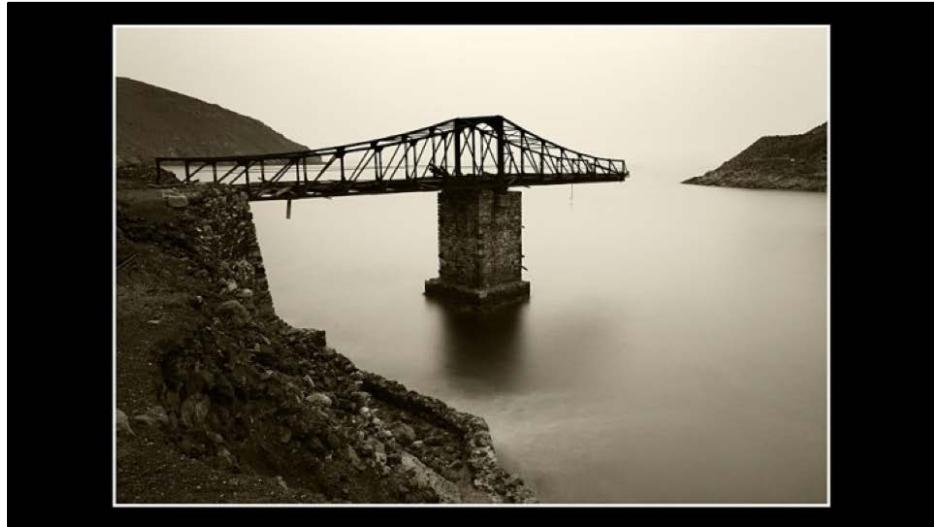




*“Hope at the Foot of the Cross”*

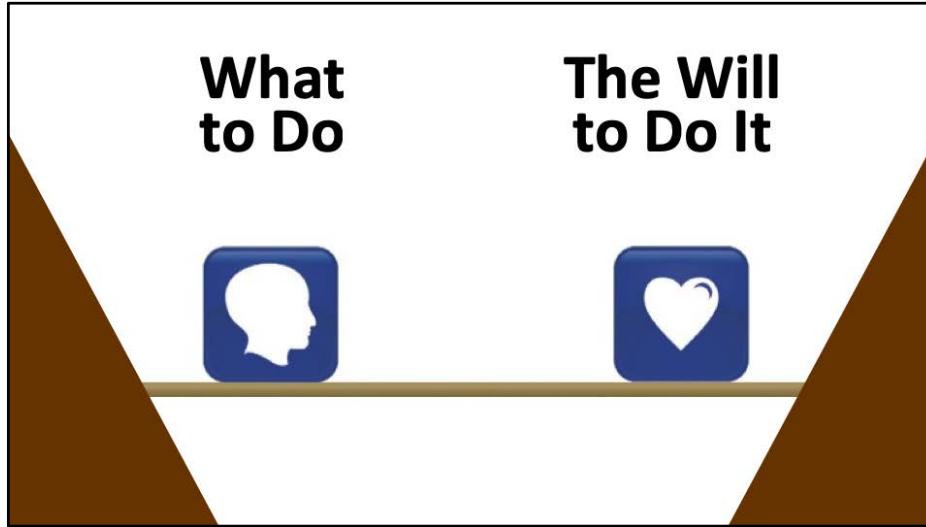
(Title Slide)



2

**As we pursue being biblical peacemakers, and so being blessed by Jesus, we may find ourselves with a half-finished bridge.**

**TR: The Peace Initiative Resource Manual, the Small Group discussions of case studies, the memory verses, and all may have built the first half of the bridge . . .**



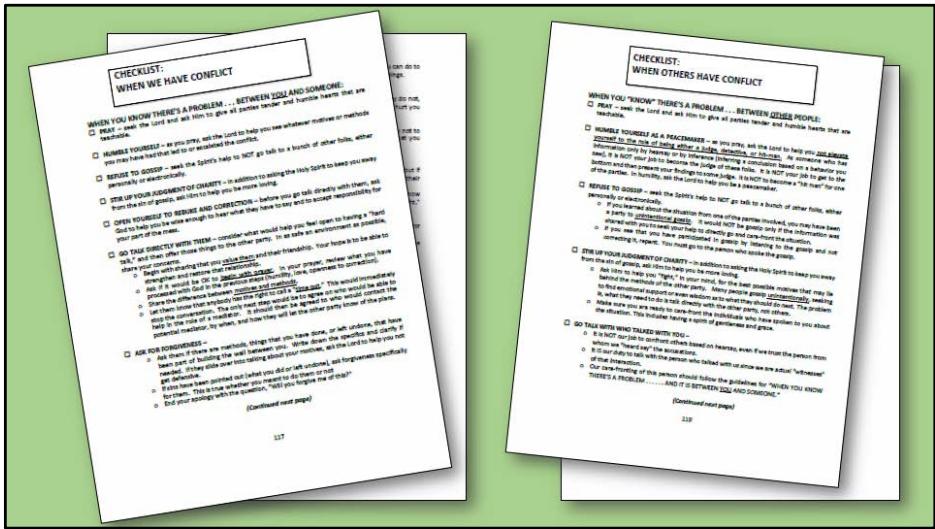
3

. . . the head portion – the “what to do” part.

-- We may now have the insights into knowing what God wants us to do next.

-- But the question remains of how to build the rest of the bridge, and find “the will to do” the next right thing.

TR: Checklists for what to do . . .



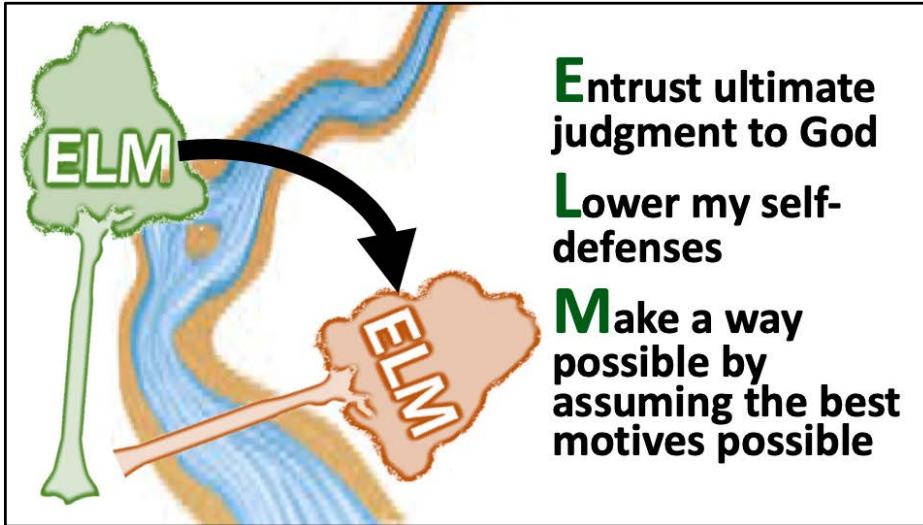
... are found in the Resource Manual.  
 -- What to do when we are in conflict.  
 -- And even what to do when others are in conflict and we know about it.

TR: In either case, there is an important checkbox that is much more heart related than head related. It's the need to . . .



## READ SLIDE

TR: We may even remember the ELM treat acronym for the steps to stirring up this judgment of true godly love . . .



... using the word picture of cutting down a tree to make a bridge across the dividing river of conflict, we . . . READ SLIDE

TR: Those who have taken the time to work through the material understand why stirring up this judgment of charity is so important.



