about God's being the God of peace. Since the fall, the only peace that humanity has known is the peace they have received as a gift from God by the sending of his only son, Jesus Christ, because only in him is he able to remove sin from us, which is the greatest barrier of peace that we experience in this world. Ephesians 2, 13 through 16 says, But now in Christ, you who were once far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 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, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. [ 6 : 07 ] At the cross, all of man's hatred and anger was vented against God. On the cross, the Son of God was mocked, he was cursed, he was spit on, he was pierced, he was reviled, and he was killed.

Jesus' disciples fled in fear while Jesus hung on the cross. The sky was darkened, the earth shook violently, the veil of the temple was torn in two, yet through that violence, God has brought us peace.

God's greatest righteousness confronted man's greatest wickedness, and righteousness won. And because righteousness won, peace was won.

As Christians, we are commanded by God to spread the peace, the peace of God, to proclaim the gospel, to warn of his judgment and his wrath towards sin, and plead with unbelievers to be reconciled through Jesus Christ so that they too might have peace with God as well.

As 2 Corinthians 5.20 tells us, Therefore, we, Christians, are ambassadors for Christ. God making his appeal through us, we implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

[ 7 : 30 ] The Bible has much to say about conflict and confrontation, and how Christians should seek to be used by God to resolve it.

The Bible also says that there are only really two kinds of people in this world. There are believers, and there are unbelievers. Jesus said, if you remember, that there are two doors, that there are two pathways that lead to two different destinations.

One leads to eternal life. The other leads to eternal punishment. And as Christians, we are commanded by God to be peacemakers.

And the way that we handle conflicts and confrontations with both unbelievers and believers will determine how effective we are in who and what the Lord has commanded us to be.

So the main idea for this morning's sermon is this. The Bible instructs Christians to resolve conflicts with unbelievers and believers. The Bible instructs Christians on how to resolve conflicts with unbelievers and believers.

[ 8 : 38 ] Unresolved conflict in the church threatens its unity and dims its influence on the unbelieving world. The better we are able to resolve conflicts by doing things God's ways, the greater our impact will be in fulfilling the great commission, which is to go and to make disciples.

And so I ask you, don't you want our church to thrive? Don't you want our baptistry waters to be continually stirred in this place and these people to be a fellowship that is warm, that is welcoming, that is exciting to be a part of?

Then you have to be committed to resolving conflict God's way. And if you do want to see disciples being made, then you must seek to be Christ's ambassador to them, a peacemaker.

And like Christ, you must seek to be used by him to resolve their ultimate conflict, which is a conflict with God, their creator, in the hopes that they will become your brother or your sister in Christ.

And so today we will focus on resolving conflict with unbelievers, and then next week we will focus our attention on resolving conflict with believers. The Bible says a lot more about the latter, about resolving conflict with believers.

[ 10 : 03 ] However, that unbelieving person at your work, in your neighborhood, or in your family is someone whom God loves. Instead of avoiding them or hating them, you are commanded to be Christ to them, who humbled himself for you to the point of death on the cross, dying for your sins so that you will have peace with God that you enjoy now in Christ and will enjoy forever.

And so today we will look at what the Bible says about how to resolve conflict with unbelievers. And so that's the main point and really the one point for today.

The next point will follow next week. How to resolve conflict with unbelievers. And we look at Romans chapter 12, verses 17 through 21 for that answer. The Apostle Paul begins his instruction

on resolving conflict with unbelievers by expressing the importance of Christians understanding the significance of their avoiding being conformed to this world and instead being transformed by the renewing of their minds.

Like Christ, they are to bless those who persecute them. Remember on the cross, Jesus prayed to God the Father that he would forgive those who had hung him there.

He didn't return their curses. He didn't seek their obliteration for what they had done to him. And so in verse 17, Paul continues explaining how to resolve conflict with unbelievers.

[ 11 : 46 ] He says, Repay no one evil for evil. Now, no one means no one.

It's all inclusive. That person who cut you off on your way to church. That neighbor who never waves back to you, no matter how friendly you are to them.

