

FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION:

(From Resolving Everyday Conflict Participant Guide)

1. What struck you about Marion Jones's confession in the video? What may have convinced you that it was genuine?
2. If someone caused a significant loss in your life, felt deeply remorseful, and wanted to be reconciled with you, what would have to happen for you to fully trust that person again?
3. What makes an apology "less than believable" to you? How do you usually feel after receiving one these-followed by a request for blanket forgiveness?
4. Do you trust some people more than you do others? If so, on what basis do you decide this?
5. Why does making a specific, effective apology increase your trustworthiness?

One of the purposes of making an effective apology is to model how you would like the other person to respond in regard to his or her contribution to the conflict.

Address Everyone Involved: Why do you think it's important to address the concerns of everyone who may have been impacted by your words and actions? What are some common reasons to avoid doing this?

Avoid "ifs" and "buts": Why does qualifying or blame-shifting always discredit the apologies in which they are wrapped?

Admit Specifically: Why do blanket apologies seem to water down an offender's admission? What can people avoid (or deny later) by not being specific? Why do you think it is important to clearly identify what was actually said or done when it comes to confession?

Acknowledge the Hurt: What tends to happen to a person's level of defensiveness when he or she hears an acknowledgment of the losses that person has suffered caused by the conflict?

Accept the Consequences: Why does restitution, even when it's just symbolic, have a such a powerful effect on someone who's been hurt?

Alter (Change) Your Behavior: Why is reconciliation dependent upon a high confidence that the conflict-provoking behaviors are not going to be repeated?

Ask for Forgiveness: Why do all the previous steps "set the stage" for reconciliation?

Is there someone with whom you can go through these steps this week? If so, call that person and set up a time to meet.

SORRY NOT SORRY

Accepting responsibility and true apologies

We continue personal peacemaking in our Peace with Others Series by revealing the rarest speech in North America—true apology. People know how to judge and cancel but to apologize and move into conciliation? That is rare. This is the speech of a beloved community Dr. Martin Luther King believed was necessary for all to have freedom. We need Jesus' teaching and Spirit at work. Join us as we look at accepting responsibility.

KEY TEXTS: *Proverbs 28:13, 2 Corinthians 7:9-10, 1 John 1:8*

REVIEW OF FOUR "GS"

- The power of the gospel: What Jesus did changes everything
- First G: Go to higher ground/glorifying God - fully alive humans
- Second G: Get real about yourself/Get the log out of your own eye
 - Don't focus on the other - start with what you did
 - Look for your idols and remove them with new affections—desires can be trained by habit.
 - Dealing with Heart Idols
 - Repent and confess it to God. Acts 3:19
 - Replace idol with worship Psalm 37:4
 - Hearts are idol factories...
 - James Smith, Part 1:Chapter 1 Homo Liturgicus: The Human Person as Lover Desiring the Kingdom 39ff.

WHAT ABOUT MY RIGHTS?

One must realize that God sometimes calls us to give up our rights for a bigger kingdom purpose. In the Kingdom, rights are privileges.

- Stewardship helps when thinking of rights. Paul gave up his right to be paid for ministry while arguing forcefully that pastors should be paid once a church is established. On the other hand, when he allowed himself to be flogged by the Philippians authorities and then insisted that they apologize to him, he alarmed them and vividly reminded them of their responsibility to administer justice. (Acts 16).
 - “Will exercising my rights honour God by showing the power of the gospel in my life?”
 - “Will exercising my rights advance God’s kingdom—or will it advance only my interests at the expense of his kingdom?”
 - “Will exercising my rights benefit others?”
 - “Is exercising my rights essential for my own well-being?”
- Stewardship NEVER means preserving everything you have. Refusing to lay down any rights or sacrifice any property for the Gospel and peace is a notion condemned by Jesus. (Matthew 25:24-27) Jesus wants us to invest our resources wisely to gain a maximum return for His kingdom. We protect ourselves and our rights from wasteful sacrifices, but this means we’re willing to expend them on spiritually profitable ventures. Seed must be sacrificed to reap a crop.

TRANSITION

- Bad apologies

- "An apology or confession is not about escaping the consequences or "moving on." It's about healing a hurt or restoring the wounded."

REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION

"Worldly sorrow means feeling sad because you got caught doing something wrong or because you must suffer unpleasant consequences of your actions, such as a financial loss, a broken marriage, a damaged reputation, or nagging guilt. ANY normal person will feel regretful when faced with these unpleasant circumstances. Before long, however, worldly sorrow dies away, and most people begin to behave just as they did before...the simply try harder not to get caught again" (Sande, Peacemaker, 118).

SEVEN "A"’S OF GOOD APOLOGY

Address...

Avoid...

Admit...

Acknowledge...

Accept...

Alter...

Ask...

FINAL WORD

- Remember to allow...
- Don't use your confession to point out sin in others.
- Are you really sorry?