

A Heart
at Peace

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To Ray

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From the Author

So there I was, sitting at a four-day peacemaking conference in Minneapolis, knowing that a coworker and I had been ramping up hostilities for more than a year. With a fresh commission in hand, I was trying to reconcile writing a book about *peacemaking* while hell-bent on destroying someone else's life. We were miserable warriors, she and I. But both of us were too stubborn to let a little thing like misery stop us from hating each other.

During the conference a colleague and I sat up late each night discussing my situation. He understood the irony. We considered Bible principles and weighed personal options. Practical strategies, however, eluded us. And real solutions seemed more distant than ever.

Three-and-a-half years later, the clichéd metaphor of *the journey* has thoroughly applied to this project. Writing *A Heart at Peace* has taught me some hard lessons—mostly about myself. Lessons like seeing enemies as human beings, forgiving and forgetting without conditions, loving patiently with compassion, mercy, gentleness, humility, acceptance, and respect. Along the way I've also learned to be a practical peacemaker.

My enemy's heart also changed. With the hope of God's promises and the power of his forgiveness, God healed our anger, salvaged our hurt pride, and repaired our damaged trust. We did not make it easy for him. Over time he replaced our at-war hearts with new attitudes that were beating to the rhythm of his own peace-loving heart.

On the same day that I put the finishing touches on this manuscript, the two former enemies enjoyed each

other's company over lunch. We laughed and shed tears about the foolishness of our ill-advised feud. We acknowledged the remarkable miracle that God had worked in us. We recited prayers of confession, repentance, and thanksgiving. We told each other how much we treasured one another's friendship. We agreed to share our experience with others as evidence of the blessings we both have received through the peace and friendship of our new relationship.

Introduction

William Sherman—the celebrated Civil War Union Army general—said, “War is hell.” He was right. Ask anyone who has experienced the heartache and suffering that conflict brings. When nations go to war, it can be hell. When family members loathe one another and work toward destroying one another, it is *hell*. When dissension and discord erupt within the church, *hell* is having its way. The gut-wrenching quarreling and fighting, the divorces and separations, the schisms and painful divisions that have occurred throughout the history of God’s people bear ample testimony to the terrible destruction conflict causes. Today, in our homes, businesses, schools, service organizations, congregations, and mother church bodies, conflict wreaks havoc among God’s people, leaving us with an acrid taste of the unending hatred that awaits unbeliever in hell.

The good news is that the hellish war between God and his rebellious creatures is over. Peace has been restored. A divine love so pure and consistent with God’s gracious nature drove him to slay¹ his dear Son on a battlefield outside the gates of a city called Peace.² It is on that battlefield that our struggle for securing a heart at peace with others begins. His love informs the conversation we are about to have. His grace compels us to explore the challenge of living in peace with one another and the hostile world beyond.

Some wars do more damage, cause more pain, or wreck more lives than others. Only a few are about defending noble causes; those battles are worth fighting. But in the main, conflict can rob us of the life God wants us to have,

both here on earth and in eternity. The seeds of human conflict have the potential to destroy faith and bring souls to ruin. That is the underlying premise of this book.

When conflict threatened the congregation of believers in Corinth, the apostle Paul pleaded, “I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought. My brothers, some from Chloe’s household have informed me that there are quarrels among you” (1 Corinthians 1:10,11). Paul understood that the fragile faith of some of the Corinthian believers was in grave danger because of the dissension and rancor simmering beneath the veneer of a false and uneasy peace.³

When Solomon wrote, “*A heart at peace gives life to the body*” (Proverbs 14:30), his point was that God created us for living lives of peace with one another. In God’s worldview, living without peace is not really living at all. Unfortunately, the English word *peace* doesn’t have the depth or range of a Hebrew *shalom*. With overtones of a greeting, a farewell, a blessing, a prayer, and even a binding contract, a Jewish *shalom* is packed with nuance. A heartfelt *shalom* can connote completeness, wholeness, health, peace, welfare, safety, soundness, tranquility, serenity, prosperity, satisfaction, rest, harmony, or the absence of agitation or discord. You and I have all of these in the special relationship we enjoy with our Lord Jesus. And while we wait patiently for his return, God wants us to live in peace with others. He wants this peace for us because it is for our good. Through commitment, hard work, and personal sacrifice, such earthly peace can sustain vibrant, healthy relationships between brothers and sisters, parents and children, friends, acquaintances, classmates, soul mates, marriage partners, extended fam-