That co-worker who supports lifestyles that are contrary to Scripture. That person who voted for a different candidate than you. Those people who frequent the cannabis store across from the church that you go to.

Those who have lied to you. Those who have lied about you. Who have cheated you. Who have ridiculed you. Who have stabbed you in the back.

And who revile you for your faith in Christ and your commitment to obey his word. Paul, the Bible, God includes them all.

[ 12 : 47 ] All of them. Now, you might hear that and you might think, Well, Pastor Mike, I've also read the Bible. And I know that in multiple places it says that we are to repay an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth.

Exodus 21-24. Leviticus 24-20. Deuteronomy 19-21. Are all passages that contain that statement. But in context, they pertain to civil justice.

Not personal revenge. And the major purpose of this mandate was to prevent the severity of punishment from exceeding the severity of the offense. To prevent people from saying, Well, you took my tooth, so I'm going to cut off your head.

Or in these times, you killed my cow, so I'm going to kill one of your children. Going back to the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus not only established this standard as a principle for limiting retribution to what was just.

But he took it to the next level in regard to affronts to your personal dignity. In Matthew 5-38-39. He said, In Romans, Paul will go on in chapter 13 to explain the institution of governing authorities by God.

[ 14 : 14 ] That they are the ones who have received his authority to carry out justice on civil matters. Now, in situations that are life and death. Situations where someone is breaking the law and an innocent life could be taken.

And no governing authority is there or could get there quickly enough to resolve the conflict. Then we have laws which give us authority to protect the innocent. That's not what I'm talking about here or what I think the Bible is addressing.

I'm speaking to matters and issues where your ego is bruised. Where you feel slighted or wronged and you think the best course of action is to get revenge. You know, if revenge was the best course of action, then you and I would be without hope.

We've all sinned against God. We've all incurred a debt to him because of that sin. And he would be just to sentence us all to hell for it.

But instead, he decided that the best course of action was for him to send Jesus, his only begotten son. And for him to suffer and endure his wrath in our place.

[ 15 : 25 ] That by his grace, through faith in him, we have been saved and we have peace with God. Because, you know, no one has been slighted more than God has.

No one has been more maligned than God has. No one has been cheated on more than God has. And yet he has chosen to make a way for his rebellious creation to have peace with him instead of his returning evil for evil.

And so Paul continues in verse 17 saying, But give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. Here he's talking about the right kind of attitude in conflict and confrontation.

A right attitude towards enemies, which involves respect for them and for what is right in the sight of all people. If you genuinely respect others as image bearers of God, you will have a built-in protection against angrily repaying others evil for evil and will instead be guided by God's word and the indwelling of his spirit to do what is right.

Kalos in the Greek is that word right. And it refers to things that are intrinsically good, proper, and honest. It also carries the idea of visible action.

[16:48] Not just thinking about doing the right thing, but actually doing the right thing. And therefore being an honorable person. Not responding to whatever has angered you by being grumpy or grouchy and snappy at everybody because you are upset.

But having the right attitude, an honorable attitude at all times. And that is displayed in honorable actions to all people.

Years ago, when we were living in Leavenworth, I was up at City Hall to pay for my car tax. And as I waited, grabbed my number, took a seat.

As I waited, an older gentleman was there. His number was called. And he had a bone to pick with the poor young lady behind the glass. You know, there's a reason why they put up those thick pieces of glass in City Hall and at the DMV, isn't there?

Paying taxes for property that you already own and paid taxes for already is not a pleasant experience, is it? And this man was unhappy about that.

[18:02] And for about five minutes, he went on a tirade, giving this young girl a tongue lashing about how upset he was that he had to pay these property taxes.

But you know, what could she do about it? She was just doing her job. She didn't make the law. She didn't have any power to change the law.

And as I think about it now, I'm really preaching to myself because I kind of sat there and watched it all happen without stepping in to be a peacemaker. You know, listen, sir, she doesn't have any ability to change the laws.

