

August 29, 2026

Release What You Cannot Control

August Series: Christ-Centered Relationships

Week Focus: Making Peace

Scripture – Romans 12:18 - *“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”*

Devotional Reflection

One of the hardest parts of reconciliation is accepting that we cannot control how another person responds. We can approach someone with humility and still be rejected, offer a sincere apology without receiving immediate forgiveness, or demonstrate genuine change while trust remains damaged. Romans 12:18 acknowledges this reality with two important phrases: **“If it is possible”** and **“as far as it depends on you.”** God calls us to pursue peace faithfully, but He never gives us control over another person’s heart.

This distinction protects us from two opposite mistakes. The first is doing too little and saying, **“Well, I tried,”** when there are still faithful steps God is asking us to take; the second is carrying too much and assuming that if the relationship is not restored, we must have failed. We should honestly ask whether we have acknowledged our part, apologized where necessary, listened with humility, changed what needed to change, and made reasonable efforts toward peace. If God reveals another step that belongs to us, we should take it. **But faithfulness does not require us to carry responsibility God has assigned to someone else.**

Jesus demonstrated this throughout His ministry. He loved faithfully, spoke truth, extended grace, and invited people to respond, but He did not force anyone to receive what He offered. Some accepted His invitation while others walked away. Their response did not determine His faithfulness. In the same way, releasing the outcome of reconciliation is not giving up—it is surrendering control to God. We can continue praying without manipulating, loving without controlling, and remaining open to restoration without becoming consumed by an outcome we cannot produce. **Faithfulness does your part; faith trusts God with theirs.**

As followers of Christ, we must learn when obedience requires another step and when obedience requires open hands. Perhaps you have been carrying the weight of a relationship you sincerely tried to repair, replaying conversations and wondering whether another person’s response means you did not do enough. Ask God honestly whether something still belongs to you. If there is another apology to offer, behavior to change, conversation to pursue, or faithful action to take, obey Him. But if you have sincerely done what He required, allow Him to lift the responsibility for what happens next. **You cannot force reconciliation, manufacture trust, or control another person’s choices.**

Today, place the outcome of that relationship into God’s hands. Release the response you hoped for, the timetable you expected, and the ending you have been trying to produce. This does not mean you stop caring or believing God can restore what has been broken; it means you trust Him enough to stop trying to accomplish what only He can do. Sometimes the final faithful step in making peace is opening your hands and saying, **“Lord, I have done what You asked me to do. Now I trust You with what I cannot do.”**

Focus for Today

God calls you to faithful obedience, not control over another person's response.

Practice

Prayerfully consider the relationship you have been bringing before God this week.

Ask:

“Lord, is there anything else that genuinely belongs to me?”

If the answer is yes, commit to obeying Him.

Then ask:

“What am I carrying that actually belongs to You or to the other person?”

Name that burden before God and intentionally release it.

You may even open your hands as you pray as a physical reminder:

“I release what I cannot control.”

Prayer

Father, thank You for showing me what faithfulness looks like in my relationships. Give me humility to take every step that genuinely belongs to me and wisdom to recognize when I am carrying responsibility You never gave me. Where there is more for me to do, give me courage to obey. Where I have faithfully done my part, help me stop trying to control another person's response. I release their choices, their timing, the outcome, and the future of this relationship into Your hands. Teach me to pursue peace faithfully and then trust You completely. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Reflection Question

What outcome, response, or relationship am I trying to control that God may be asking me to release into His hands?