



# Application Discussion Guide

## *Conflict Resolution vs. Reconciliation*

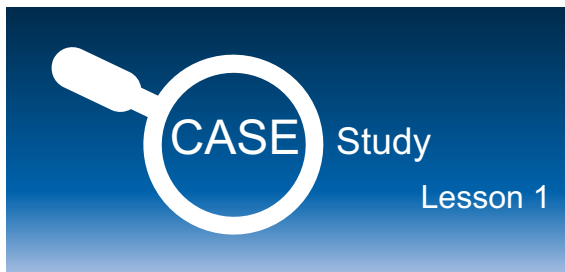
Self-paced Study ([www.aorhope.org/aor-gift](http://www.aorhope.org/aor-gift))

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### Case Studies and Application Questions

#### Use this guide for the following:

- For reconciling with someone:
  - Write down answers to the application questions for a conflict in your life.
- For Small group Bible study discussion:
  - Read the case studies. Discuss questions for the people identified in the case.
- For Pre-course work for *Coaching People through Conflict Practicum*:
  - Read the case studies. Answer questions from your Pre-Course Homework Worksheet.



Robert and Emily, adult siblings, disagree on how to provide care for their elderly mother, Esther. Esther has been living alone in her home, but her health has been declining over the last few years. Five weeks ago she fell and broke her hip. After a week in the hospital, she has been in a recovery center receiving care and therapy. Esther is ready to be released but cannot stay in her home alone anymore.

Years before (while Dad was living), Robert promised both his parents that he would never put them into a nursing home. Robert wants Mom to live with her children trading every other month – one month with Robert and his wife, and the next month with Emily and her husband. Emily believes that Mom should be moved into a permanent nursing facility where she can receive 24-hour care. Emily is worried that neither of them can provide the kind of care their mother needs. Esther wants to move back into her home. She knows that is not possible now, but she hopes that soon she can return home.

Emily and Robert have had a number of disagreements over the care of their mother, but on the day before Esther was to be released, they both lost their tempers in front of the social worker. Emily called her brother stupid and unrealistic. Robert accused his sister of being non-caring and unwilling to sacrifice for their mother. No decision was reached, and they left the social worker's office still bickering.

Esther, Robert and his wife, and Emily and her husband are all Christians.

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## Application

### Lesson 1

*These questions can apply to the above case study or to a current conflict from your personal life. For the case study, you can assume either Robert's or Emily's role. For a conflict from your life, apply these questions to yourself, writing out your answers.*

1. How have you contributed to this conflict?

Who has been affected by your sinful thoughts, words, or actions?

2. In spite of your sinful nature, how does your heavenly Father view:

a. you?

b. the person with whom you are in conflict?

3. In light of how your heavenly Father views you both:

a. What is your worth to God?

b. What is the other person's worth to God?

4. Review 1 John 3:1.

Whose are you?

What comfort does your relationship with God give you in the midst of this struggle?

5. In Christ, we are called as new creatures to put away our “old self” and put on our “new self” in Christ.
  - a. How can you put away your old self in this conflict?
  
  - b. How can you put on your new self in Christ?
  
  - c. What would your contrition and repentance look like?
  
6. Describe what material or substantive issues need to be resolved in your conflict.
  
  
7. Identify what relational issues need to be reconciled in your conflict.
  
  
8. Write a prayer asking for God’s help in resolving the material issues and reconciling with the other person.



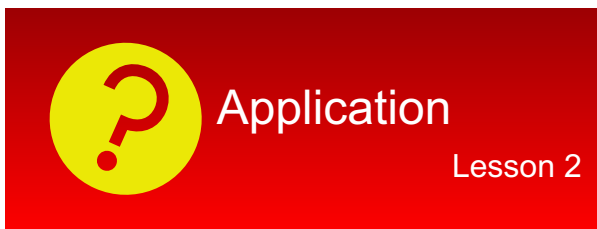
*Same Case Study as Lesson 1, continuing the discussion with different application questions.*

Robert and Emily, adult siblings, disagree on how to provide care for their elderly mother, Esther. Esther has been living alone in her home, but her health has been declining over the last few years. Five weeks ago she fell and broke her hip. After a week in the hospital, she has been in a recovery center receiving care and therapy. Esther is ready to be released but cannot stay in her home alone anymore.

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Esther, Robert and his wife, and Emily and her husband are all Christians.



