

Christian Leadership Reflections

Discussion Guide

MAKING PEACE IN YOUR CHURCH

https://www.cccc.org/news_blogs/john/2021/01/06/making-peace-in-your-church

1) Keep Christ front and centre

Questions to ask are:

- a) Have we spent time together discerning what the Holy Spirit has to say?
- b) Is this discussion disrupting our life together based on love and unity? Are we making every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification? (Rom 14:19)?
- c) Do our discussions reflect respect for church leadership, the people who disagree with us, and the selfless character of Christ? Do not vilify the “other”!
- d) What is the root cause of the division, deep down? Is it values? Priorities?
- e) Which theological understandings apply to this topic?
- f) Do we have any blind assumptions on this matter? Ask someone who thinks differently on the matter.
- g) What effect is this having on our pastor and church leadership?

2) Maintain your ability to fulfill your mission

Questions to ask are:

- a) Is this disagreement a distraction that is causing us to squander an opportunity to be the Church and shine?
- b) Is the way we are discussing this matter consistent with what we tell the public about our church and our faith?
- c) How will our proposed resolution of the disputed matter advance our mission?
 - a. Might it stifle our growth, creativity, or relevance?
 - b. Could it antagonize the very people we want to evangelize?
- d) What opportunities are open to us at this time that weren't before?

3) Be a good witness to Jesus Christ

Questions to ask are:

- a) Will our behaviour in this matter help people see us as a caring, other-centred, peaceful community?
- b) Based on our decision-making process, what would the secular world say is the value proposition of our church to them?
- c) How can we contribute to reducing extremism? What can we do to reduce extremist positions and build a moderate centre?

4) Give the Spirit room

Questions to ask are:

- a) Which spiritual practices (such as group discernment) have we overlooked?
- b) What can we do to be more open-minded and creative? In what new ways can we do ministry? One book that is very helpful in stimulating creativity is *A Whack on the Side of the Head*.
- c) What are Christian leaders and theologians saying about this topic?
- d) Are we aware of what God is doing in and around us?
- e) Is anything happening in the secular world that we can endorse?