**Judgment of Charity  
(Love)**

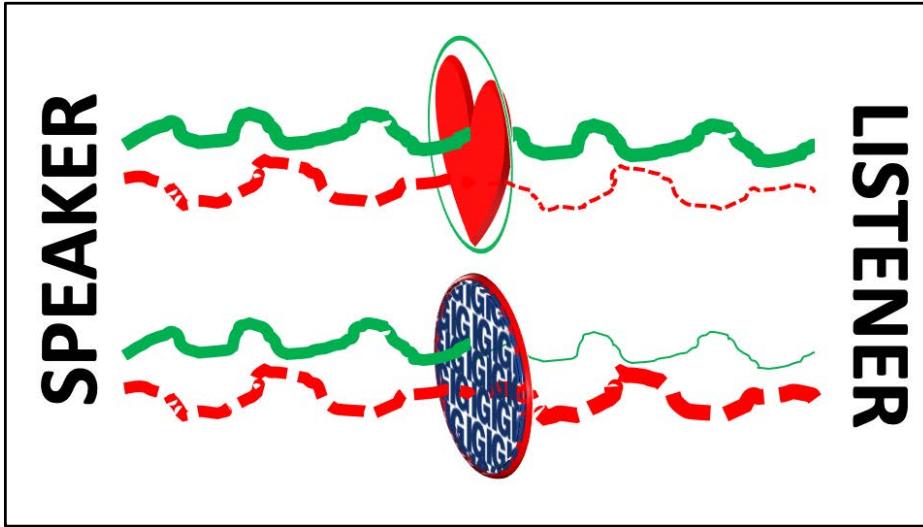


**Judgment of Blame  
(IG = Injustice Gathering)**

**All of us have filters. But our filters are impacted by the judgment we are using.**

-- Either of READ SLIDE

**TR: Picture communication this way . . .**



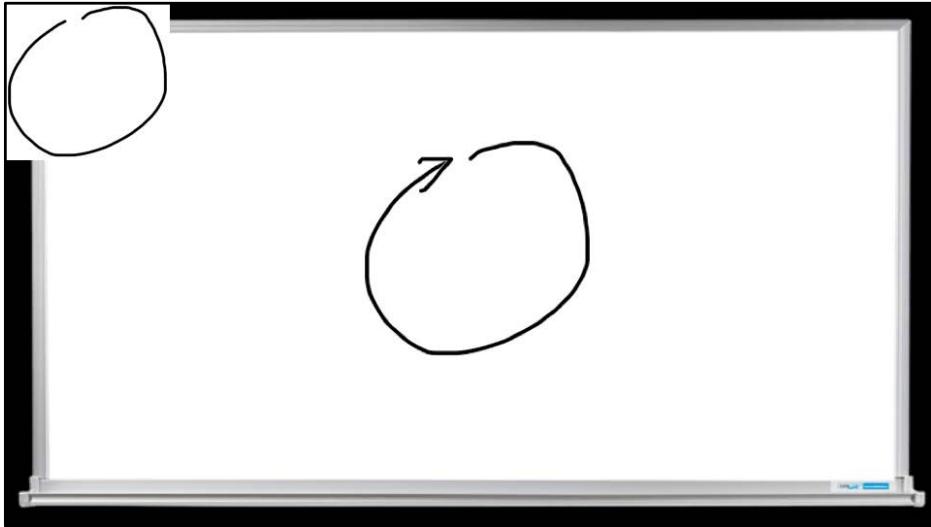
**The judgment of charity can better pick up what is good in what the speaker is saying.**

- It isn't oblivious to the negative, red line. But it won't allow the negative communication methods get in the way of really listening.
- The judgment of blame, with its injustice gathering, is looking for the negative.
- It tends to make much of whatever the other person did wrong.
- In police terms, it is always looking to see if the other person has form. And then looking at the current situation in light of our

**judgment about the past.**

**8**

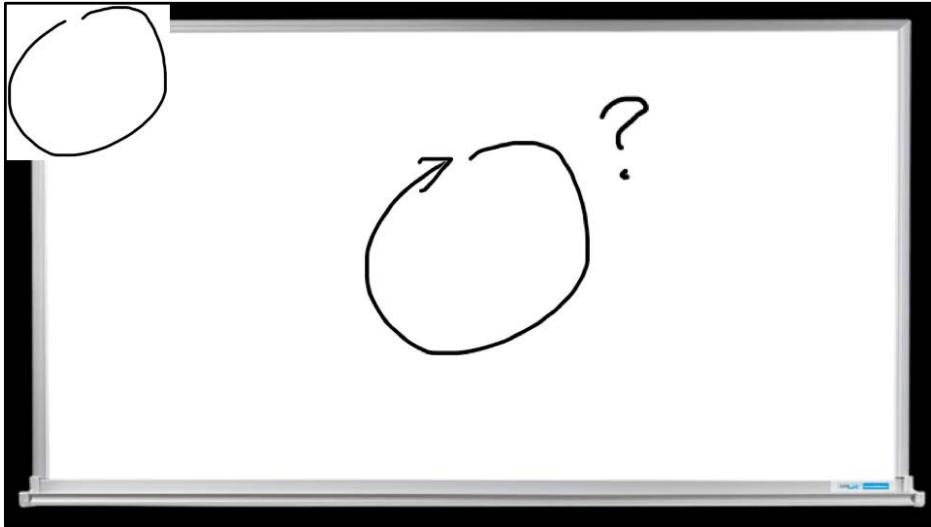
**TR: This review is trying to make one point. We often know what to do next, including stir up the judgment of charity. But that doesn't mean we have the will to do it.**



9

**Perhaps we even remember from the cycle of conflict why all this is so important.**

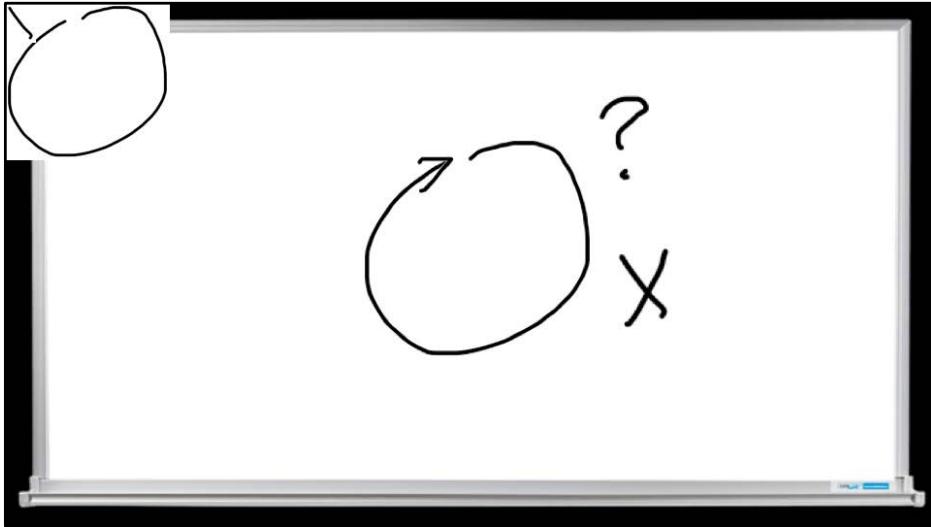
**TR: The cycle has five basic stages**



10

**It starts when tension develops and we say, “Something’s wrong?!”**

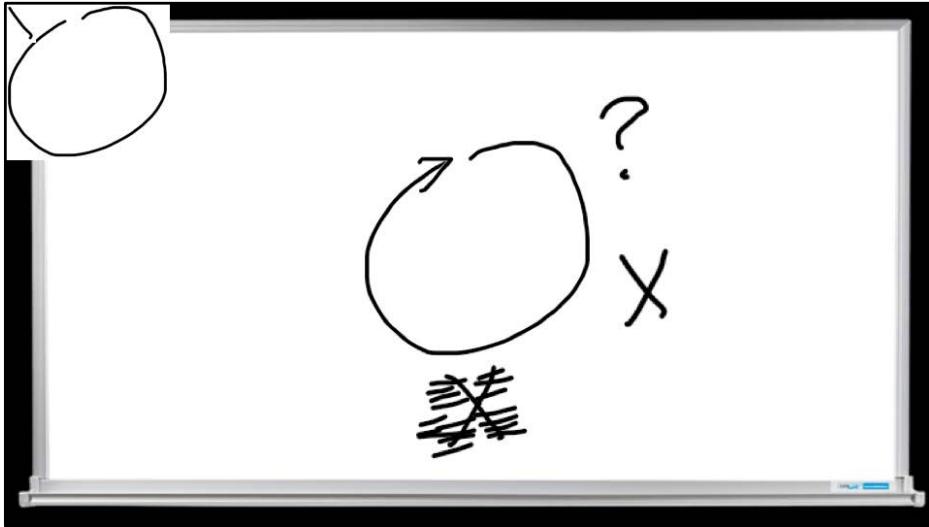
**TR: The second stage creates a dilemma of who is supposed to bring up . . .**



11

. . . the “X”, that is the answer to the question, “What’s wrong?”