*For the Case Study, put yourself into either Robert's or Emily's shoes. Use the questions below to understand his or her idols.*

*For personal application, consider a conflict where you may have felt one of the following: anger, bitterness, pride, fear, judgmental attitude, jealousy, or defensiveness. Reflect on the following questions to identify your underlying idols.*

Consider the idols listed in this lesson. Ask yourself the following questions to identify the idols with which you were struggling:

1. Improper desires for physical pleasure
  - a. What physical pleasure did you find yourself thinking about much of the time?
  - b. When a certain desire or expectation was not met, did you feel frustration, resentment, bitterness, or anger?
  - c. What was unsatisfying about the gifts God has given you?
  - d. How did you get even with the other person when you did not get what you wanted from him/her?
  
2. Pride and arrogance
  - a. How are your expectations of the other person magnifying your demands on him/her and your disappointment in his/her failure to meet your desires?
  - b. How are you judging the other person when your desires are not met?
  - c. How are you getting even with the other person when your desires are not met?
  - d. How have you communicated to the other person what you feel he/she must do?
  - e. How have you threatened the other person? (“Give me what I want or you will pay!”)

3. Love of money or material possessions

- a. What preoccupies your thoughts? (What is the first thing on your mind in the morning and/or the last thing at night?)
  
- b. Fill in this blank: “If only I had \_\_\_\_\_, then I would be happy, fulfilled, and secure.” What does this suggest to you about your trust in God for what you desire?
  
- c. When a certain desire or expectation is not met, do you feel frustration, resentment, bitterness, or anger?

4. Fear of man

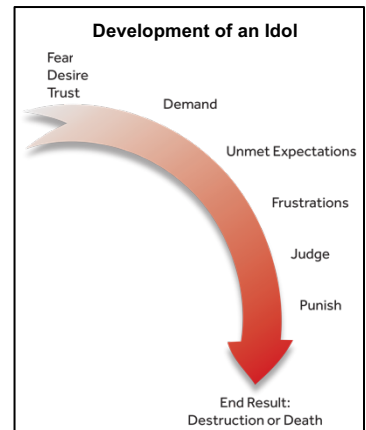
- a. Whose approval do you want most of all?
  
- b. Whom are you seeking to please at almost any cost?
  
- c. What do you want to preserve or avoid about your reputation?
  
- d. In this situation, what or whom do you fear most?

5. Good things that I want too much

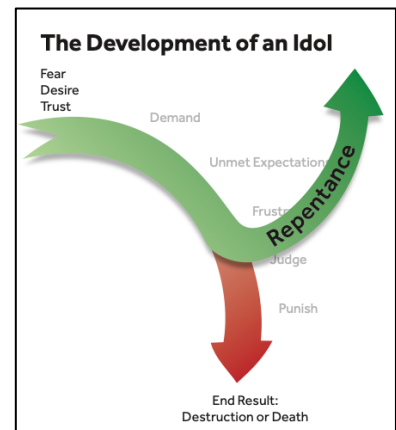
- a. What do you find yourself thinking about much of the time?
  
- b. What causes you the most worry? How has your anxiety replaced your trust in God?

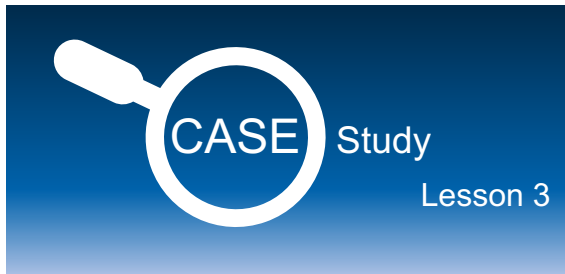
- c. Fill in this blank: “If only \_\_\_\_\_, then I would be happy, fulfilled, and secure.”  
What does this suggest to you about your trust in God for what you desire?
- d. When a certain desire or expectation is not met, do you feel frustration, resentment, bitterness, or anger?

6. What or whom have you sacrificed to get what you wanted?
7. If you do not repent of this pattern, what will be the destructive results?
8. What are some of the Commandments you have broken in this conflict?  
(Compare your thoughts, words, and actions to the explanations of the Ten Commandments.)



9. What hope is there for you?  
(See 1 John 1:9; Romans 5:8, 15:13; Ephesians 1:7.)
10. Write a prayer that reflects your confession and your thanks to God for His forgiveness. Include a petition for strength to overcome these temptations in the future.





Kyle and Nicole were engaged to be married in three months. For several years, Kyle had been working as a production manager in a company that produced specialized components for the heavy equipment industry. Business was booming. His boss offered to promote him to plant manager if he would agree to do whatever the boss asked him to do. The promotion meant a raise plus large bonuses. Kyle quickly agreed, thinking that the increased income would be great for a new marriage. He didn't ask his boss what was meant by "do whatever the boss asked."