So just do what you have to do and vote for somebody different or whatever. Write a letter to your congressman or senator or something like that. I did tell her that, you know, what he did was wrong, but still.

Snapping at people, unleashing your anger, rarely accomplishes the good that you think that it's going to accomplish.

[19:05] People in your life should know that you are a Christian. And in knowing that you are a Christian, they have the right to expect that you won't be someone who easily flies off the handle when you're upset.

That your approach to conflict and confrontation is peaceable. But I am thankful for what the Apostle Paul says next because seeking peace in conflict is a two-way street.

In verse 18, he says, If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. See, your responsibility in resolving conflict with an unbeliever is to make sure that your side of the relationship is right.

And that you truly desire to be at peace with them. If you've sought forgiveness, if you've been willing to extend forgiveness, if you're not holding on to a grudge, and you hold no hate for that person in your heart, then you've done what is expected of you as an ambassador of Christ.

Now, I think that it's important to add something here. That you can be at peace with someone from a distance. Know what I'm saying? Sometimes the trauma done to you, the violation of your trust, the harm done to you physically or emotionally means that while you should forgive, and you have the power to forgive in Christ, and there's power and there's peace that comes with forgiving that person, it doesn't mean that you have to welcome them back into your life in the way that they were a part of it before.

[20:48] And you need to use discernment in that. And you need to pray about that. I wouldn't advise an abused child or wife to return home just because the abuser said that they were sorry.

There'd have to be evidence of genuine change and remorse and repentance. There is power, again, in forgiveness, though. And we see that, I think, a lot of times in court cases, where someone has been convicted of killing another person, taking an innocent life.

Have you seen those instances where at the end of the trial or towards the end of the trial, the family addresses the person who's been convicted? And in some of those cases, the family member will stand up, whether it's a father or a mother or a spouse or a brother or a sister, and they'll look at that person who killed one of their loved ones and say to them, I forgive you.

And the reason why they forgive them often we'll see in that testimony as a part of their addressing that person is because I've been forgiven by Jesus Christ.

And, you know, when those things happen, they get broadcast, don't they? The news media covers them. We hear them all over the place. Why? Because that's so unlike what we see in the world that teaches us to avenge ourselves, to seek vengeance for those who have hurt us.

[ 22 : 20 ] And those are powerful testimonies of the difference that Christ can make. And so unlike how unbelievers in this world would respond, we are to be honorable as we seek peace in conflict.

This doesn't mean that, you know, you go to that person that you're in conflict with this week and you say, you know, I was at church on Sunday and our pastor told me that I am supposed to do my part to make sure that I'm at peace with you.

So be at peace with me, right? And I'm not going to stop until you say that you're at peace with me. That will cause other problems.

So don't do that. In verse 19, Paul again turns our attention to the importance of not seeking to avenge ourselves when we find ourselves in conflict with unbelievers.

In verse 19, he says, Beloved, never avenge yourselves. That's never. There's no loophole there. Never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.

[ 23 : 25 ] And so again, there he reiterates that we are not qualified to render punishment for the offense ourselves. We are to leave that to the wrath of God, who in his divine time will execute it towards those who have rejected him and his offers of peace through the cross of his son, Jesus Christ.

I think it's also important to note here that the wrath of God is not something that you and I should delight in. We shouldn't be at conflict with someone who's an unbeliever and be daydreaming about the torture that they're going to experience, the excruciating pain and discomfort of a place like hell where they will be suffering eternally.

We should not be pleased with that or take any kind of joy in that. Because if you do, you're not being like God and you do not have the mind of Christ. Ezekiel 18.23 says, here God says, If God took pleasure in it, then again, we'd be totally without hope.

And if we take pleasure in it, then we won't be seeking reconciliation with them. And we won't desire to be used by God as Christ's ambassadors and peacemakers. God desires that you live at peace with all so that you will be like him and be used by him to help unbelievers see their need to be reconciled to the one whom they are ultimately in conflict with.

