

Introduction: Three approaches to peace

- Inward
- Outward
- Upward

The world's peace

The absence of disturbance and hostility, free from internal and external strife.

God's peace: Shalom

1. Complete soundness or wholeness of health
2. Harmony in relationships
3. Success and fulfillment of purpose
4. Victory over one's enemies

²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Jesus of Nazareth – John 14:27 (NIV)

With what one person would you most like to be at peace?

Choosing peace in relational conflict

Philippians 4:1-5

The context:

¹ Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!

Philippians 4:1 (NIV)

The plea for unity:

² I plead with Euodia and I plead with Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.

Philippians 4:2 (NIV)

The request for competent counsel:

³ Yes, and I ask you, my true yokefellow, to help these women who have [contended] with me for the gospel, along with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

Philippians 4:3 (BSB)

The command concerning relational focus:

⁴ Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

Philippians 4:4 (NIV)

The command concerning personal responsibility:

⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

Philippians 4:5 (NIV)

5 ways to diffuse relational conflict:

1. Resolve to stop _____ . Philippians 4:1

2. Re-evaluate your _____ . Philippians 4:2

3. Get competent, outside _____ . Philippians 4:3

4. Refuse to allow _____ relationship to ruin your life. Philippians 4:4

5. Remember a right _____ is more important
than being _____ . Philippians 4:5

Discussion Questions:

1. On a scale of 1-10, rank the level of stress and concern you are currently experiencing from any problem relationship.
2. Why does relational conflict rob us of peace? What price are you paying to allow this to continue?
3. What specific steps does the apostle Paul give to help resolve relational conflict? List them and discuss each.
4. Is there a relationship in your life that calls for you to follow this pattern? When and how will you follow God's plan for peace (as far as it depends on you)?
5. Who could help you turn your good intention into action this week?