Two weeks into his new position, his boss asked him again about his commitment. Kyle affirmed his agreement, apprehensive of where this was leading. The boss told him that two of the plant employees were older (early 60's), and that meant that their seniority wages and health insurance were costing the company more expense than younger employees. In addition, they weren't as energetic as the younger guys on the team. So, Kyle needed to begin documenting everything these two guys did wrong so that Kyle could justify firing them in the next 45 days. His boss promised to give him a bonus equaling 1/3 of the savings in annual health insurance costs, which would amount to a few thousand dollars.

Kyle's heart sank. He respected both of the older workers, knowing that both men were solid workers. Their families were dependent upon their incomes. Kyle feared it would be difficult for them at their ages to find new jobs that paid as well. He regretted his promise to "do whatever" just to get the promotion, and he resented his boss for setting him up.

Kyle began to document, even exaggerate, the severity of the two men's mistakes. He raised his voice with them whenever they slipped up, letting them know they were being written up. Guilt started to overcome him as a Christian. Their mistakes were no worse than others' mistakes, including his own. He knew what he was doing was wrong – even evil. He was unable to sleep well at night. He became moody and snapped at Nicole for the smallest things. She asked him what was wrong, but Kyle was reluctant to tell her what was bugging him. In fact, he hadn't told anyone. He felt trapped and began to fall into a depression. Nicole wondered if her fiancé was having second thoughts about the wedding.



*These questions can apply to the above case study or to a current conflict from your personal life. For the case study, assume Kyle's role. For a conflict from your life, apply these questions to yourself, writing out your answers.*

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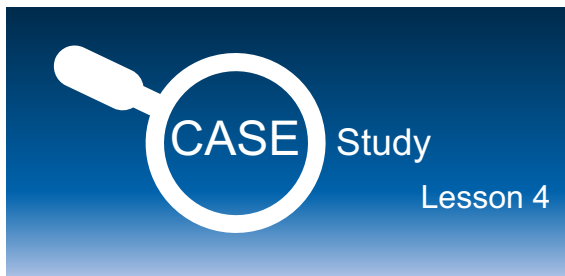


1. Which of the following idols are you guilty of in this situation? (Review the application questions at the end of Lesson 2 if you have not done so.)
  - a. Improper desires for physical pleasure
  - b. Pride and arrogance
  - c. Love of money or material possessions
  - d. Fear of man
  - e. Good things that I want too much
  
2. Besides the individuals with whom you are in conflict, which others are being affected by your thoughts, words, or actions?
  
3. What is keeping you from confessing your sins against God before one of the following:
  - Your pastor?
  
  - A mature Christian with whom you are not related but whom you trust?
  
  - A mature Christian with whom you are related and who loves you?
  - a. Pray that God will take away your fear of confessing before another person and give you courage.
  - b. If you continue to struggle with your guilt and yet are reluctant to confess to someone who will proclaim God's forgiveness to you, seek out your pastor or a mature Christian for advice and encouragement.
  
4. Application of confession and hearing God's forgiveness proclaimed to you:
  - Make an appointment with your pastor or a mature Christian believer.
  - Explain that you desire to confess your sin to God before another person so that you might audibly hear God's forgiveness proclaimed to you by another Christian.
    - If the person is not your pastor, ask for his or her commitment to keep what you confess confidential (pastors vow to keep private confession confidential).
    - Tell the person that you have a simple form that will help guide you both.

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- When you meet, you may give some background of the situation if helpful for *you*. But such background is not necessary for the person hearing your confession.
  - Consider using the form *Proclaiming God's Forgiveness* (pages 22-26 in this guide). Using that form, you can confess your sins to God, and the person hearing your confession can proclaim God's forgiveness to you.
  - Your confession may be general or it may include specifics. God knows more about your sin than you do, and He does not need details in order for Him to forgive. However, if a specific sin is troubling you, confessing that particular sin aloud will help you to "own" your sin. More importantly, when God's forgiveness is proclaimed to you, it will help you to "own" the forgiveness, providing you with special comfort and assurance.
  - Whether or not the form is used, be sure to request that the person hearing your confession specifically use Bible verses in proclaiming God's forgiveness (e.g., see the verses listed on page 26 of this guide).
  - Ask the person to pray for you.
5. Write your reflections on confessing before another believer and hearing God's forgiveness audibly proclaimed to you.

