

August 26, 2026

Take the Step

August Series: Christ-Centered Relationships

Week Focus: Making Peace

Scripture – Matthew 5:24 - *“Leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.”*

Devotional Reflection

There is a difference between knowing what needs to be done and actually doing it. We can recognize that a relationship needs attention, admit where we contributed to the problem, pray about what happened, and still remain exactly where we are. Sometimes we tell ourselves we are waiting for the right moment when, in reality, we are avoiding an uncomfortable one. Jesus' instruction in Matthew 5:24 is strikingly active: **“First go.”** There comes a point when peacemaking must move beyond recognition and become faithful action.

Taking the step does not mean knowing how everything will turn out. We may not know how the other person will respond, have the perfect words, or feel completely comfortable reopening a difficult conversation. But obedience often begins before we know the outcome. The question is not, **“Can I guarantee this relationship will be repaired?”** but **“What faithful step has God placed within my responsibility?”** Perhaps it is making a phone call, requesting a conversation, offering a sincere apology, correcting something we said, listening to someone we previously dismissed, or beginning to change a behavior that damaged trust.

Jesus calls us toward this kind of active peacemaking because following Him requires more than good intentions. Pride may say, **“They can call me,” “They know what they did,”** or **“Why should I have to go first?”** Yet Jesus shifts our attention away from determining who deserves to move first and toward becoming people willing to obey Him. Taking initiative does not mean accepting blame that is not ours, nor does it require placing ourselves in an unsafe or harmful situation. **It means refusing to let pride, fear, or discomfort keep us from doing what God has clearly shown us belongs to us.**

As followers of Christ, we must remember that our responsibility is faithfulness, not control. We cannot control another person's heart, response, willingness to forgive, or desire for reconciliation, but we can be obedient with what God has entrusted to us. Prayer is essential, but prayer also prepares us to obey. Sometimes transformation begins with one humble act of obedience—the call we finally make, the apology we finally offer, the conversation we finally request, or the change we finally begin.

Today, return to what God has been showing you this week and ask Him one simple question: **“Lord, what is my next faithful step?”** You do not have to repair the entire relationship today, predict what happens afterward, or carry responsibility for another person's response. Where direct contact would be unsafe or unwise, seek godly wisdom and maintain appropriate boundaries; but where God has clearly shown you something that belongs to you, do not allow fear or pride to keep postponing obedience. **You cannot control the outcome, but you can take the step.**

Focus for Today

Peacemaking requires movement, not merely good intentions.

Practice

Return to the relationship or situation you have been praying about this week and ask:

“Lord, what is the next faithful step that belongs to me?”

If God makes that step clear and it is wise and appropriate, do not try to solve the entire relationship today.

Take one step.

It might be:

- Reach out.
- Apologize.
- Ask to talk.
- Listen.
- Correct something.
- Change a behavior.

Where direct contact would be unsafe or unwise, seek godly wisdom rather than assuming reconciliation requires renewed access.

Prayer

Father, thank You for showing me that peacemaking requires more than good intentions. Give me courage to act on what You have revealed. Where pride makes me want to wait for someone else to move first, give me humility. Where fear makes me hesitate, strengthen my faith. Give me wisdom to know what belongs to me and discernment where boundaries or distance are necessary. I cannot control the outcome, but I can obey You. Show me my next faithful step and give me courage to take it. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Reflection Question

What faithful step has God already shown me that I may have been praying about, thinking about, or postponing instead of taking?