2 Peter 3.9 says, Now that Paul has addressed the attitude and motivation to seek reconciliation with unbelievers, he next gives us some practical ways that we can do that in verses 20 and 21.

[ 25 : 30 ] To the contrary, if your enemy is hungry, feed him. If he is thirsty, give him something to drink. For by doing so, you will heap burning coals on his head. Do not be overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good.

Doing good to someone you are in conflict with will prick their conscience and potentially lead to their salvation and their conversion.

To just merely decide not to seek vengeance and to decide to avoid the issue and the person you are in conflict with fails to meet your responsibility as a Christian.

Because honestly, it's much easier to think of ways to seek revenge than to think of positive ways that you can bless someone that you are in conflict with.

We are experts when it comes to sin. We are experts in ways to seek revenge. It comes naturally to us. It's organic. But as we saw last week, that isn't who you are now that you are in Christ.

[ 26 : 39 ] This is what it means to enter through the narrow gate and to walk the narrow path. Pride and ego tell us to seek revenge. The narrow way and the narrow path looks like insanity to the rest of the world.

But again, isn't that what Jesus did for you and for me? He suffered. He took the retribution. He bore the guilt and the shame of your sin.

And he died in your place. The only perfect man bore the sins of his disciples who turned away from him in his hour of forsakenness.

The one who died for crimes he did not commit. And was crushed on the cross. By the innumerable sins that we have committed against God.

He took the punishment himself. He declared war on sin to set sinners free from its consequences. Reconciling us to God by faith in him.

[ 27 : 55 ] None of us is worthy of such love. Such grace. Such peace. Such salvation. These things God gave us.

Has lavished upon us. As he declared war on sin. And he made his enemies his children. Thank God that his goodness.

And his graciousness. And his peaceableness. Has overcome our sinfulness. Writing on this passage. Charles Spurgeon said. This passage gives us a choice between two things.

And bids us choose the better one. We must either be conquered by evil. Or we must conquer evil. One of the two. We cannot let evil alone.

And evil will not let us alone. We must fight. And in the battle we must either conquer. Or be conquered. Paul was like a wise general who says.

[ 28 : 58 ] Conquer. Or be conquered. Be victorious. Or be defeated. There is no avoiding the conflict. There is no making truce. Or holding negotiations. No suspension of hostilities.

After a brief skirmish. The battle must be fought through to the end. And can only close with a decided victory. To one or the other side. He pleads.

Soldier of Christ. Do you need to debate which of the two. To choose victory or defeat. We are not called to conquer evil with evil. That is the way of the world.

But to conquer evil with good. We conquer evil with good. With direct and overt acts of kindness. That is if anyone has done a wrong to you. Do not only forgive it.

But avenge it. By showing them kindness as well. You ever heard the phrase. Fight fire with fire.

[ 29 : 55 ] Have you ever thought about that phrase. Isn't it stupid. If your house was on fire. And the fire department showed up.

With blow torches. And whatever. Those guns that shoot out large flames. You know a flamethrower. He said what are you doing. He said we are fighting fire with fire.

You would say you are crazy right. It is all going to burn. And quicker that way. No we need water. Water suppresses and extinguishes the flames. If you really trust that God's word is God's word.

And that God's word is true. If you believe truly that his ways are better than your ways.

If you desire to live at peace. You will seek to end conflicts. And you will do so by being like Jesus.

[ 30 : 58 ] Loving the unlovable. Sacrificing for enemies who don't deserve it. In the hopes that the good that you do to them. Will result with them having peace with God.

That you would gain an audience with them. In order to share the gospel. In the hopes that they will be reconciled to God. And you know what is truly tragic.

And I've seen this happen before. If it's an unbeliever. Who's in conflict with a believer. And the unbeliever takes all of these steps. And does all of these things to try to resolve the issue.

And the unbeliever refuses to forgive them. How tragic is that? May we not be like that. Don't waste your life being angry.

Don't waste your life being full of hate. Don't waste your life. Not being like Christ.