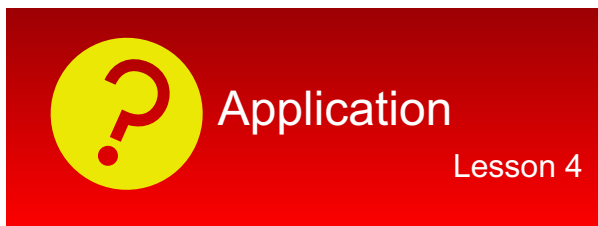


Matt is a 17-year-old with his new driving license. His parents have a house rule that Matt is not allowed to drive without first gaining permission from them. One evening while Matt's parents were gone, Matt's friend Jake called. Jake had just broken up with his girlfriend and was upset. Without contacting his parents, Matt immediately went out of the house, taking his father's Jeep. When backing the Jeep out of the driveway, Matt backed into a retaining wall and broke a taillight. But he was in such a hurry that he didn't notice. He then picked up Jake and drove around so that they could talk. He returned home before his parents and parked the Jeep back in the driveway.

When his parents came home, his father saw the damaged taillight. He checked the mileage on the Jeep and noticed that the seat had been pushed back and the mirrors changed. He came into the house to confront his son. His father raised his voice, accusing Matt of taking the Jeep without permission and damaging it.

Matt denied taking the Jeep. Matt's dad became angry, yelling and accusing him. Matt responded in anger, denying his actions and showing disrespect for his father.

Without resolving the matter, Matt walked out on his father muttering, "Whatever!"



*These questions can apply to the above case study or to a current conflict from your personal life. For the case study, assume either Matt's or his father's role. For a conflict from your life, apply these questions to yourself, writing out your answers.*

1. If you could go back in time and do anything differently in your encounter with the other person, what would that be?

Reflecting on your answer, what have you failed to do as a child of God?

2. Consider whether you have any bitterness against the other person. Read Ephesians 4:26-27.

How long have you been angry?

How has your bitterness become a foothold for the devil?

3. Reflect on your words in your conflict with the other person. Compare them to Ephesians 4:29-32.

What words have you spoken to the other person that were not helpful for building up?

4. Think about others you have talked to about this situation. Comparing your speech to the Commandment on not bearing false witness, how have you sinned? (Note especially the *proactive* requirements of this Commandment, such as those in Proverbs 11:13; 1 Corinthians 13:7; and Philippians 4:8.)

5. Read Philippians 2:14-15. Whether or not you talked to someone else, have you grumbled or complained about the other person?

6. What behaviors did you exhibit that failed to follow God's commands?

7. Compare your thoughts, words, and actions to what the Bible describes in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

How have you failed to love the other people involved?

8. Prepare to express your confession to the other person. Use the Guidelines for Confession to write out the words you could use.

### **Guidelines for Confession**

- Go as a beggar.
- Own your sin.
- Identify your sins according to God's Word.
- Express sorrow for hurt your sin has caused.
- Commit to changing your behavior with God's help.
- Be willing to bear the consequences.
- Ask for forgiveness.
- Trust in Christ's forgiveness.

9. Write a prayer for God's help in confessing to the other person. Or, use the following:

Gentle Savior, I am often blind to my own faults. By nature I want to defend and protect myself. But you did not protect yourself when dying on the cross for my sins. Instead, you willingly laid down your life for me, taking on my punishment, that I may be restored to God and live eternally in heaven. Help me see my faults in conflict, especially my dispute with [name]. Grant me insight that I may see where I have failed you and others. Assure me of your love as you guide me in confession that I may hear your promise of forgiveness. Then, according to your will, grant my reconciliation with all those I have sinned against. I ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.



Amber, Nicole, and Kaitlyn shared everything. They played together on the college volleyball team. Between classes and practice, they always could be found together. The girls loved skiing in the winter and running in the warmer months. After college, each found employment in the same city where they attended church together. Nicole married first, then Amber. Kaitlyn remained single. But their friendship continued to flourish.

That is, until one day...

Amber and Kaitlyn exchanged some texts where Kaitlyn complained about Nicole. Kaitlyn thought that Nicole was acting arrogant because she married first, and Kaitlyn felt like Nicole was putting her down for not having a boyfriend. Amber defended Nicole and wrote some curt responses to Kaitlyn, who wrote back with hurtful words. Amber forwarded the whole exchange to Nicole. Nicole and Amber exchanged a flurry of texts in which they grumbled about all of Kaitlyn's idiosyncrasies and how she must be jealous of them. It didn't take long before Kaitlyn learned about the other two "ganging up" on her. She responded with angry texts to both of these friends. Before long, they were posting negative things about each other on Facebook and "unfriending" each other.