**TR: If conflict is not care-fronted at this point, it becomes very dangerous.**

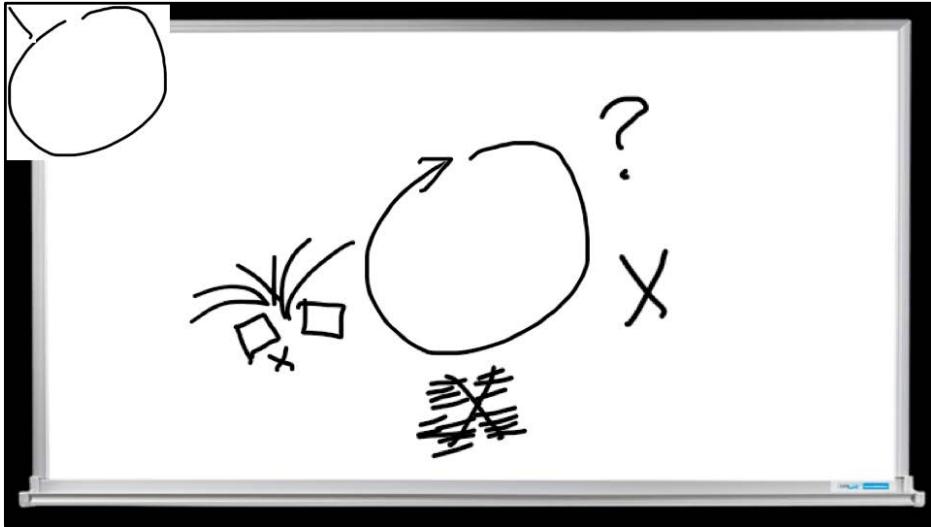


12

**The third stage sees injustice gathering. We start blaming the other person.**

-- We stop asking “What’s wrong?” and start pointing the finger and say, “You’re wrong!”

**TR: That doesn’t mean we care-front conflict here. This stage can continue for months, even years.**



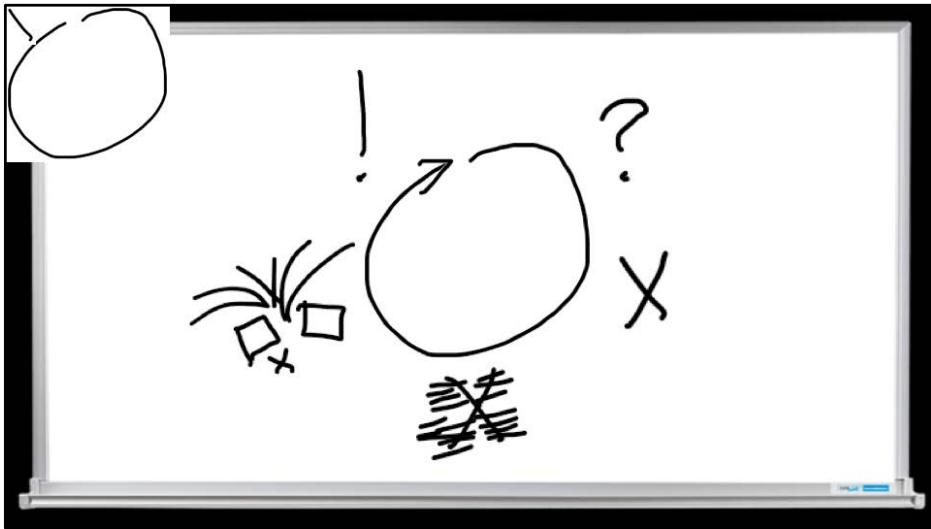
13

**Even though conflict can and should be care-fronted as soon as it is noticed, often things are not brought out until we reach stage four.**

-- **The Let's Fight stage when a little precipitating event, the proverbial straw that breaks the camel's back, causes an explosion.**

-- **Those who had moved to SILENCE now turn to VIOLENCE, at least verbally.**

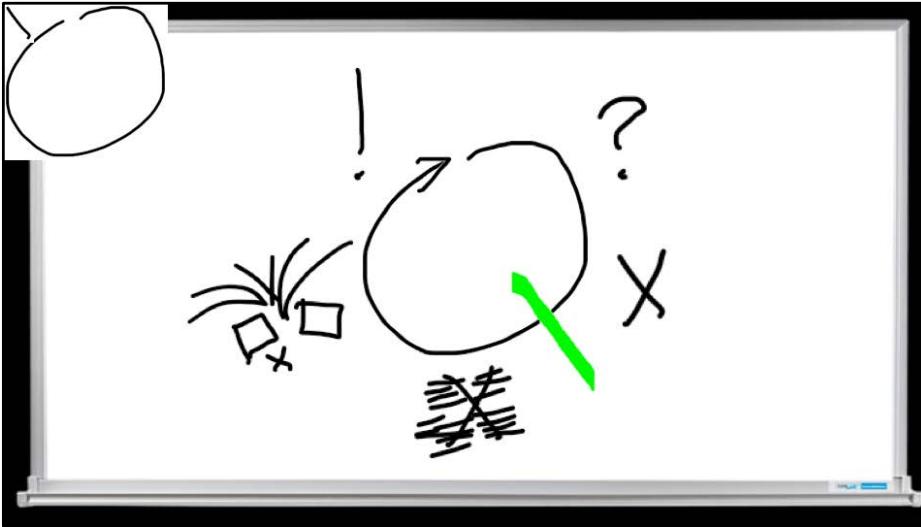
**TR: The last stage is marked by . . .**



14

. . . an exclamation point. It speaks of some kind of resolution.  
-- It could be a good resolution or a bad one, but the label "Who Won?" for this stage recognizes that there are usually winners and losers.

TR: This cycle is adapted from the work of Norm Shawchuck, but with my added graphics and labels. Over the years I've added a few other parts.

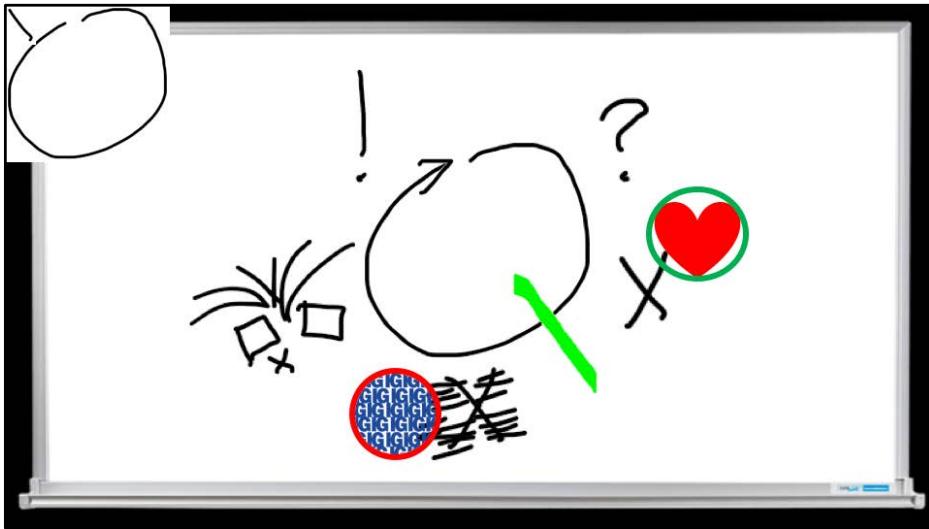


15

After drawing the cycle on the whiteboard, trying to help to folks in conflict to see their situation probably fits the pattern . . .

- I then add a bold line after the What's Wrong stage.
- Something really changes when our fingers move from pointing to the X, the issue of what was done or left undone . . .
- . . . to the finger pointing to the person.
- When we have crossed this line, we begin to lose the judgment of charity.
- And the longer we stay in the YOU'RE WRONG stage, the injustice gathering stage, the worse our judgment of charity grows.