ily, business partners, and, yes, even between Christians and unbelievers. It plays a vital role in maintaining harmony and concord among fellow believers. Nevertheless, God also wants us always to remember that such temporal peace is completely eclipsed by that peace which Christ came to bring.⁴ From the beginning it has always been God's desire to envelope humankind in his loving shalom. Yet the only world we have ever known is the world of struggle and tension, conflict and war, hatred and strife. It is impossible for us to imagine a time when the entire created universe was wrapped in unflawed tranquility. For people like us whose imaginations are clouded by the fog of sin, God inspired his prophet Isaiah to describe a return to Eden's transcendent peace.

The wolf will live with the lamb,
The leopard will lie down with the goat,
The calf and the lion and the yearling together;
And a little child will lead them.
The cow will feed with the bear,
Their young will lie down together,
And the lion will eat straw like the ox.
The infant will play near the hole of the cobra,
And the young child put his hand into the
viper's nest.
They will neither harm nor destroy on all my
holy mountain.

ISAIAH 11:6-9

A haunting emptiness in all of us longs to be filled with God's holy shalom. But only in faith are you and I able to relate to Isaiah's surreal words.

For Adam and Eve, God's garden paradise was filled to overflowing with a satisfying and harmonious inti-

macy with their Creator. The profound peace of their conflict^{less} existence⁵ made such an idyllic life possible. They lived in unimaginable security.

Then their peace was shattered by sin. After safely securing Adam and Eve from the garden, God placed cherubim with a flaming sword⁶—an instrument of war—to guard the way to the tree of life.⁷ Along with thorns, tears, and hard labor, conflict was now an integral part of the human experience. And without peace, life suddenly grew tenuous.

God's blueprint for overcoming sin's curse actually embraced conflict. The war that culminated on Golgotha's hill was a deadly war on a cosmic battlefield. The heel of the woman's Seed—the Messiah—was bruised. But her Seed crushed the serpent's head in the bloody clash. The resulting victory ushered in the divinely ordained peace between the loving Creator-God and his rebellious creatures. This was the only peace that ever really mattered—the transcendent peace that Jesus spoke of in John 14:27 when he reassured his disciples: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." Christ's peace was precisely the kind of peace humankind needed.

After the fall, Yahweh's shalom echoed down through the long centuries that waited for his promise to be fulfilled. In the wilderness of Sinai, the Lord insisted that a shalom be spoken every day to his people as a special blessing: "The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you *and give you peace*" (Numbers 6:24-26). Here was solace for God's hungry, hurting, homeless nation. It gave hope to a beleaguered people who longed for peace at virtually every level of

their meager existence. With these words the Lord *shalomed* his children day after wretched day with the good news that peace with him was already theirs in infinite abundance.

Two thousand years later, the planet that greeted the Lord's Prince of peace was eerily nestled in a span of history that is still remembered as the *Pax Romana* (the "Roman Peace"). Ironically, this brief global hiatus from war was stitched together with violence and brutality. Just months after the angels' hymn celebrating *peace on earth* had graced the Judean plains, Mary and Joseph were forced to flee to Egypt with their infant to escape the murderous hand of Herod the Great. In human flesh, God's Son was no stranger to conflict, even as a young child.

It was a reflective adult Jesus who bluntly observed, "In this world you will have trouble." His poignant words are as relevant today as they were when he said them. Notably, they were spoken in the context of peace: "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. . . . Take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

Overcoming the world meant that Christ would willingly expose himself to the lies of unbelievers, face the unjust judgments of evil men, suffer the ridicule of thugs, and endure a cruel and painful execution. Jesus knew what it was to be hated. When we think of the anguish and injustice he suffered at the hands of sinners like us, our hearts break. But we are also deeply grateful. The Savior's conflict on Calvary separated him from his Father's shalom in our place. Where you and I deserve to be cast out of God's loving presence and thrown into the furnace of everlasting war, his Son willingly and obediently stepped in as our substitute.