Once inseparable, Amber and Nicole now avoided Kaitlyn. It wasn't difficult to steer clear of one another, except at church. So they separately concluded that the best way to not see one another was to stop going to worship.



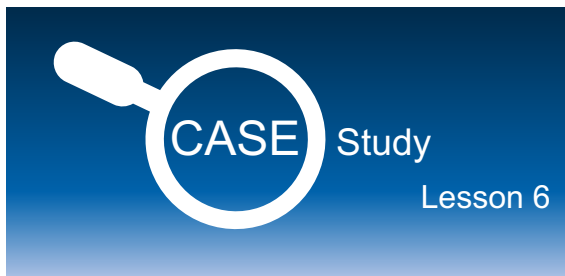
*These questions can apply to the above case study or to a current conflict from your personal life. For the case study, assume any of the three women's roles. For a conflict from your life, apply these questions to yourself, writing out your answers.*

1. What has caused the hurt in your relationship:
  - For you personally?

- For someone else you care about?
  
  - For the person who hurt you and others you care about?
2. How has your relationship with the other person changed?
  
  3. What grieves you the most about what has happened?
  
  4. What is keeping you from forgiving the other person?
  
  5. How has your strained or broken relationship affected:
    - Your attitude toward the other person?
  
    - Your attitude toward yourself?
  
    - Your attitude toward others?
  
    - Your relationship with God?
  
  6. What are some of the consequences of your unforgiveness?

7. You know that our heavenly Father commands that we forgive others as He forgives us. List at least ten sins from your life that God has forgiven through Christ.
  - Does God offer forgiveness to you for your bitterness and unforgiveness?
  
  - Reviewing this lesson, what Scripture passages give you comfort and assurance of God's forgiveness for all your sins?
  
8. Has Christ died for the sins of the person who hurt you or others you care about?
  - Reviewing this lesson, identify Scripture passages that support your answer.
  
9. For which sins of people did Christ not die?
  
10. Reflecting back on this lesson, what Scripture passages promise God's strength to forgive as He has forgiven you?
  
11. Write a prayer to God. You might include:
  - Confessing your sins of unforgiveness, bitterness, grudges, hatred, or anger that you may have in your heart.
  - Thanking Him for the forgiveness of all your sins.
  - Seeking His help to forgive as He has forgiven you.
  - Asking God to bless the person who has wronged you.
  - Praying that God reconciles your relationship with the other person.





*Note that this is a continuation of the case from Lesson 4.*

17-year-old Matt and his dad just finished fighting about Matt's use of his dad's car without permission. Matt walked out on his father at the end of the argument and went to his room to sulk.

Matt's father felt guilty about the fight. While he knew he needed to address his son's sins (taking the car without permission; lying about it; treating his father with disrespect), he realized that the manner in which he confronted his son was ungodly. He let his anger get out of control (Ephesians 4:26-27), he called his son various names (Ephesians 4:29), and he provoked his son to anger and failed to discipline him in a loving way (Ephesians 6:4). He failed to show him the love and forgiveness of Christ, even while disciplining him (see Hebrews 12:7-11; 1 Peter 4:8; Ephesians 4:32).

Matt's father took the form *Proclaiming God's Forgiveness* (pages 22-26 of this guide) and approached his son's bedroom. Knocking quietly on the door, he asked to come in. Matt responded, "Whatever."

The father began by expressing sorrow over losing his temper and attacking his son. He asked for Matt's forgiveness. Matt quickly responded with, "Sure, Dad." This led Matt to admit taking the car, saying that he didn't realize he had damaged it. Matt explained that his friend called, depressed over a breakup with his girlfriend. Matt dropped everything and immediately drove over to pick up his friend and drive around so that they could talk in private.

Matt's dad then introduced him to the form and asked if they could try to confess their sins to God and one another using the pamphlet. Matt agreed. Matt's father confessed first, specifically naming his own sins, asking God and Matt for forgiveness. Using the words of the form, Matt proclaimed God's forgiveness to his father and then offered his personal forgiveness. Matt then confessed his sin to God and his father, identifying some of his particular sins. Matt's father proclaimed God's forgiveness to him and offered personal forgiveness.

Matt ended up paying for the damage to the car. Most importantly, father and son reconciled through mutual confession and forgiveness.



## Application

### Lesson 6

*These questions can apply to the above case study or to a current conflict from your personal life. For the case study, assume the father's role. For a conflict from your life, apply these questions to yourself, writing out your answers.*

1. How have you prepared to restore the other person with forgiveness? (If you need help with this, review the application questions from Lesson 5.)
2. Before seeking to restore the other person, what kinds of logs do you need to get out of your own eye first (Matthew 7:1-5)? (If you need help with this, see the application questions at the end of Lesson 4.)
3. Review 2 Timothy 2:24-26.  
What are your responsibilities in helping the person with whom you are in conflict?  
  