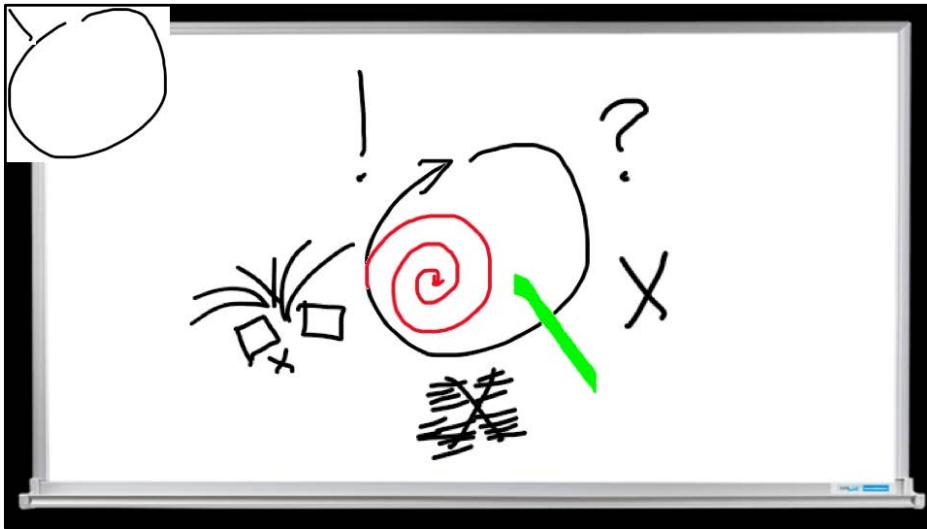
**TR: What we end up doing . . .**



16

. . . is replacing it more and more with the judgment of blame.  
-- Think about the extended conflicts you've been in.  
-- Isn't it really hard not to blame the other person? Isn't it easy to see them as the problem?

TR: Another addition to the cycle that I've added in the last few years is . . .



17

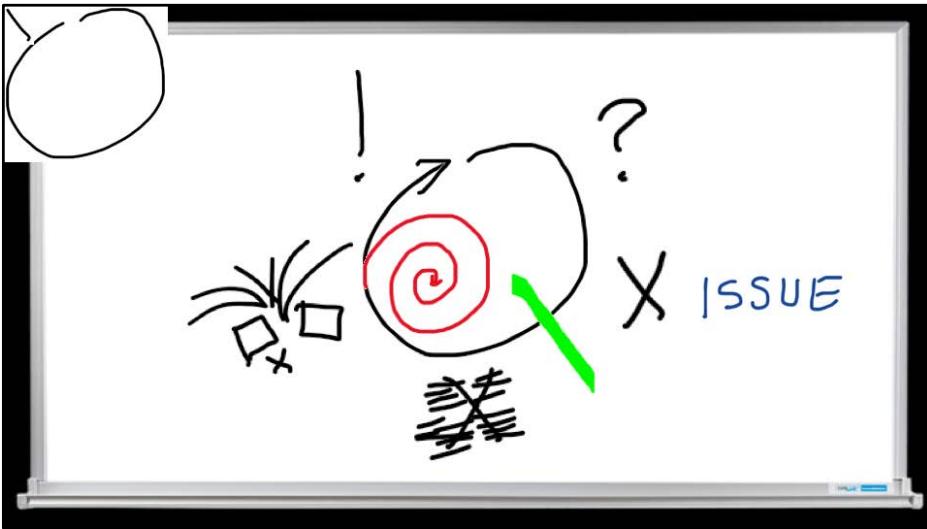
. . . the death spiral.

- I've found that people imagine having a blow-up clears the air.
- Often there is no good resolution. People may even say they forgive but then struggle to not continue blaming the other person, looking for injustices.
- So, we have a fight, a blow-up, and then we go right back to injustice gathering.
- In your resource manuals, you'll find an self-assessment of how far down the death spiral you've gone.

TR: Recently, Chad Postema's hospitalization helped me illustrate

**a key lesson from this cycle.**

**17**

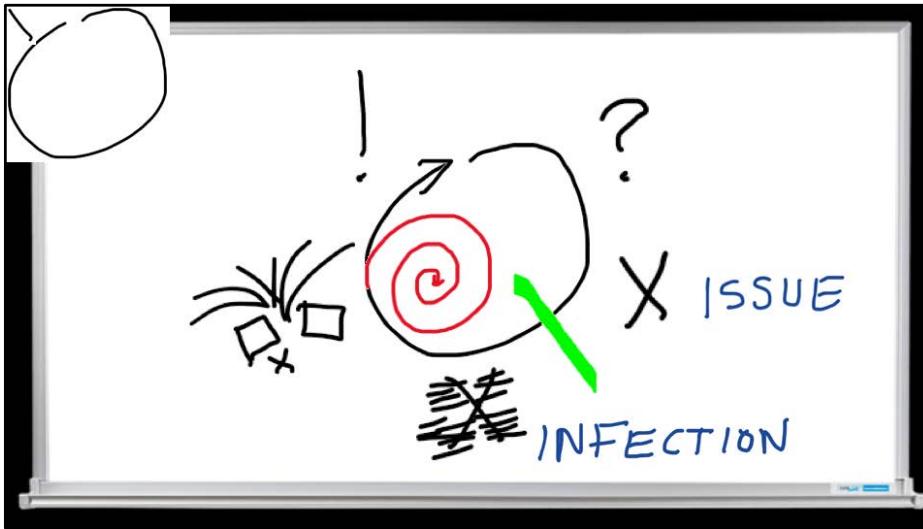


18

**Chad has a brain tumor that needs to be operated on. We could call that the ISSUE that needs to be dealt with.**

**TR: But the doctors can't deal with that issue until they deal with .**

..



19

. . . the INFECTION of pneumonia and MRSA.

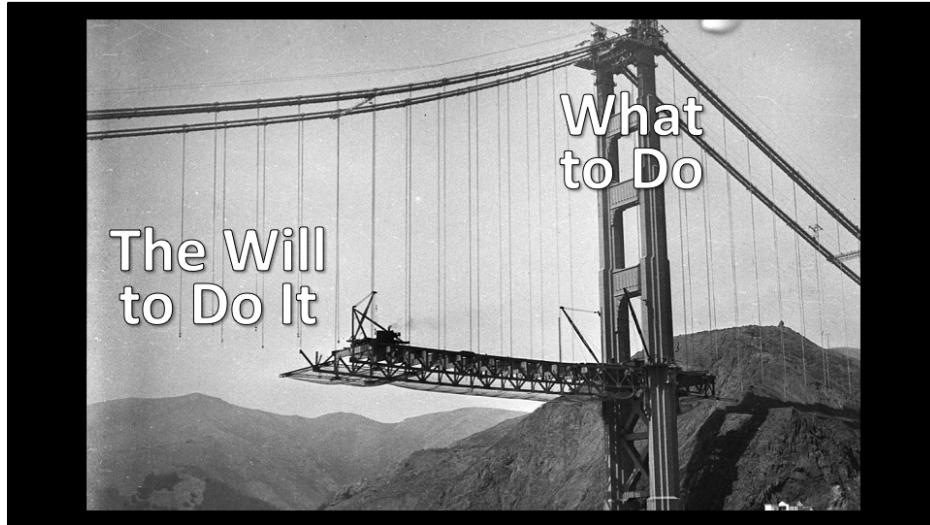
-- That is what makes dealing with conflict so difficult.

-- It is not just dealing with the issue, but with the infection of bitterness, resentment, anger that has been held on to overnight.

-- All of this is review for those who had worked through the Peace Initiative. And we know what we are supposed to do. We must go directly to the person we are in conflict with. We must go as soon as we realize there's an issue, while we still have the judgment of charity. And if we have crossed the line to the judgment of blame, we must repent of our judgmental attitudes and graciously clean out the infection so we can deal with the

**TR: It is easy for us to let ourselves off the hook when we say, “I don’t know what to do.” But, when we do know what the next right thing is, the real reveal of our hearts happen . . . the AH-HA moment when we realize . . .**

20



**... we don't have THE WILL TO DO IT.**  
**-- Finishing the bridge, lowering the ELM tree over the raging waters, is just too hard.**

**TR: Do we know what to do? Hebrews 12 gives us a good summary . . .**

**Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. <sup>15</sup>See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no "root of bitterness" springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled;**

*ESV*

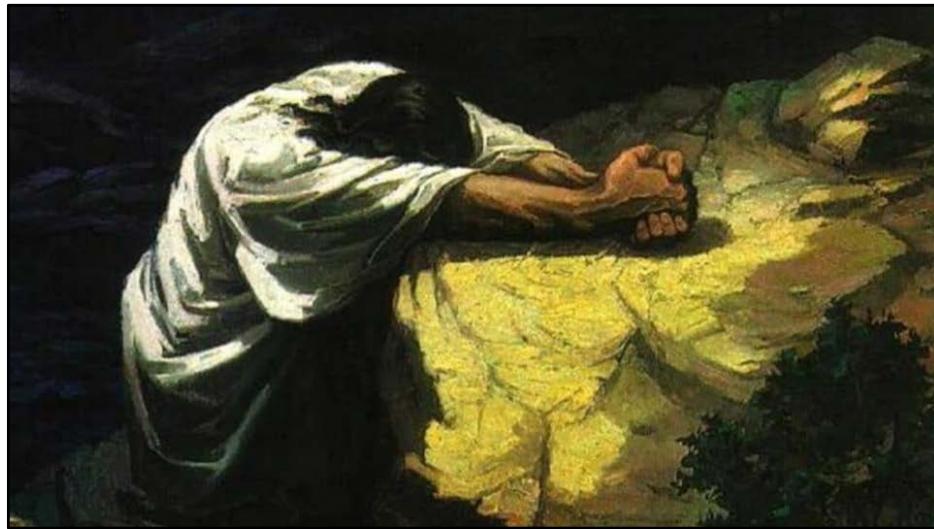
**READ SLIDE**

- Peace with everyone . . . and holiness
- Grace . . . and truth
- Grace . . . and accountability
- It seems so clear . . . until I have to fight for the judgment of charity with someone who seems irrational. When I have to offer forgiveness, willing to pay the price for the sins of others. When I have to let go of my judgmentalism about another's motives, leaving room for God's justice.

