

# Peacemaking

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*A neglected key to church life and church planting.*

**Rick Love**

I have had the privilege of studying under some of the best theologians and missiologists in America. I learned many valuable lessons about hermeneutics, biblical theology, strategy, culture and contextualization. Yet no one prepared me for peacemaking. This was something I had to learn the hard way—on the job. It has been the most difficult lesson I have learned about church life and church planting.

*Peacemaking is one of the neglected keys to church life and church planting.*

This study has emerged in the context of learning how to become a peacemaker during the past 25 years. I frequently find myself in the midst of peacemaking, but I have to admit I don't like it. Peacemaking is hard work; it's draining. But I do it because peacemaking is love in action. The Bible defines love as obedience to Christ's commands (John 15:9-10; 1 John 2:5, 5:3; 2 John 6). In other words, the most loving thing I can do for others is to obey what Christ has taught about peacemaking.

People often ask me how to apply these peacemaking principles in another culture. My answer: true biblical peacemaking does not fit any culture. While every culture values certain aspects of peacemaking, generally peacemaking is "counter-cultural." This is a heavenly message that rubs against the rough edges of earthly cultures.

I have written this as a study guide that can be used for small group Bible studies or individual interaction with the Bible's teaching on this subject. As you wrestle with the text, I pray this guide will help you develop your own convictions about these urgent issues. The best peacemakers are those who have biblical convictions about Christ's approach to right relationships. Because of this, they are willing to do whatever the Bible teaches about promoting peace in the church—for the glory of God! 🌍

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*Dr. Rick Love is the International Director of Frontiers, an agency devoted to representing Jesus faithfully to Muslim peoples. The above is taken from the preface to Peacemaking, a book published by William Carey Library and described further on page 20.*