What are God's responsibilities and *not* yours?
4. How have you failed to restore the other person with gentleness?
5. Review Galatians 6:1. Identify the sins that you believe have ensnared the other person.
6. If these were your sins, describe what another person could do that would help free you from your entanglement.

7. Identify a time and place that will provide safety for both you and the other person to meet together.

8. Prepare your words by writing out your opening comments.

- Begin by assuring the other person of your care and Christian love.
- Acknowledge behaviors and motives of the other person that are godly.
- Confess your own sins that you have not yet addressed.
- Next, if you were personally affected, refer to the behavior that caused you personal hurt or harm. Using an “I statement,” indicate how you were personally hurt or affected:

“I feel \_\_\_\_\_ when you \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_. As a result, I \_\_\_\_\_.”

9. Prepare yourself to listen. The other person will not likely hear anything you have to say until he or she feels that you have listened to him or her. Remember basic skills in active listening:

- Waiting – Be patient. Wait until the other person finishes speaking before responding. Don’t plan your response until the other person is finished speaking.
- Attending – Maintain eye contact and other body language that communicates your genuine interest. Nod occasionally or respond with short phrases that indicate you are paying attention (e.g., *I see, uh-huh, I understand*, etc.).
- Clarifying – Ask questions to test your understanding (e.g., *When you said \_\_\_\_\_, did you mean \_\_\_\_\_?*).
- Reflecting – Repeat short portions back to the person. This communicates that you are listening closely and allows for the other person to restate things if needed. It also helps the other person hear back what she has said, which may help her rethink her responses to the situation.
- Agreeing – Look for opportunities to agree. When you agree with some portions, the other person believes that you are open-minded and really listening. He will much more likely hear what you have to say if he believes you are balanced in your assessment.

10. Prepare open-ended questions to help the other person discover for himself the offensive behaviors and own them. For example:

- “When you [describe the behavior], what were you hoping would be the result?”
- “If you had the opportunity, what would you have done differently?”
- “If someone else had done the same thing to you, how would you have felt?”
- “Now that you have had time to reflect, what words or actions do you regret?”
- “What could you have done that would be more reflective of your faith in Christ?”

Write out some questions:

11. Anticipate the person’s reaction to your questions and plan your response.

- How will you respond if she immediately repents?
- How will you respond if he becomes angry?
- How will you respond if she tries to justify what she did?
- How will you respond if he tries to explain things away?

12. What will be your next steps if he is not yet repentant?

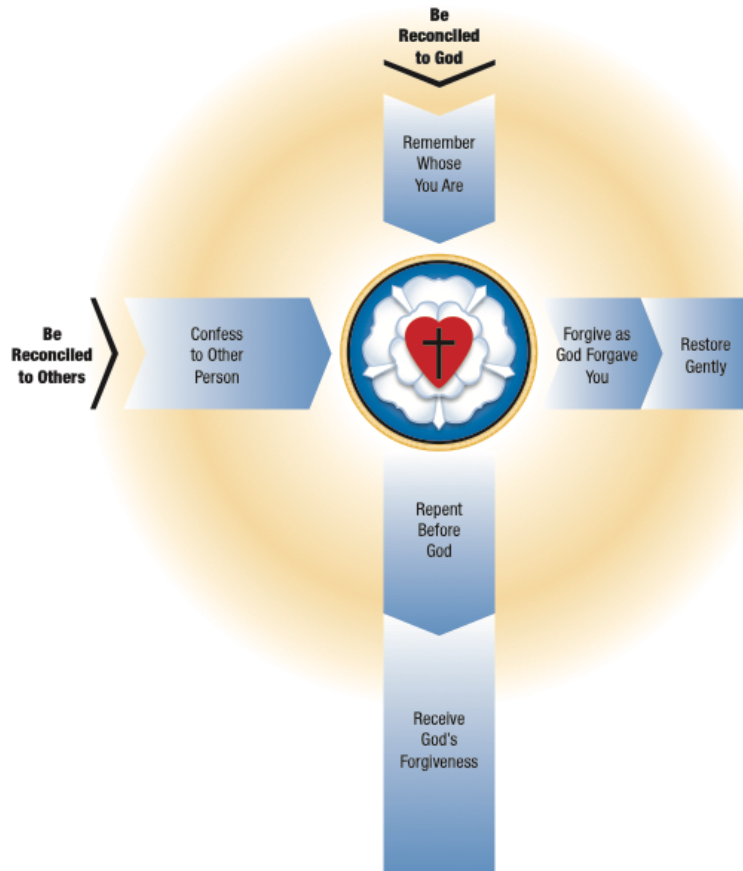
13. How will you proclaim God's forgiveness and then your own?