**TR: How do we move from knowing the next right thing to do . . .**

**and then actually doing it?**

**21**



22

**For me, the answer rests with Jesus in the Garden, the night before His crucifixion.**

**TR: Let's look at Luke's account in Luke 22.**

And (Jesus) came out and went, as was his custom, to the Mount of Olives, and the disciples followed him. <sup>40</sup>And when he came to the place, he said to them, "Pray that you may not enter into temptation."

*ESV*

READ SLIDE

TR: Verse 41

And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup>saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."

ESV

## READ SLIDE

- [this cup] is speaking of the cup of God's wrath
- Jesus had come as God the Son Who took on humanity, which is what we celebrate at Christmas.
- He came so He could be the mediator. The Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world.
- He came as the scapegoat, Who would carry away our sins.

TR: This imagery from the OT of the cup of God's wrath is found in passages like Psalm 75

**For in the hand of the LORD  
there is a cup  
with foaming wine, well mixed,  
and he pours out from it,  
and all the wicked of the earth  
shall drain it down to the dregs.**

*ESV*

**25**

**READ SLIDE**

- But the cup of God's wrath was meant for the wicked of the earth, not for a sinless person like Jesus.
- Jesus, the Son, was being asked to drink the cup of God's wrath.

**TR: The wrath of an All-powerful, absolutely holy God, is so overwhelming that Jesus prays . . .**

And he withdrew from them about a stone's throw, and knelt down and prayed, <sup>42</sup>saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."

ESV

(SAME SLIDE AS TWO PREVIOUS BUT WITH DIFFERENT HIGHLIGHT – DON’T READ)

... for the cup to be removed.

- Remember, elsewhere in the Bible it is clear that Jesus agreed willingly to fulfill the Father's plan of salvation.
- But, now in His true humanity, the horror of what He is facing makes Him feel like He wants the cup removed.
- In this ultimate of conflicts, Jesus faces the temptation that we do . . . to know what to do but then struggle to finish the bridge by having the will to do it.

-- What a model for us when He is honest with the Father<sup>26</sup>  
prayer about His feelings and desires, but then submits His  
will.

TR: After this, in verse 43

And there appeared to him an angel from heaven, **strengthening him.** <sup>44</sup>And being in **agony** he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat became like great drops of blood falling down to the ground.

*ESV*

## READ SLIDE

- [strengthened by an angel] = God the Father's grace, not to remove the cup but to provide the strength.
- However this happened, the strength did not make the agony go away.
- How often we imagine that if God answers our prayers it will be with the complete relief that only heaven can bring.

TR: Why was Jesus in such agony? The Apostle Paul helps us understand in 2 Corinthians . . .

**For our sake he **made him to be sin**  
who knew no sin, so that in him we  
might become the righteousness of  
God.**

*ESV*

**READ SLIDE**

- The sinless Messiah was about to be “made sin.”
- He was about to carry all of our sins upon Himself as the Lamb of God.
- He was about to drink the cup of God’s wrath.
- We imagine that the worst part of the crucifixion was the physical brutality of it all.

**TR: I believe what made Jesus agonize to such a degree that blood came from His pores was the absolute horror of facing what Matthew writes of in chapter 27 . . .**

**And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?" that is, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?"**

*ESV*

## **READ SLIDE**

- At three in the afternoon, at the critical moment of Christ's death, He quotes from Psalm 22.
- The sinless Creator of everything, Who humbled Himself and took on the form of a servant, even dying a cursed death on a tree . . .
- . . . experienced God the Father forsaking Him because He could not look upon sin.
- In some mysterious way, the eternal community of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit was "broken."

**TR: Verse 45 . . .**

**29**

And when he rose from prayer, he came to the disciples and found them sleeping for sorrow,<sup>46</sup>and he said to them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you may not enter into temptation."

ESV

## READ SLIDE

- When compared to the other accounts of this prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, on the Mount of Olives, we find Luke capturing the repeated warning from Jesus to the disciples . . .
- . . . [pray that you may not enter into temptation]
- Luke recognizes that the week had been brutal for the disciples as well. They slept "FOR SORROW."
- But Jesus does not excuse them because of weariness . . . He challenges them . . . warns them.

TR: I wonder what temptations Jesus was thinking about? He had

just stared down the temptation to not fulfill the next right thing to do as the Savior. He was strengthened in prayer to have the will to do it. But, what about the disciples? <sup>30</sup>

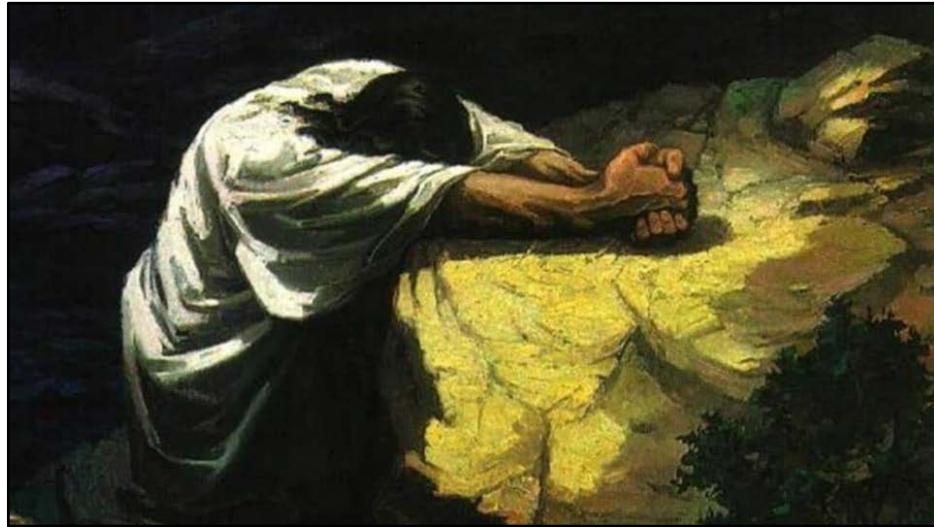
*The temptation to . . .*

defend ourselves,  
run away,  
deny Christ,  
despair of hope,  
disbelieve.

**When you think about what happens next, we can imagine at least these temptations . . . READ SLIDE**

-- defend ourselves, taking a swipe with our swords at a servant's head,  
-- to run away, even leaving the linen cloth behind to prevent being seized,  
-- to deny Christ, even three times . . . that they even knew Him,  
-- to despair of hope . . . hiding behind locked doors imagining that Jesus death was the end of all their dreams,  
-- to even disbelieve when women from their group would come and say that "He is risen."

**TR: How can we deal with our temptations, especially in conflict to READ SLIDE ? We must go to the garden . . .**



32

. . . and wait with Jesus.

-- How often I have beat myself up for my inability to help others do the next right thing.

-- I assumed that if I could make clear from the Scriptures what God calls them to do is that they would do it.

-- How foolish of me to imagine that half a bridge can cross the divide.

TR: It is only in the garden, in the anguish of prayer, that we will be strengthened to say, "Not my will, but yours be done."