[ 31 : 56 ] Who has set you free. From sin. And its consequences. So the main point of application for this sermon is this. Resolve the conflicts that you have with unbelievers.

Resolve the conflicts that you have with unbelievers. Well how can you do that? Well you're going to have to make some choices. You're going to have to do some stuff.

You're going to have to make some resolutions. So the first one is this. You need to let go of past hurts. In order to resolve conflict with unbelievers. Conflict really of any kind.

You have to let go of past hurts. To move on from a conflict. You have to move forward. If you have forgiven the wrong done to you.

It does you no good to continue to go back to that time. When you were in conflict. Or that situation that caused it. And revisiting that wrong. Over and over and over again.

[ 32 : 59 ] If you do so. That may indicate that you haven't truly forgiven that person. Think of what Jesus said to Peter about forgiveness. In Matthew 18 21 through 22. Then Peter came up and said to him.

Lord how often will my brother sin against me. And I forgive him. As many as seven times. Peter thinks I'm being generous here. Right? Seven times. Jesus said to him. I do not say to you seven times.

But 77 times. Jesus said to him. And that's not like literally the 78th time. Okay. I did it 77 times. It's over. Jesus' point is you continually forgive that person.

And so when it comes to being able to let go of past hurts. I think one of the ways that Satan works. He wants you to be in conflict. He wants you to avoid those confrontations. He wants you to not forgive that person. And not share the gospel with them. And so what he'll do is he'll put you back in that place. Over and over again. You can't.

[ 33 : 56 ] You can't forgive that person. What did they do to you? How could you do that? No. They need to get hurt. And so I think what this means too. One of its applications with what Jesus' instructions are.

When Satan does that. You repeat in your mind. No. I've forgiven that person. I've moved on from that situation. And you keep doing that. And you keep doing that. Let go of those past hurts. That will help you. Next. Be calm. How can you resolve conflict and confrontation? Be calm in the midst of it. In the heat of the moment. When what you really want to do.

Is let that person have it. What happens a lot of times. Is that you might say something. Or you might do something. That actually escalates the conflict. And makes matters worse.

Instead of better. Proverbs 15. One says. Julia read this passage to us this morning. A soft answer turns away wrath. But a harsh word.

[ 34 : 53 ] It stirs up anger. Sometimes the best thing that you can do. In the heat of that moment. Is just to excuse yourself from it. For a time. And think more about what you need to say.

Instead of what you want to say. Don't retreat either to social media. And think that you are being calm. And resolving conflict.

By posting some kind of a vague post. On Facebook or whatever. And saying. You know. Not listing the person's name. But talking about how upset you are with them.

That person knows that you're talking to them. And so probably does everybody else. That doesn't resolve conflict. That makes things worse. Be calm. Think about it.

Pray about it. But don't avoid it. Don't avoid it. Eventually you're going to have to go. And speak to that person. But make sure you say to them. What you need to say. Not so much what you want to say.

[ 35 : 48 ] Next. And this goes along with that. Be patient. Be patient. Now I'm talking here about being patient. With people who drive you crazy. I'm talking about people.

Who are like splinters. They just have a way to get up. Underneath your skin. You know what I'm talking about. And they're hard to remove. Or like mosquitoes.

They're just always buzzing around. Their presence is always there. And you just can't get rid of them. I'm talking about the people that drive you crazy. Ephesians 4.1-2 says.

I therefore a prisoner of the Lord. Urge you to walk in a manner. Worthy of the calling to which you have been called. With all humility and gentleness. With patience. Bearing with one another.

Now bearing with one another. I love the King James Version's translation of that. It says. Long suffering. Must suffer for a long time.

[ 36 : 46 ] With you. And hasn't God done the same? To you? Suffered with you? While I do think that passage speaks. Specifically to Christians in the church.

And we'll see that. Again next week. I think it also applies to unbelievers too. God has put that person in your life. For a reason.

And it's your job to be patient with them. To bear with them. To suffer with them. So that you can witness better to them. Next. Be in prayer. Be in prayer about it.