Consider using the form *Proclaiming God's Forgiveness* (pages 22-26 in this guide) in which you can both confess and receive forgiveness.

14. Write a prayer seeking God's guidance for both of you.

# Proclaiming God's Forgiveness

## Go and Be Reconciled: *What Does This Mean?*



*Therefore, confess your sins to one another (James 5:16).*

*Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another,  
as God in Christ forgave you (Ephesians 4:32)*

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*Cultivating Lifestyles of Reconciliation*

# Proclaiming God's Forgiveness

When someone confesses his sins, whether against God or us or other people, Christians have the privilege of proclaiming God's forgiveness.

Although the Bible does not require a specific form for confession and forgiveness, these forms provide simple ways to confess sin to our pastor, fellow Christian, or family member and receive the good news of God's forgiveness.

## The Development of an Idol

We slide down the slippery slope of idolatry when we elevate a fear, desire, or trust into a demand. When expectations are not met, frustration increases. We judge those who will not give us what we want and we punish them. Left unchecked, idolatry results in destruction or death of the idol and/or the person worshipping it. In other words, idolatry leads to death. (James 1:14-15)

## Guidelines for Confession

Confession and forgiveness lead to life (2 Corinthians 7:10). Expressing godly sorrow in confession reflects true contrition which is a result of repentance. (James 5:16)

**Go as a beggar.** (Matthew 5:23-24; Luke 15:19; Luke 18:13-14)

**Own your sin.** (Numbers 5:5-7; Psalm 32:3-5; Psalm 51:3-4)

"I sinned against God and you when I . . ."

"I was wrong . . ."

**Identify your sins according to God's Word.** (Exodus 20:1-17)

Sinful thoughts, words, and actions. (Matthew 15:19; Ephesians 4:29; Galatians 5:19-21)

Sins of omission (e.g., failing to love, as in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7)

**Express sorrow for hurt your sin has caused.** (Luke 15:21)

"I am sorry for how my actions hurt you when..."

If unsure how you hurt, ask! ("Can you help me understand how my actions hurt you?")

**Commit to changing your behavior with God's help.**

(Matthew 3:8)

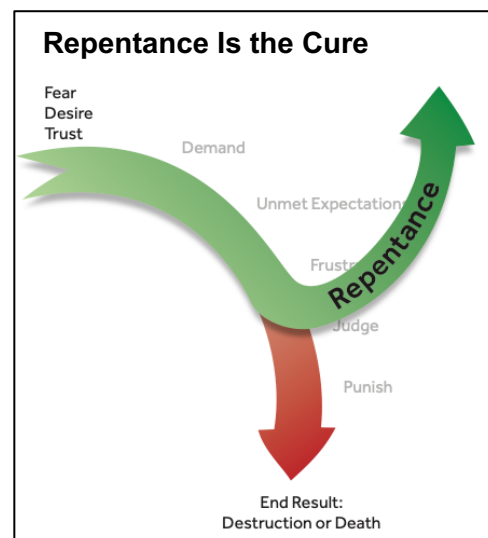
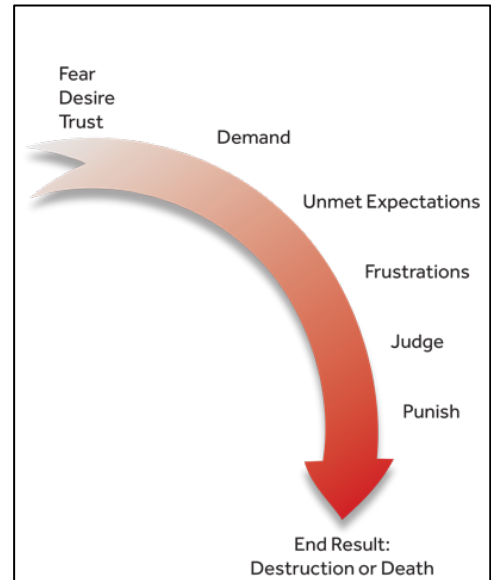
"With God's help, I will not do this again."

**Be willing to bear the consequences.** (Luke 15:21; 19:8)

**Ask for forgiveness.** (Genesis 50:17; Psalm 32:5; Luke 18:13)

**Trust in Christ's forgiveness.** (Colossians 1:13-14; Ephesians 1:7-10)

Regardless if the other person forgives, trust in Christ's forgiveness.



