

Building a Culture of Peace in the Church

Culture of Peace: Where Christians are inspired, equipped, and assisted to live out the gospel in the conflicts of daily life.¹

Four Building Blocks of a Culture of Peace

1. *Passion for the Gospel*

People are excited by the gospel of Christ, and it is the dominant influence in their lives. We need to “fan into flame a passion for the gospel.”

The good news that Jesus died and rose again to save us from our sins and reconcile us to God (our *vertical reconciliation*) becomes the foundation of our *horizontal reconciliation* with each other.

Through the gospel, God provides both the motivation and the model for peacemaking.

2. *Pastoral Leadership*

a. *The Heart* – Pastoral leaders exhibit the *heart* of the shepherd to provide, protect, and guide. Without the heart, all the skills in the world will be of little use.

b. *Leading by Example* – Leaders are committed and equipped to model and apply peacemaking in their own lives. They don’t just tell their flock what to do – they model it.

c. *Seeking the Lost* – Leaders are committed and prepared to do the hard work of going after sheep who have strayed. If someone is caught in a conflict, the shepherd seeks after that person and does all s/he can to restore him/her to right relationship with God and others, even through loving, redemptive discipline.

3. *Peacemaking Theology*

We need a biblical and practical theology for resolving conflict.

“The Four G’s:”

- Glorify God
- Get the log out of your eye
- Gently restore
- Go and be reconciled

4. *Practical Assistance*

The leadership team of the church must be conflict coaches and mediators, and disciple others to become the same. With time, a church may develop a team of gifted, dedicated, and trained peacemakers to teach, coach, and mediate in conflict settings in the Church and in the lives of its members.

¹ *The Leadership Opportunity: Living Out the Gospel Where Conflict and Leadership Intersect*, p. 39.