Because of Jesus and his redemptive work on our behalf, we can look forward to the eternal shalom that awaits us in heaven's glory.

But we still wait in a world where conflict is the norm and peace remains as ephemeral as ever. That is a problem. Worse, we are as engaged in the daily conflicts of life as our pagan neighbors. Jesus' prophetic declaration in Matthew 10:22 echoes down through the ages: "All men will hate you because of me." Because of Jesus, you and I are hated by a world that despises our Lord Jesus.

It is also true that most of us know what it is to hate others. What Christian hasn't experienced the disturbing emotions associated with a falling out with the boss, a moment of road rage, a bitter argument with a spouse, a fight with a bully on the playground, a raging quarrel with an in-law, a turf war at work, a savage confrontation on the church council, a flare of tempers with a parent, or a contentious charge filed in a court of law? We may recoil at the word, but if we are really honest, *hatred* describes exactly what is going on in our hearts during those times when things are not right in one of our relationships. And those times are many. And during those times, peace may seem to be an elusive specter, dancing out of reach (and almost out of sight) on some distant horizon.

A book about peace is necessarily about conflict's brutal impact on us all. A case study involving conflict at several different levels has been woven into the text. Its purpose is not to entertain but to teach, as is the purpose of the questions at the end of each chapter. They are there to provide a context in which we can see how Bible principles apply to us and our daily lives. The "Kids in Conflict" section (appendix A) and the "Five Smooth Stones" section (appendix B) were added later to help adults teach the basic Bible principles of Chris-

tian conflict resolution to the next generation of God's peacemakers.

Dealing effectively with conflict requires us first to look inward. In Part One we will examine the human heart to see how the sin that so often drives our conflicts causes us to behave as though we are at war. This can be a painful discussion—one that has the potential to bring each of us to our knees in humble repentance.

Part Two is aimed at helping us prepare for our co-mission. Jesus himself used the term *peacemaker* to describe a unique aspect of ministry.⁸ Chapters 8 through 14 will look at conflict intervention from a gospel perspective, pondering the characteristics of a godly peacemaker and the tools God provides for doing such work. We will wrestle with the question of whether to approach group conflicts through internal intervention strategies or seek professional intervention from outside the organization. It is an important question that deserves discussion. We included it with the confidence that readers will understand there are several viable ways to approach intervention. The model provided is not introduced as the only solution or even the best solution. It is meant only to serve as a vehicle for offering a variety of ideas and suggestions.

In Part Three (chapter 15) we will turn our attention to the peacemaking work of Matthew chapter 28, where Jesus unleashes his army of believers (the church militant) into a holy battle to win lost souls for God's kingdom. Armed with the message of God's peace, this conversation will take us beyond the relatively safe environment of Christendom into the hostile milieu of an unbelieving world. It is the most noble of all battles. In the murky shadows of a world destroying itself in loveless conflict, a single truth emerges: *The only heart that*

truly knows peace is a heart purified in God's undeserved and unearned forgiveness. While lost souls remain in contention, we have opportunities to explain the profound connection between *peace* on earth and *life* in Christ. On this battlefield, God gives purpose and meaning to our lives.

part
one
PART ONE

Christians in Conflict

Anyone who claims to be in the light but hates his brother is still in the darkness. . . . He does not know where he is going, because the darkness has blinded him.

1 JOHN 2:9,11

Sin That Entangles

The Bible doesn't provide a lot of details in its account of the first human conflict. Moses (the author of Genesis) devoted only five sparse verses to a description of how Cain's felony went down. Moses' narrative leaves readers wondering why the account lacks the passion for such a brutal crime. It also leaves open questions about Cain's underlying motive and why he would kill Abel if he is really angry at God. The version that follows is admittedly a speculative account. Its purpose is to help us get a better grip on the reality of conflict and zero in our focus on conflict's sin-driven origin.

In the cool mist of a pristine dawn, a dark thread of smoke rose perpendicular against the burgundy horizon. Cain's brother was at it again, making a mockery of their clan's hardscrabble labors by wasting what little food there was on yet another sacrificial offering to the Lord Jehovah. "Oh, the stupidity," thought Cain, and he grieved over Abel's foolishness.

