

PARENTING BY THE BOOK

CHOOSING TO LIVE AT PEACE

1. REVIEW

A. PEACEMAKERS ARE PEOPLE WHO BREATHE GRACE.

1. THEY CHOOSE TO DRAW ON THE GOODNESS AND POWER OF JESUS CHRIST, AND THEN BRING HIS LOVE, MERCY, FORGIVENESS, STRENGTH, AND WISDOM TO THE CONFLICTS IN THEIR LIVES.

2. PEACE IS A CHOICE... THAT WE MAKE.

A. OUR SALVATION IS A GIFT FROM GOD.

1. Ephesians 2:8-9 (NASB) For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

B. OUR SPOUSE IS A GIFT FROM GOD.

1. Matthew 19:4-6 (NASB) And He answered and said, "Have you not read that He who created them from the beginning MADE THEM MALE AND FEMALE, and said, 'FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH'? "So they are no longer two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate."

C. OUR CHILDREN ARE A GIFT FROM GOD.

1. Psalms 127:3 (NASB) Behold, children are a gift of the LORD, The fruit of the womb is a reward.

D. BUT... PEACE IS A CHOICE

3. REVIEW OF PEACE

A. THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF PEACE... THROUGH JESUS CHRIST:

1. PEACE WITH GOD.

- a. SALVATION THROUGH JESUS CHRIST
- b. TIME SPENT WITH GOD IN:

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- 1) **STUDY** OF HIS WORD
 - 2) **PRAYER**
 2. **PEACE WITH OTHERS.**
 - a. THE MAIN FOCUS OF OUR STUDY.
 - b. **DISCUSS: PEACE WITH GOD AND PEACE WITH OTHERS... MUST BE PERSUED.**
 3. **PEACE WITH SELF.**
 - a. **BY GOD'S DESIGN, THE THREE DIMENSIONS OF PEACE ARE INSEPARABLY JOINED.**
 - b. **WE WILL NOT KNOW GENUINE INTERNAL PEACE UNLESS WE ALSO PURSUE PEACE WITH GOD AND PEACE WITH OTHERS.**
 - c. **PWG + PWO = PWS**
- B. **THREE BASIC RESPONSES TO CONFLICT: (SEE THE CHART BELOW)**
1. **ESCAPE RESPONSES = PEACE FAKING**
 - a. **WALKING AWAY FROM THE CONFLICT AND THE RELATIONSHIP.**
 - b. PEOPLE USE THESE RESPONSES WHEN THEY ARE MORE INTERESTED IN **AVOIDING CONFLICT** THAN IN **RESOLVING CONFLICT.**
 - c. **ESCAPE RESPONSES NEVER RESOLVE CONFLICTS.**
 2. **ATTACK RESPONSES = PEACE BREAKING**
 - a. PEOPLE USE **ATTACK** RESPONSES WHEN THEY ARE MORE INTERESTED IN **WINNING A CONFLICT** THAN IN **PRESERVING A RELATIONSHIP.**
 - b. **ATTACK** RESPONSES ARE DIRECTED AT **BRINGING AS MUCH PRESSURE TO BEAR ON OPPONENTS AS IS NECESSARY TO ELIMINATE THEIR OPPOSITION.**

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3. PEACEMAKING RESPONSES = PEACE MAKING

- a. **PEACEMAKING RESPONSES ARE DIRECTED TOWARD FINDING JUST AND MUTUALLY AGREEABLE SOLUTIONS TO CONFLICT.**

C. PEACEMAKING RESPONSES

1. OVERLOOKING AN OFFENSE

- a. **Proverbs 19:11 (NASB)** A man's discretion makes him slow to anger, And it is his glory to **overlook a transgression.**
- b. **OVERLOOKING AN OFFENSE IS A FORM OF FORGIVENESS THAT INVOLVES A DELIBERATE DECISION NOT TO:**
- 1) **TALK** ABOUT IT,
 - 2) **GOSSIP** ABOUT IT,
 - 3) **DWELL** ON IT, AND LET IT **GROW** INTO **PENT-UP BITTERNESS OR ANGER.**

2. RECONCILIATION

- a. **Matthew 5:23-24 (NLT)** “and you suddenly remember that **someone** has something against you, ... **Go** and **be reconciled** to that person.”
- b. IF A **CONFLICT** (OFFENSE) IS **TOO SERIOUS TO OVERLOOK**, OR HAS **DAMAGED THE RELATIONSHIP**, WE NEED TO **RESOLVE IT THROUGH:**
- 1) **CONFESSION**
 - 2) **LOVING CORRECTION**
 - 3) **FORGIVENESS**

3. NEGOTIATION

- a. **EVEN WHEN WE SUCCESSFULLY RESOLVE RELATIONAL CONFLICT ISSUES, WE MAY STILL NEED TO WORK THROUGH MATERIAL ISSUES RELATED TO:**
- 1) **MONEY**

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2) PROPERTY

3) OTHER RIGHTS

4) NEGOTIATION SHOULD BE DONE THROUGH A PROCESS IN WHICH YOU AND THE OTHER PERSON SEEK TO REACH A SETTLEMENT THAT SATISFIES THE LEGITIMATE NEEDS OF EACH SIDE.

