

RA1-Six Keys to Peace in Relationships

Rick Warren is a world renowned author. His book “A Purpose Driven Life” has affected countless lives. In the summer of 2012 Rick delivered a series of messages entitled “You Make Me Crazy” (YMMC). As I studied these messages I gained new insight into how to deal with the crazy makers in my life. But more importantly, I saw how I was a crazy maker in the lives of those closest to me. I also saw how I could change my approach and my attitude toward these crazy makers. My most profound take away from YMMC is addressed in his first message. He declares that “Hurt People Hurt People”. What a profound truth that will change the way you look at people you feel are hurting you! You’ll want to go to the Saddleback website and order that message.

Rick refers to James 3:13-18 when he states that wherever you find confusion, disharmony and disorder, there’s ego. James says wherever you find jealousy and selfish ambition, you’ll find disorder and every kind of evil. Rick then moves on with **six steps** you can take to bring peace into your relationships.

If I want to be wise in my relationships

I won’t compromise my integrity

I won’t antagonize your anger

I won’t minimize your feelings

I won’t criticize your suggestions

I won’t emphasize your mistakes

I won’t disguise my intentions

The foundation for Rick’s message is **James 3:17** “...The kind of wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, gentle at all times, willing to yield to others. It is full of mercy and good deeds. It shows no partiality and is always sincere. Those who are peacemakers plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of goodness.”

I encourage you to invest in the YMMC series of messages. Details are in the appendix.

My insight from the opening message of the YMMC series is this - I need to understand **what I do** and **how I do it** are all that I can control in any relationship. I have no control over my wife, son, daughter, Mom, Dad, boss or co-worker! If I am wise and follow the six keys I will establish an environment of love, acceptance and trust which improves the chances that others will respond with love, acceptance and trust!

Is it always true that we reap what we sow? If I am attacked and I respond with love and kindness then the attacker will not reap what they sowed. They will not reap what the devil intended them to reap because God has intervened and replaced my hard heart with a loving heart! They will reap love, acceptance and trust! Regardless of how a crazy maker attacks, you can wisely choose to respond as a peacemaker. This is one of those new habits we developed in the “Are You a Peacemaker” session. The discipline of listening to the Holy Spirit develops your self-control. Since you have allowed the Holy Spirit to indwell you with a new heart, you respond with love, acceptance and trust. These new habits that you have been practicing serve you well when the crazy maker attacks. The Holy Spirit brings harmony and peace to you during trials.

What happens when I won't compromise my integrity, antagonize your anger, minimize your feelings, criticize your suggestions, emphasize your mistakes and disguise my intentions? The crazy maker sees a peacemaker! The crazy maker sees someone isn't pushing their buttons! The crazy maker sees someone who cares about them and loves them! The devil is thwarted when the peacemaker does not return evil for evil. The peacemaker's response changes the outcome.

Now it's time to look at how to change your crazy making habits into peacemaking habits. We all do things that push other people's buttons. It may be what we say. It may be how we say it. It may be a facial expression. Whatever it is, we need to figure it out and stop it! We need to empower

those closest to us to point out how we push their buttons. If we can be completely transparent and be completely open to constructive feedback, we can discover our blind spots. Once we have established an environment of love, acceptance and trust, we have the foundation for honest dialogue. We then must take the initiative. We must be vulnerable and willing to receive unbiased feedback from those we empower to identify the things we do that drive them crazy. If we can constructively receive and accept their feedback and make the changes that the Holy Spirit places on our heart, those around us will respond in kind. Not only can we reap what we sow, but we can demonstrate to others that if they reap the seeds of love, acceptance and trust, they too can sow joy and peace.

Personal Reflection:

How are you pushing other people's buttons? How can you be transformed from a crazy maker to a peacemaker? Why do you over react when your buttons are pushed?

Group Discussion:

How can we hold each other accountable to become peacemakers?

Share your struggles that surface when your buttons are pushed.