For years Cain had brought his own token offerings of grain and vegetables to pay his respects. And he still did occasionally. Only, his heart was no longer as enthusiastic as the hearts of the others. His hard-earned offerings were aimed at winning the Deity's good will. But they seemed to go unappreciated.

“If only Abel were less passionate about his worship,” thought Cain. “Why must he openly flaunt his feelings for the Deity with these burnt sacrifices? . . . And why so often? Surely it is poor stewardship to render a prime animal into a heap of ashes. The healthy ones are the best breeders. Doesn’t the Holy One desire that we first feed ourselves and meet the needs of our family?” With the authority of the firstborn, Cain felt duty bound to curb his brother’s zeal and instruct him on the realities of their meager existence in a hostile world.

But something else, certain questions, irritated Cain. Why, for example, were Abel’s offerings always accepted while his were not? How had he failed where Abel had succeeded? Was not the fruit of his labor just as worthy as Abel’s? Lately Cain had even begun to wonder if Abel might be poisoning his relationship with the Almighty One. Had Abel somehow turned God against him? As a result, he harbored jealous thoughts over the intimacy his brother enjoyed with the Lord. At the same time, Cain wondered to himself if Abel’s God was really worthy of all the attention; after all, it was he, Cain, who lived by the sweat of his own brow. He survived day-to-day by his own cunning and the skills he had developed. If he prospered, it was by his own hand; if he failed, he would have only himself to blame.

As Cain stormed off in the direction of Abel’s sacrifice, the Lord whispered truth to him one final time—a merciful warning: “Beware! Sin, like a wild beast, is crouching nearby, taut and ready to attack. You are its intended prey.”

Yahweh’s words left no impression. Cain had already made up his mind. It was his duty to shape the will of his younger sibling, to impress upon Abel that he, Cain, was the elder and therefore knew what was best. If Abel

was unwilling to listen, he was prepared to be forceful, to draw a line in the sand. His brother needed to understand that the first law of survival in a sin-ridden world is the law of strength, power, leverage, and brute force.

And Abel did resist. He had other ideas about what was important—priorities that his brother would never understand. From Abel’s perspective, Cain trusted too much in his own cunning. For Abel, a relationship with the Lord God was far more important than any other thing. After all, it was God who fed him and the other members of his household, clothed them, sheltered them, protected them. How could he live without worshiping his infinite provider? How else would he express his appreciation for the merciful Creator’s plan to make everything right and good again?

The brothers argued. Cain’s angry words filled Abel with sadness. Abel’s gentle and submissive posture only angered Cain all the more. Soon Cain was consumed by a white-hot rage that demanded more than angry words. “Come,” he invited, “walk with me across this meadow so that we can resolve our differences.” But Cain’s intent was to deceive Abel instead of reconciling their dispute. He knew that while his brother’s posture might have been submissive, Abel would never submit to his will. It was time to take firm action.

When Cain was sure no one else could see, he picked up a jagged rock and struck his brother’s skull from behind—with full force. As Abel’s broken body slumped to the ground with a heavy thud, Cain was pleased. The dark red liquid pumping rhythmically from the gaping wound in his brother’s skull meant that his brother was not going to get up to fight back. Abel was dead.

Cain had helped his father slaughter many animals; he understood death. But this was the first time Cain had

seen the death-curse happen to a fellow human being. It made him sick enough to retch. Life is a precious thing. But Cain was not sorry this had happened. "Now," thought Cain, "at least the others will know that I am the elder and the wiser. Abel should have listened to me when he had the chance." And Cain's heart became as hard as the bloodstained rock in his hand.

Though the account of Cain murdering Abel in Genesis chapter 4 may be terse and lacking passion, it also has the makings to be one of the Bible's most gripping narratives. It has a great plot; plenty of violence; deception and intrigue; a likeable, innocent victim; a coldhearted villain; dramatic tension; and conflict. Kids love it. They don't see the sad implications this story has for every man, woman, and child who ever walked the planet.

Adults understand. We have seen the path of destruction that sin leaves in its wake. We have real-life experiences with the bitter taste of conflict. Cain's brutal

Cain's attack on Abel reminds us of the dark thoughts that can infest our own hearts.

attack on his brother reminds us of the dark ideas that can infest our own hearts—ideas that can even lead to murder.