Matthew 5.44 says. But I say to you. Love your enemies. And pray for those who persecute you. So often.

We use prayer to try to change God. Instead of God to change us. Don't we? Don't raise your hands. But I'm sure many of you have. Have come in conflict.

[ 37 : 44 ] Or in a confrontation with a person. And this is your prayer request. Lord. You may not say it this way. Lord. Get rid of them. Get rid of them.

They just move to a different neighborhood. Can't they just transfer to a different school? Can't they just get fired from their job? Can't they just move far away from me?

And maybe. If you're being honest. You even say. Lord. I just. I just. I wish they were dead. That. Does not reflect. The mind. Of Christ. When you pray. God has a way. Of changing you. Through. Your.

Your.

Prayers. And if you pray for that person. That you're in conflict with. And you pray for their good. And you pray to be used. By the Lord. To resolve the conflict.

[ 38 : 42 ] And hopefully to share the gospel with them. What you'll find. Is that it's really hard. To be angry. And hate someone. Whom you have spent so much time. Praying for. You pray for that person.

Pray for that situation. That God would give you peace. And the words to say. To resolve the issue. And then finally. And there could be more. But finally here. Be a friend.

Instead of seeking to remain that person's enemy. Try to. Become. Their friend. Proverbs 16. 7 says. When a man's ways. Please the Lord.

He makes even his enemies. To be at peace with him. You know. I've experienced. Personally. How confrontation. And conflict. When done.

According to God's way. Has ended up resulting. In friendship. Sometimes. Those really good friends. End up being those ones. Who at first. You were really at odds with.

[ 39 : 39 ] And if it doesn't lead to that. At least it results to. The misunderstanding being cleared up. And resolved. So that you can be. Civil. And courteous.

To one another. Which still would give you chances. To share the gospel. With them. Once the air is cleared. There is a warmness. There is an appreciation. For the efforts that you have made. To try to make things right. So three questions. Of application. For you to consider today. This week. And to put into action.

Number one. Who are you in conflict with? Right now. Who is that person? We'll talk about believers next week. But specifically unbelievers. Who is that person.

That right now. If you saw them at Walmart. This afternoon. You would turn around. And run away. Who is that person. That you are in conflict with? Question number two.

[ 40 : 35 ] What steps. Will you take. To resolve it? What steps. Will you take. To resolve it? You've already.

Seen what God's word says. You know the instruction there. What will you do first. To resolve it? And then finally. Will you begin praying for them right now?

And I really think that's the first step to take. Will you begin praying for them. Right. Now. That person is in your life for a reason.

God desires that his people be peacemakers. And his desire is that he use you. To share the gospel. With them.

And to help them hopefully be used by him. To overcome their greatest conflict. Which is their conflict with God. As a result of their sin. Be used by him.

[ 41 : 31 ] Seek to be used by him. To be a person of peace. Let's pray. Lord. This is easier said than done.

God. You know us better than we know ourselves. It's. Often our desire. When we're in conflict. Or in confrontation with someone.

To either avoid it. Avoid them. Or. Or. Hurt them in ways that. That were worse than the way that they hurt us.

But Lord. All we have to do is think about the gospel. In your word. In this truth. That tells us that we have all sinned against you. We have all made ourselves enemies of you.

And you purchased our peace through the precious blood of your only son. Jesus Christ. Who willingly endured and absorbed your wrath for the sins of your people. That by faith in him.

[ 42 : 28 ] We have peace with you. That. Lasts from the moment of salvation. All the way into eternity. Lord. May we never forget or take for granted. The peace that we have received from you.

And in not taking it for granted. Lord. May we be used by you. To seek to be used by you. To be peacemakers as you've commanded us to be. God. I pray that today. In moving forward.

You would cause us to see those whom we are in conflict. With. Differently. That we would see them as a fellow image bearer. And that we would seek to be used by you. That they would be reconciled.

By Christ. To you. And be our brother. Or sister. Lord. We need your help to do that. And we pray for it. In Jesus name. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.