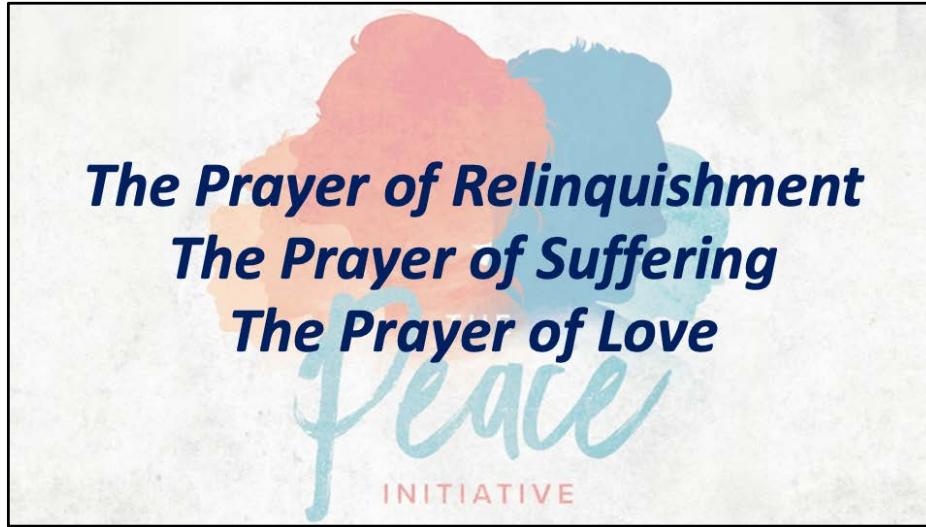
Then Jesus told his disciples, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. <sup>25</sup>For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.”

*ESV*

The challenge of conflict moments is that they are some of the most painful, agonizing moments of discipleship . . .

-- will we . . . READ SLIDE

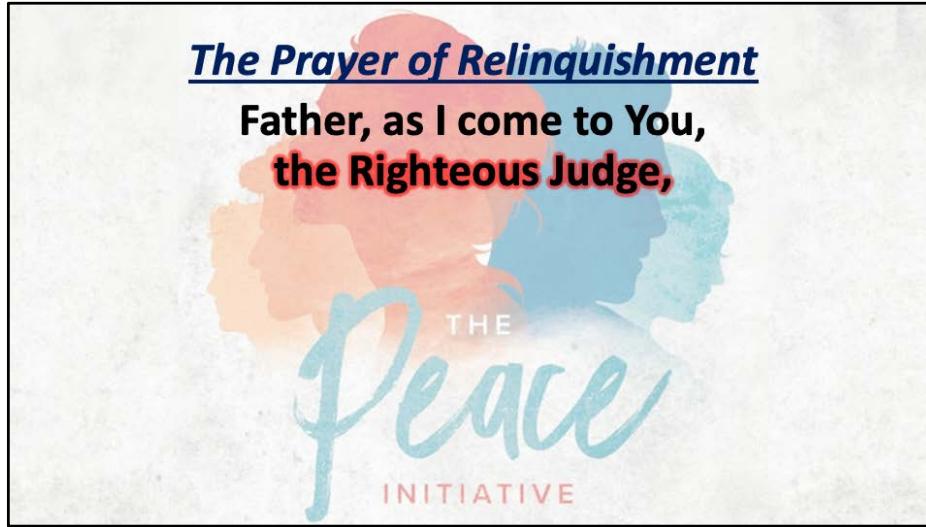
TR: On the back cover of your worship flier I have included these three prayers that I have used as starters for my times with Jesus.



**They are a . . . READ SLIDE**

-- Extended conflict is so brutal, we all struggle to stay awake. We want to just sleep for sorrow. We just want to escape the agony.

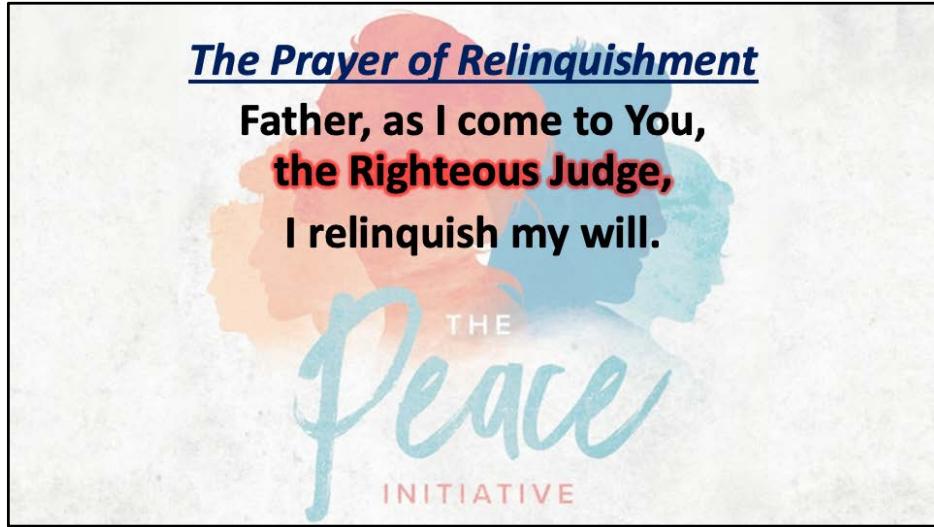
**TR: But the Savior invites us to come and wait with Him, so that we will not fall into temptation. To pray . . .**



## READ SLIDE

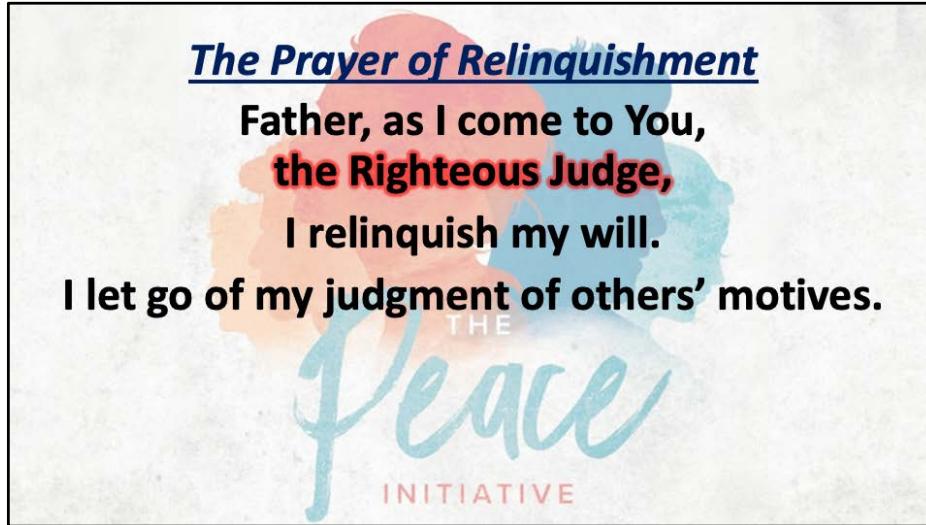
-- The One Who knows the secrets of all hearts, Who will do right.

TR: As we come we pray . . .



READ SLIDE

TR: Especially me will . . .



that wants to be the judge of others' motives.

TR: I pray . . .



### The Prayer of Relinquishment

Father, as I come to You,  
**the Righteous Judge,**  
I relinquish my will.

I let go of my judgment of others' motives.

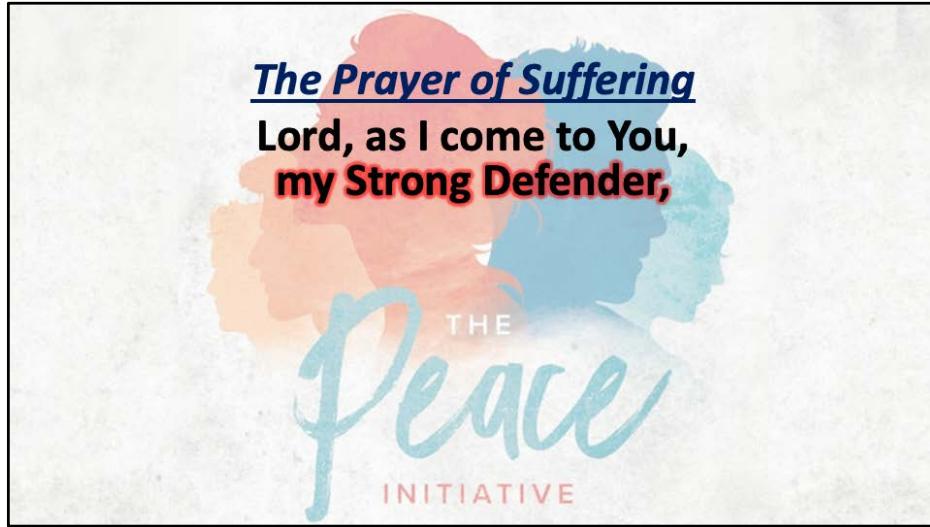
THE  
I give You my stony heart and  
TRUST that in Your time,  
You will do what is right.