4. MEDIATION

a. WHEN TWO (OR MORE) PEOPLE CANNOT REACH AN AGREEMENT IN PRIVATE... THEY SHOULD ASK ONE OR MORE OBJECTIVE PEOPLE TO HELP THEM COMMUNICATE MORE EFFECTIVELY AND EXPLORE JUST AND MUTUALLY AGREEABLE SOLUTIONS TO THE CONFLICT.

1) MEDIATORS MAY ASK QUESTIONS AND GIVE ADVICE, BUT THEY HAVE NO AUTHORITY TO FORCE THE PARTIES TO ACCEPT A PARTICULAR SOLUTION.

5. ARBITRATION

a. WHEN OPONENTS CANNOT COME TO A VOLUNTARY AGREEMENT THEY MAY APPOINT ONE OR MORE ARBITRATORS TO LISTEN TO BOTH SIDES AND RENDER A BINDING DECISION TO SETTLE THE CONFLICT.

6. ACCOUNTABILITY

a. IF A PERSON WHO PROFESSSES TO BE A CHRISTIAN REFUSES TO BE RECONCILED, JESUS COMMANDS CHURCH LEADERS TO INTERVENE TO HOLD THEM ACCOUNTABLE TO SCRIPTURE IN ORDER TO PROMOTE REPENTANCE, JUSTICE, AND FORGIVENESS.

b. DIRECT CHURCH INVOLVEMENT IN CONFLICT BETWEEN CHRISTIANS IS OFTEN VIEWED NEGATIVELY AMONG CHRISTIANS TODAY... ESPECIALLY IF THEY ARE CHURCH LEADERS.

1) BUT, WHEN RESTORATION IS DONE IN LOVE IT CAN BE THE KEY TO SAVING RELATIONSHIPS AND PRESERVING CHURCH UNITY.

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4. **CONFLICT CAN PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES**

A. **PEACEMAKERS HAVE LEARNED TO VIEW CONFLICT NOT AS AN ACCIDENT, BUT AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO USE THE RESOURCES GOD HAS GIVEN US:**

1. TO **GLORIFY HIM...**
2. TO **SERVE OTHERS...**
3. TO **GROW TO BE MORE LIKE CHRIST**
4. TO **SHOW THAT WE TAKE THE GOSPEL SERIOUSLY**

B. **THE OPPORTUNITY TO GLORIFY GOD**

1. **1 Corinthians 10:31 (NASB)** Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

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2. **GOD IS GLORIFIED** WHEN HIS PEOPLE **DEPEND ON HIM** AND **TRUST HIM** AND **OBEY HIS COMMANDS...** **EVEN/ESPECIALLY** WHEN IT SEEMS TO PUT US AT A **DISADVANTAGE**.

3. **QUESTIONS** FOR WHEN WE ARE IN A **CONFLICT**:

a. **HOW CAN I HONOR GOD IN THIS SITUATION?...** **AM I HONORING GOD IN THIS SITUATION??**

b. **AM I SHOWING** THAT **JESUS HAS SAVED ME** AND IS **CHANGING ME THROUGH THIS SITUATION?**

C. THE **OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE OTHER PEOPLE**

1. **Ephesians 4:29 (NASB)** Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, **so that it will give grace to those who hear.**

2. **BY HELPING TO CARRY THEIR BURDENS.**

a. **Galatians 6:2 (NASB)** **Bear one another's burdens,** and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.

3. **HELP OTHERS CHANGE THROUGH CONSTRUCTIVE CONFRONTATION IN LOVE.**

a. **Galatians 6:1 (NASB)** Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; *each one* looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted.

b. **THE KEY WORD IS LOVE**

c. **DISCUSS:**

4. **TEACH AND ENCOURAGE OTHERS BY EXAMPLE... LIFESTYLE EVANGELISM.**

a. **Ephesians 5:2 (NASB)** and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

D. THE **OPPORTUNITY TO GROW TO BE LIKE CHRIST**

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1. **Romans 8:28-29a (NASB)** And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become **conformed to the image of His Son,**

2. THE **PROCESS OF SANCTIFICATION**

E. THE **OPPORTUNITY TO SHOW OTHERS THAT WE TAKE THE GOSPEL SERIOUSLY**

1. **Ephesians 4:1-3 (NASB)** Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

5. **PEACEMAKING AND OUR CHILDREN**

A. **CONFLICT SITUATIONS FOR OUR CHILDREN...**

1. **FIGHTS, ARGUMENTS, QUARRELS, AND DISAGREEMENTS ARE OTHER NAMES FOR CONFLICT.**

B. **DISCUSS: TEACHING OUR CHILDREN NOT TO ESCAPE CONFLICT SITUATIONS BY:**

1. **PRETENDING CONFLICT DOESN'T EXIST = DENIAL**

2. **PLACING ALL RESPONSIBILITY ON OTHERS = BLAME GAME**

3. **RUNNING AWAY FROM CONFLICT... AND THE RELATIONSHIP**

C. **DISCUSS: TEACHING OUR CHILDREN NOT TO ATTACK IN CONFLICT SITUATIONS BY:**

1. **SAYING HURTFUL OR UNKIND THINGS TO SOMEONE = PUT DOWNS**

2. **TALKING ABOUT SOMEONE TO DAMAGE THEIR REPUTATION = GOSSIP**

3. **USING PHYSICAL FORCE TO GET WHAT THEY WANT = BITING, SHOVING, OR FIGHTING.**

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D. **NEXT WEEK: TEACHING OUR CHILDREN TO CHOOSE PEACE IN CONFLICT.**