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## The Confession

Confession of sin is a private matter. A Christian hearing a confession and proclaiming God's forgiveness is obligated to respect the confidential nature of a confession.

When confessing, you may prepare by meditating on the Ten Commandments and by praying Psalm 6, 7, 13, 15, 51, 121, or 130. If you are not burdened with particular sins, do not torture yourself to search for or invent other sins. However, if particular sins trouble you, naming them out loud will help you own your sins. Moreover, it will help comfort you for those specific sins as God's forgiveness proclaimed to you.

**NOTE:** *When confessing sin, it is not necessary to use any specific rite or prepared words. However, some may find it helpful to use the following:*

*The person hearing the confession begins:*

Since Adam and Eve sinned, all people have been born in sin. We sin against God by disobeying his commandments, and we also sin against others around us. Nevertheless, God promises in the Bible to forgive us when we confess our sins because Jesus died for all our sins (see Psalm 32:2-5 or 1 John 1:8-9). Thus, you are invited to confess your sins so that you can hear God's forgiveness proclaimed for you.

*The person confessing prays:*

**Heavenly Father,**

**I know that you created me and love me.**

**You have taught me in the Bible how to live as your child.**

**But I was born a sinner.**

**And I have sinned against you and others around me,**

**by what I have done, and by what I haven't done.**

**I deserve your wrath and eternal punishment.**

**I am sorry for my sin, known and unknown.**

(optional) **I am especially sorry for ...** [mention specific sins that trouble your conscience]

**Have mercy on me.**

**Please forgive me for Jesus' sake.**

**Help me to live in the way that you teach me.**

(optional – you may pray additional thoughts to God.)

**In Jesus' name. Amen.**

*If you sinned against the one hearing your confession, you may also say:*

**I have also sinned against you, and I ask you for forgiveness, too.**



## Fellow Christian Proclaiming Forgiveness

(Pastors may provide another form for individual confession and forgiveness.)

*Upon hearing a person's confession, a fellow Christian announces God's forgiveness:*

God loves you. He promises to be merciful to you and strengthen your faith. Do you believe that God's promises of forgiveness given in the Bible are written for all God's children, including you?

**I do.**

Then hear and believe what God's Word promises you (*use one or more Bible verses, including those on the following page*).

In 1 John 1:9 God promises: "If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

Through Romans 8:1, the Lord declares: "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

In 1 Peter 2:24, God assures us: "[Christ] himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed."

Therefore, \_\_\_\_\_ [name], believe this Good News: For Jesus' sake, God forgives you all your sins.

**Amen.**

*If the person confessing has also asked for forgiveness from the one hearing the confession, these words should also be spoken:*

As God through Christ has forgiven both you and me, I also forgive you your sins against me.

**Amen.**

May the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

**Amen.**

A prayer of thanksgiving may follow. Psalms 30, 31, 32, 34, 103, and 118 are also appropriate. The one hearing confession may know additional Scripture passages with which to comfort and strengthen the faith of those who have great burdens of conscience or are sorrowful and distressed. He may include some of the passages listed under "God's Word Proclaiming Forgiveness" from the following page.

# God's Word Proclaiming Forgiveness

When proclaiming God's forgiveness, comfort the person with the assurance of God's love by reading Bible passages that proclaim God's grace. Personalize the promise by inserting in the verse the person's name and personal pronouns as noted in the brackets below.

*Blessed is [Name] whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is [Name,] against whom the LORD counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit (Psalm 32:1-2).*

*For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward [Name] who fears him; as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove [your] transgressions from [you] (Psalm 103:11-12).*

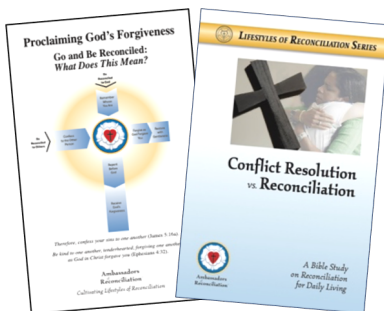
*[Jesus] was delivered up for our trespasses and was raised for our justification. Therefore, [Name,] since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in the glory of God (Romans 4:25-5:2).*

*There is therefore now no condemnation for [Name] who [is] in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:1).*

*[Name,] for our sake [God] made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him [you] might become the righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21).*

*[Name,] He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds [Name,] you have been healed (1 Peter 2:24).*

*[Name], the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses [you] from all sin (1 John 1:7).*



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