INITIATIVE

## READ SLIDE

- The judgment of blame makes our hearts hard.
- We find ourselves putting on the robe of a judge and even the hood of an executioner.
- Then Jesus invites us to come with Him . . . Who had every right to judge all of us and condemn us to an eternity in hell . . . and pray . . . READ SLIDE

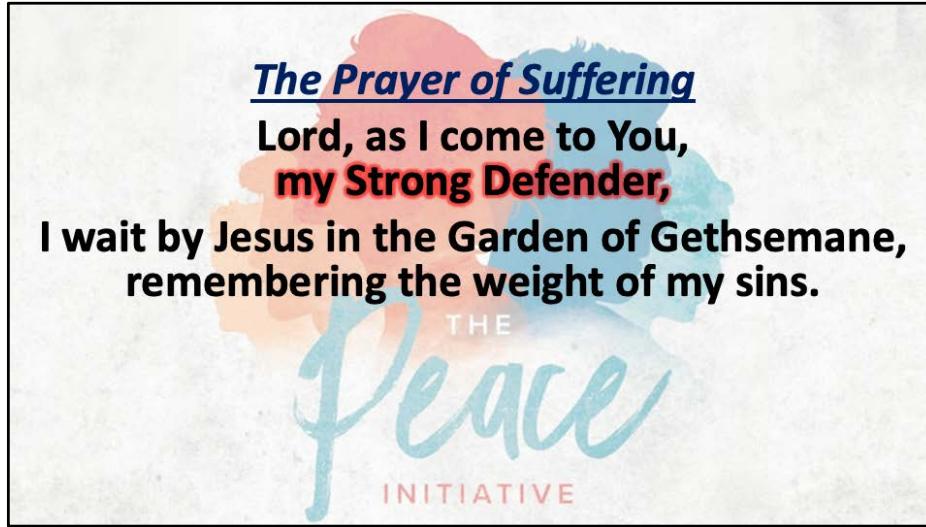
TR: There are times when I need to prop my eyes open and use the prayer of suffering to help start my waiting with Jesus.



## READ SLIDE

- My defensiveness is a denial of His protection.
- My being so easily offended is a denial that I died with Christ.

TR: I pray remembering . . .



. . . the weight of my sins.

- The temptation to try to take the speck out of someone else's eye when there is a plank in my own is so real.
- The cup Jesus drank was wrath poured out because of my sins.
- As the Spirit strengthens me to remember, I find myself humbled.

TR: I am able to pray . . .

*The Prayer of Suffering*

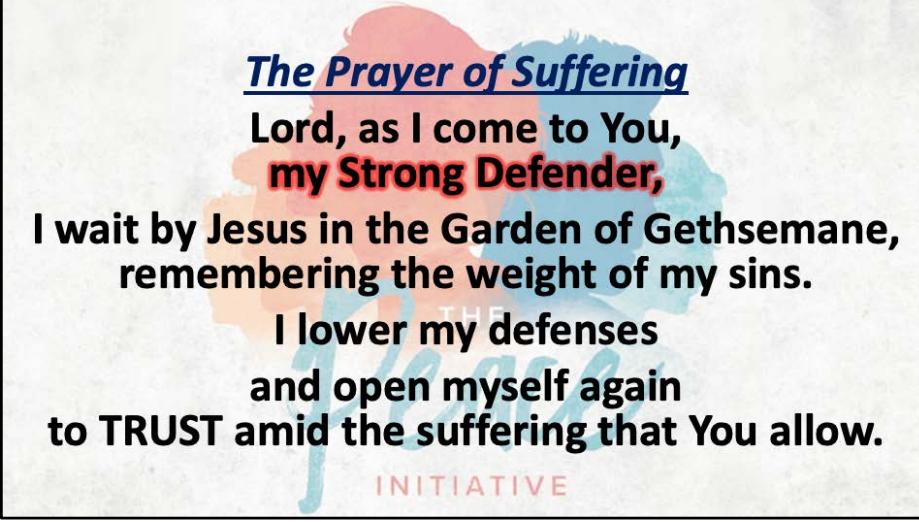
Lord, as I come to You,  
**my Strong Defender,**

I wait by Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane,  
remembering the weight of my sins.

I lower <sup>THE</sup> defenses

*Peace*

INITIATIVE



### The Prayer of Suffering

Lord, as I come to You,  
**my Strong Defender,**

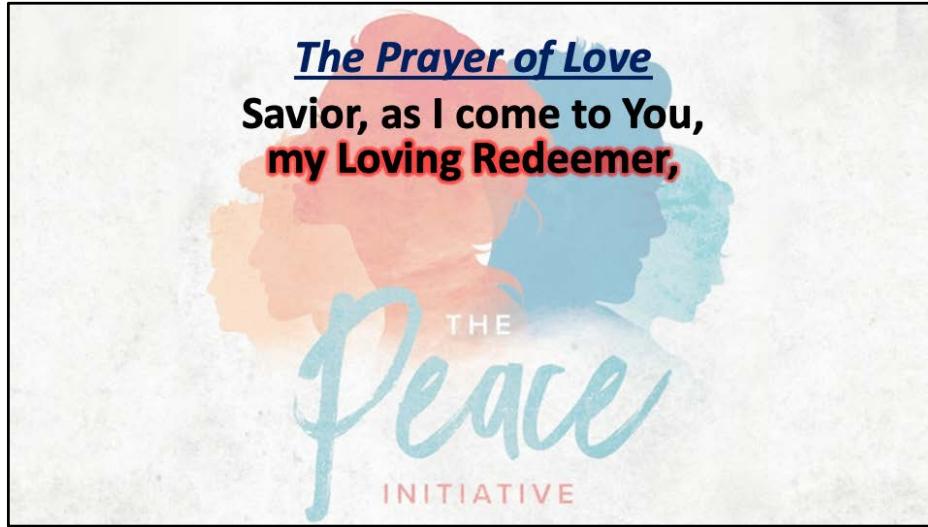
I wait by Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane,  
remembering the weight of my sins.

I lower my defenses  
and open myself again  
to TRUST amid the suffering that You allow.

INITIATIVE

## READ SLIDE

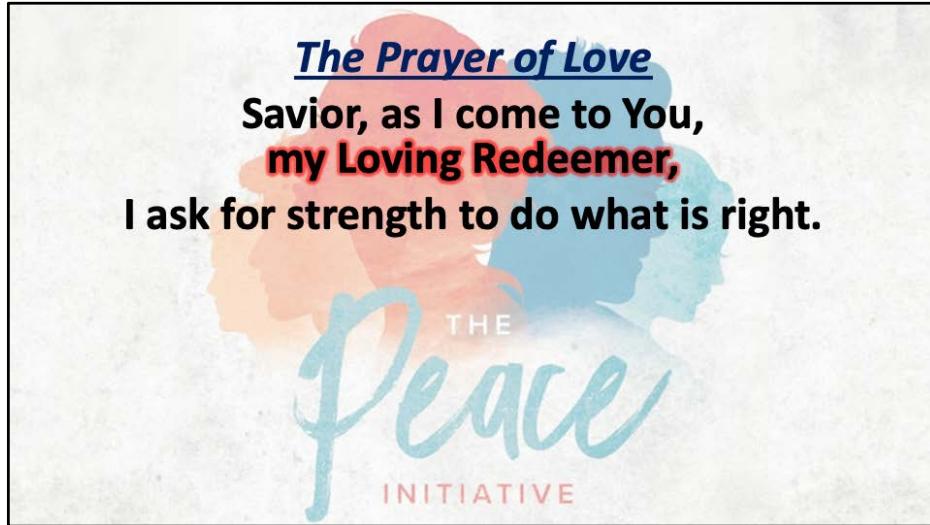
TR: I often know what is the right thing to do . . . but struggle with the will to do it. So I pray the prayer of love.