No, this event was not recorded for the purpose of holding the reader's attention raptly with a well-spun tale. God's Spirit moved Moses to record it for a very good reason. You and I are supposed to learn something from it. So, what is it that we are supposed to learn?

When scholars read this, many see this account as a necessary part of the larger story line of Scripture. They say that it is important for making sense of everything else that follows—the rest of the Bible, or even the rest

of human history. They see it as a bridge that takes us from the first sin to the truth about all the succeeding generations (including ours and those that will follow us), all plagued with the same impure thoughts and selfish motives that were passed along from Adam and Eve to Cain and Abel and the rest of us that followed. These scholars are, of course, right. The story of Cain and Abel tells us something about ourselves.

Others argue that this is the first example of how sin affected our relationships with one another—proof that sin not only destroyed our relationship with the Creator but did untold damage to the way we interact with one another. They are also correct.

Lutheran theologians like to assert that this is a lesson aimed at teaching us about God’s mercy and love, even for an unbeliever like Cain. And it is clearly that. We will pick up that thread in later chapters when we discuss conflicts between believers and unbelievers.

A Question of Identity

For the majority of us, however, these unsettling verses often boil down to one very important question: *With whom do I identify—Abel, the innocent victim, or Cain, the murderous villain?* Note, the question is not *With whom do I sympathize?* Most sympathize with Abel. He didn’t deserve to be murdered. We all agree on that. No, the question is more about how we see ourselves. Are we more like Cain, who has evil thoughts passing through his mind that he can’t, or won’t, control? Or do we see ourselves as Abel, the poor schlep who gets whacked for being a decent, God-fearing person? It’s a great way to begin our discussion about conflict, because no matter which direction you are inclined to lean, your answer has the potential to tell you a lot about yourself.

None of us cares to think of himself or herself as a murderer. Nevertheless, there are at least a few people in every crowd who will immediately identify with Cain. They recall a relationship in which they have fantasized about *erasing* a certain individual who perennially makes their life miserable. Now they feel guilty for having entertained such hateful thoughts.

Do you identify with Cain? Have you ever really hated someone?

On the other hand, many Bible readers will see themselves walking in Abel's sandals—the bystander who doesn't deserve to be drawn into a fight. There is a little self-righteousness in this position. Those who identify with Abel may also feel justified in hissing and booing all the murderous villains who have ever lived—Attila the Hun, Adolf Hitler, Jack the Ripper, Osama bin Laden, and all the rest.

It is always interesting to debate this Cain-or-Abel proposition. Some people actually become quite passionate as they defend one position or the other. Of course, it's a trick question. In the end, you and I need to identify with *both* Cain *and* Abel.

Sometimes we really are innocent victims—walking the strait and narrow, taking the high road, minding our own business. In spite of our innocence, we may still get dragged into a war that is not of our own making. But there are other times when we are responsible for doing untold damage to another person because we *started it*, or *prolonged it*, or *finished it* in a way that caters to our darker (read that *sinful*) desires.

Martin Luther described the Christian's dual nature as a constant battle between the *old* (sinful) *Adam* (sometimes also called the *old man*) and the *new man* modeled after Christ Jesus. Luther saw the new man emerging as

the dominant force, the result of God's Spirit working through Word and sacrament. But Luther also recognized that while we remain in this life, the old Adam will continue to be a problem. He said that the old, sin-driven self needs to be *drowned in daily repentance*. That's interesting language—*conflict language*. Drowning, especially drowning under someone's deadly grip, is a violent way to die. Yet Luther argued that our old Adam needs to be put down regularly, emphatically, often, and in a violent manner so that it does not get a toehold on a Christian's life and overwhelm him or her with all sorts of vices and temptations.

The Conflict Within

A very real conflict is still going on in each one of us between our old Adam and our new man in Christ. The battle is being waged all the time. This is a good reason for being careful about picking our battles. A noble cause is certainly worth going to war over. Jesus fought a noble battle against the self-righteous hypocrisy of the Pharisees. Of course, Jesus is God's Son—a perfect and righteous person. His conflicts were always righteous. Sinners like us would only be fooling ourselves to think that all of our conflicts are truly as altruistic and honorable as the ones Jesus fought. In fact, the opposite is more likely to be true. Most of the battles you and I wage are aimed at serving ourselves. We may do a good job of masking our underlying purposes, but upon closer examination, we are likely to discover that ego and self-will have had a lot of influence in our battles.

