

“Rejoice always; pray without ceasing; in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” (2 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

14. I will persist in believing that God will yet use me in the future even if I have been accused wrongly or was the guilty, but now repentant, offender.

“Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me away from Your presence and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and sustain me with a willing spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, and sinners will be converted to You.” (Psalm 52:10-13)

15. I will refuse to let Satan, the archenemy of believers, gain the ultimate victory in this conflict.

“. . . so that no advantage would be taken of us by Satan, for we are not ignorant of his schemes.” (2 Corinthians 2:11)

“The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.” (Romans 16:20)

You will notice that the direction of these resolves is downward so that all who are responsive will be in the best position for God’s grace. Grace is often missing in interpersonal conflicts, but it is what we need the most. The apostle Peter said, “God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Therefore humble yourself under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you at the proper time, casting all your anxiety on Him, because He cares for you” (1 Peter 5:5-7).

15 Resolves for Maintaining Spiritual Balance in Severe Interpersonal Conflicts

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The pain of interpersonal conflict may seem too acute to bear. Sometimes we see these conflicts erupt suddenly among families, or between church members, or at work or school. They may involve serious allegations that tend to rip people apart in ways that seem irreparable. In these most severe ruptures of confidence, when the necrosis of sin is eating up the lives of those involved, is it possible to rise above and maintain a spiritual composure? Certainly that must be so. But we have to apply biblical principles ruthlessly, without wavering.

Sin must be confronted when a person is truly abusive to you. If you are in such a relationship, seek counsel from a pastor or Christian counselor. Don't feel ashamed to deal with the issue. It will be the best thing for you and the abusive person. God has clearly stated: "If your brother sins, go and show him his fault" (Mt. 18:15). What follows in Matthew 18 is a process of church discipline leading to removal from the church if the person is not repentant. Yet, in the middle of it all, a grace-filled attitude about the painful struggle you are going through will help you deal with the issue in a way that honors God. You must do all you can to find peace and joy and to remain confident in Christ. Following Christ's example when he suffered unjustly will help.

Here are fifteen areas of obedience that will bring personal peace, assure that God’s reputation is honored in our lives, and improve dramatically the possibility for reconciliation. I have stated them as personal resolves since they demand our action, determination and faith:

1. I will embrace whatever means God may permit to make me more humble and therefore more dependent on Him, no matter how damaging to my reputation or ambition.

“Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.” (2 Corinthians 12:10)
2. I will seek to peacefully and humbly resolve the conflict face to face immediately, unless it is providentially impossible to do so.

“Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go: first be

reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.” (Matthew 5:23-24)

3. I will thoroughly repent of any known sin in my life, and will sincerely express my repentance with those who are concerned, even if there is blame on the other side.
“Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline; therefore be zealous and repent.” (Revelation 3:19)
4. I will be painfully accurate in my words about myself, even if it embarrasses or condemns me (yet I will not be intentionally and unnecessarily hurtful or demeaning to others).
“Lying lips are an abomination to the Lord, but those who deal faithfully are His delight.” (Proverbs 12:22)
5. I will believe and speak the truth (i.e. what God says), and not the lie (i.e. what anyone else might say, including me, if my thoughts are contrary to His word) by grounding myself daily through meditation on God’s word.
“If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” (John 8:31-32)
6. I will make affection for God and others my great ambition no matter how deeply I have been hurt.
“Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.” (1 Peter 4:8)
7. I will value fellowship with Christ in suffering as one of the high callings of life even if accused unjustly.
“Blessed are you when people insult you and persecute you, and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of Me. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward in heaven is great; for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” (Matthew 5:11-12)
8. I will treat anxiety as an insipid enemy and a sign to prompt me to build up my faith by seeking God’s perspective found in reading the Bible carefully and constantly.

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:8)

9. I will gladly leave all vengeance to God, who sees and evaluates with perfection.
“Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. . . . If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,’ says the Lord. But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.’ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:17-21)
10. I will forgive from my heart any time I’m asked to forgive, not analyzing whether the offending person is worthy, has perfect motives, or is adequately repentant.
“Then Peter came and said to Him, ‘Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Up to seven times?’ Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.’” (Matthew 18:21-22)
11. I will cry out to God that His commands would be accomplished in the lives of all involved, but will fully accept His sovereign will even when they are not.
“Your kingdom come. Your will be done.” (Matthew 6:10)
12. I will entrust myself to the one who judges rightly, just as Christ did, even when I am misunderstood.
“Therefore, those also who suffer according to the will of God shall entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right.” (1 Peter 4:19)
13. I will give thanks in everything, and rejoice in the Lord always, for this is safe for me.
“Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.” (Philippians 3:1)