## READ SLIDE

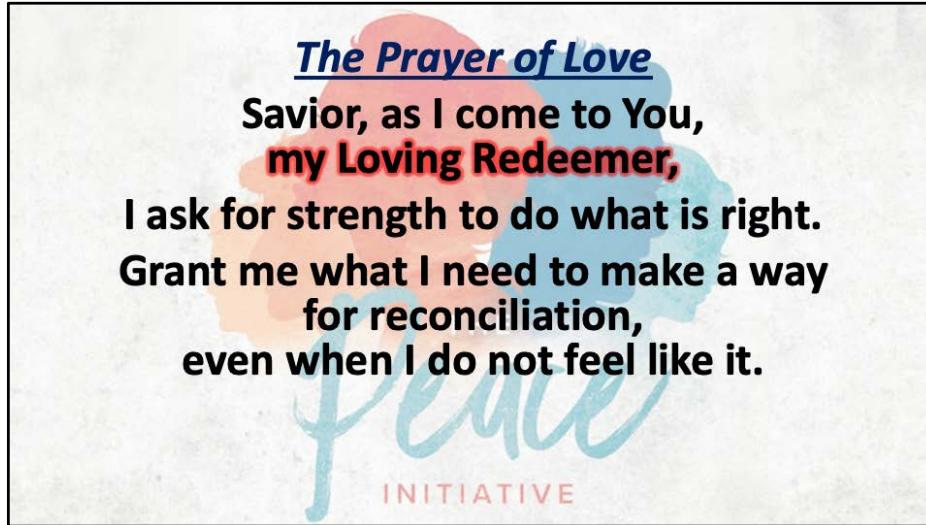
-- Love is not primarily a feeling. If my Savior did what He felt in the garden, He would have called down a legion of angels to defend Himself.

TR: With Jesus by my side I pray . . .



## READ SLIDE

**TR: Having entrusted ultimate judgment to God, and having lowered my self defenses, I ask for grace . . .**



... the grace to ... READ SLIDE

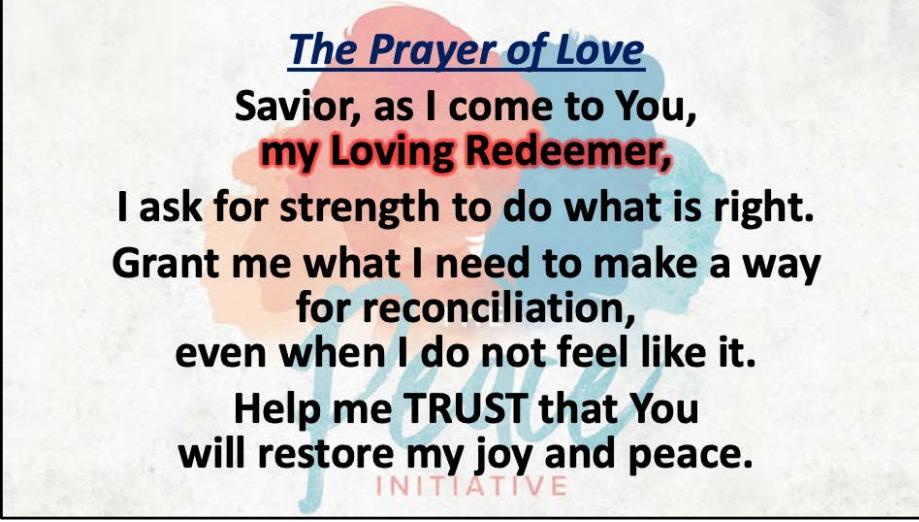
TR: The garden was a time of agony. The cross was a time of brutality and the horror of becoming sin and drinking of the wrath of a Holy God. But, by faith in the Father, Jesus was able to look beyond all that. As it says in Hebrews 12 ...

. . . looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who **for the joy that was set before him** endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

*ESV*

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: And so I pray . . .**



### The Prayer of Love

Savior, as I come to You,  
**my Loving Redeemer,**  
I ask for strength to do what is right.  
Grant me what I need to make a way  
for reconciliation,  
even when I do not feel like it.  
Help me TRUST that You  
will restore my joy and peace.

INITIATIVE

## READ SLIDE

TR; In the conflicts of life we will be tempted to know what is right to do, but then not wait on God for the will to it. We will be tempted to . . .

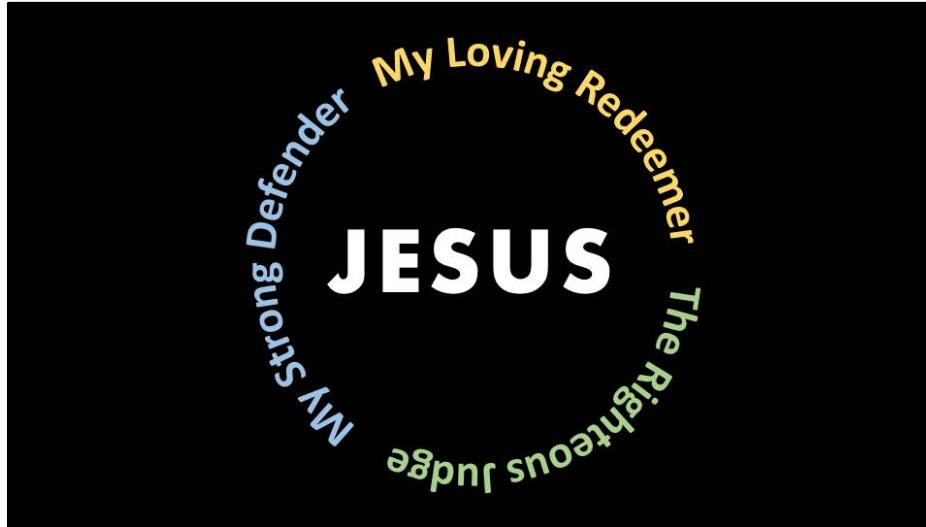
*The temptation to . . .*

defend ourselves,  
run away,  
deny Christ,  
despair of hope,  
disbelieve.

## READ SLIDE

- Peace, true Shalom, is not merely a matter of knowing cycles, styles, motives and methods, care-fronting, forgiveness, and the like.
- True peace in our families, friendships, church, and even to some measure with the unbelieving world around us, depends on us coming to the foot of the cross.

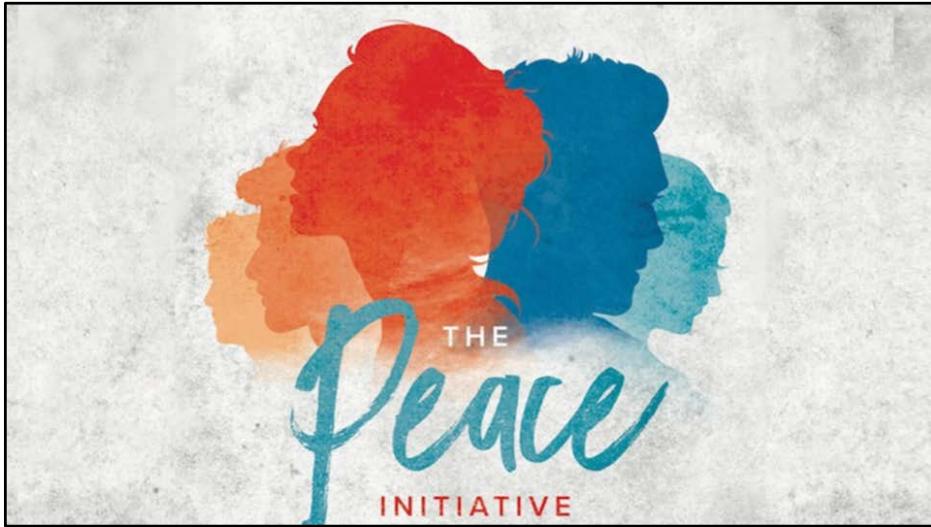
TR: To come to the garden with . . .



**Jesus . . . the Righteous Judge, My Strong Defender, My Loving Redeemer.**

- My stubbornness in stirring up the judgment of charity . . .
  - of entrusting ultimate judgment to God, of lowering my self-defenses, of making a way for reconciliation . . .
  - seems blasphemous as I kneel with Jesus and look to the cross where He would cry, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?” . . .
  - as He made a way for me to be reconciled to God.
- 
- For me to not wait with Jesus in prayer so that I can have the

**will to do what a peacemaker does . . . is like going up to<sup>40</sup> the Savior as He hangs on the cross and spitting at Him. I cannot do it. I hope you can't either.**



50