Understanding this sinner/saint (old Adam/new man in Christ) nature of every Christian is especially helpful for understanding conflict. No matter how you slice it, all Christians are in the same boat in at least this one respect: We are all works in progress.⁹ But because Christ Jesus

has taken up residence in our hearts and the power of God's Holy Spirit is working in our lives, the saintly new man is in control . . . most of the time.

On the other hand, our new man in Christ may not always be in control. (And here's the sticking point.) When conflict strikes and we engage the enemy, the likelihood that our new man will be able to remain in charge decreases.

You've heard of the phenomenon that adversely affects decisions made in the heat of war. Military experts refer to this as the *fog of battle*. Well, this mysterious syndrome has a spiritual parallel that kicks in whenever we are engaged in the heat of a spiritual battle. Even without the element of hatred, our spiritual perspective can easily become confused under battle conditions. In the environment of conflict, the old man sees an opening for putting himself back in the driver's seat. Just when we need to keep our eyes focused on Jesus, we tend to stop following his model and revert back to our old-Adam instincts.

In his book on Christian conflict resolution, Alfred Poirier writes, "We must understand that the conflicts people are in are conflicts in people—conflicts of desires, demands, and idols. These are true strongholds that are impregnable except through the gospel of Jesus Christ. And it is this gospel that we were called to preach and teach."¹⁰ While you and I zealously confess our faith in the Lord Jesus and his saving gospel, we are far from having immunity from this world's conflicts. Even when we are trying to help other Christians work through their personal conflicts,¹¹ we must be aware of the dark and ugly things that Christians are capable of thinking and doing when driven by their old Adam. And we need to apply that same awareness to ourselves, lest we become tangled up in some of the same sins.¹²

A Disturbing Fact of Life

This concept that we are still vulnerable to Satan's conflict trap is sometimes hard for Christians to swallow. But it's true. You and I don't always live as God wants us to. And when we are not behaving as God's children, we are prone to getting caught up in a culture that lives and breathes conflict. At the very least, *sin lies at the door*. Because we are both old Adam and new man in Christ, we can still be deceived by sin's deadly allure. When that happens in an environment filled with tension, bitterness and rage can finally bubble to the surface in full-blown, white-hot hatred. Wrongful attitudes and emotions give way to sinful behaviors and actions. And we stop behaving as members of God's family and start behaving like children of the devil.

Perhaps you are saying to yourself, "*But I go to church every week, pray every day, read the Bible with regularity. I don't go around picking fights with people.*" Some of Jesus' disciples held a similar view. Like us, they too were works in progress. Sometimes their failures and shortcomings were rather glaring. On the night when Jesus was bound and dragged away like a common criminal, the fog of battle set in for Peter, and soon he was slashing away at his enemies with a sword.

The author of the general letter to the Hebrews wrote, "Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith" (12:1,2).

The "great cloud of witnesses" in the early part of that verse is referring to the many heroes of faith who appeared throughout the Old Testament. Abel is men-

tioned, along with Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, and a few others. The lives of these people stand as models for Christians like us. We've learned about many of them in Sunday school or sitting at the feet of a God-fearing parent or grandparent. All of them were works in progress. Almost all of them had to deal with conflict at some time in their lives. But with God's strength, they persevered. With the examples of these great men and women of faith to guide us, we need to cast off those sins that threaten to ensnare us.

There are, of course, lots of ways to become entangled in sin — sex, drugs, greed, a craving for power. The list is long and daunting. But one way stands out. It was the reason given in Scripture for God's utter destruction of all living things at the time of the great flood (Genesis 6:11): violence and conflict. Conflict is a veritable web of temptations that can involve all of the other vices that man's sinful imagination might follow.¹³ And wherever conflict threatens, sin is crouching at the door; it desires to have us. With God's help, we must learn to master it.¹⁴

For Thought and Discussion

- How do we go about the grim business of daily drowning our old Adam?
- Why are we more vulnerable to temptation when we are caught up in a conflict?
- As God's *works in progress*, what thoughts regarding conflict could be included in our daily prayers?