

Week 3

Peacemaking

*“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you,
live at peace with everyone.”*

Romans 12:18

When was the last time you got into an argument with someone? Maybe it was with someone at school or at church or perhaps with someone in your own family. It can happen to all of us.

Sometimes our arguments and disagreements don't last very long. That may be because the argument is over something relatively small or unimportant. But sometimes our arguments aren't so easy to fix, especially if they're with someone you trust or with someone you thought was your friend. Those types of arguments can often be the hardest to solve, because they can be so hurtful and personal.

When you've been arguing with someone, what should you do? You could go to the other person and apologize, but what if the argument was the other person's fault? And what if the other person doesn't ever come to you and tell you that they are sorry?

Romans 12:18 tells us that God wants *you* to be the one to make the first move to make things right whenever you're fighting with someone. He wants *you* to do whatever *you* can to live at peace with the other person, even if that person was completely to blame for the argument. That sounds really difficult to do, but we need to remember that our relationships are typically much more important to God than whatever it is that we're arguing about.

And on top of that, we need to seek to make peace with others because that's exactly what Jesus did for us. Jesus was our peacemaker! The Bible tells us in Ephesians 2:1-5 that all of us were in a fight with God. We were always doing the wrong things and not listening to what God would say to us. But instead of punishing us for those things, God wanted to have peace with us, even though we were the ones doing the wrong things. God the Father sent Jesus to the earth to die for our sins on the cross so that we could be at peace with God.

So, as strange as it may sound, our arguments and disagreements can actually be great opportunities. They are opportunities to make choices that are honoring and pleasing to God, and they are opportunities for us to show others the type of love that Jesus demonstrated for us. *“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us”* (Romans 5:8).

Do

- Try to memorize today's Bible verse (Romans 12:18) together as a family. To aid in memorizing, write down each word from the verse on separate sheets of paper. Then mix up the pieces of paper and take turns putting the words together in order.

Discuss

- What are some good ways for people to disagree with one another? What are some wrong ways for people to disagree with one another?

- How difficult is it for you to make the first move when it comes to making peace with someone you've wronged or with someone who has wronged you?

- What are some specific ways that you can pursue peace and try to make things right when you become aware that you've wronged someone?

- How should you respond to someone who continually refuses to live at peace with you?