

# Peacefakers, Peacebreakers, and Peacemakers

## Pt. 5, Just Between the Two of You

\*So far, how has the Peacemakers study been helpful to you? What's one thing that's changed in you since we've started this class?

- 3 volunteers to open up by offering sentence long prayers of thanksgiving for God's work

### Introduction

Describe a time you chose to overlook an offense.

Describe a time you decided to approach someone about a wrong that a person committed.

### Group Discussion

#### 1. Conflict provides an opportunity to serve

Although simply overlooking someone's sins often is best, times arise when doing so only prolongs alienation and encourages the person to continue acting hurtfully.

One of the most challenging ways to serve a person you're in conflict with is to help that person see where he or she has been wrong and needs to change.

\*What's challenging about doing this in a helpful, godly way?

#### 2. Restoring means more than Confronting

Jesus calls us to do more than simply confront others with a list of their wrongs. Rather, he calls us confront the person in order to restore the relationship

***Matt. 18:15:** If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over.*

Although direct confrontation is often necessary, the Scriptures also discuss and illustrate other valid ways to confront people about their wrongs.

Valid ways to confront people about sin: Confession, Teaching, Instruction, Reasoning with, Showing, Encouraging, Correcting, Warning, Admonishing, or Rebuking

***1 Tim. 5:1:** Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.*

Things to avoid: Quarreling, Arguing, or Foolish Controversies (see Phil. 2:14)

Notice how these people handled conflict in scripture:

- Jesus and the Woman of Samaria – Jesus used questions and discussion that caused her to assess her own life (John 4:1-18)
- Paul and the Athenians – Paul found a common interest before hitting them over the head with their direct idolatry (Acts 17:22-31)
- Esther and the King – Esther took two days and two banquets to show the king the wrong of decreeing that all the Jews should be killed.

Likewise, God can work in us to discern the best way, time, and place to approach someone.

### 3. Sooner or Later, Face-to-Face

Meeting in person can be critical for reconciliation, but sometimes you may need to leverage an intermediary. Have you ever used an intermediary?

Examples of intermediaries in the Bible

- Gen 32-33 → Jacob and Esau
- Gen 50:15-17 → Joseph's brothers
- 1 Sam 2:18-35 → Abigail and David
- Acts 9:26-27 → Barnabas affirmed Saul's conversion to Apostles.

### 4. If Someone Has Something Against you

What should you do if you know someone is mad at you, but you don't know why or don't think you did anything wrong? → Matt 5:23-24; Rom 12:8

### 5. When Someone's Sins Are Too Serious to Overlook

Some practical questions for evaluating:

- Is it dishonoring God? → Matt 21:12-13
- Is it damaging your relationship?
- Is it hurting others?
- Is it hurting the offender? → James 5:19-20

### 6. Special Considerations

Non-Christians, Person in Authority, An Abuser, Multiple Attempts, My Rights, The Cost

- Live at peace with others, be carefully and respectful, don't go alone, process and repeat

### 7. After The Log Is Out of Your Eye

*Matthew 7:3-5 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.*

Overlooking is not passive, pretending the issue doesn't exist, or pushing it under the rug. Overlooking is active. Through Christ you decide not to talk about it, not to dwell on it, and not let it become bitterness.