

Berean Fellowship's Statement on Conflict, Disputes, and Lawsuits

The church is populated by sinners who have received grace but continue to face challenges in working out their salvation,¹ especially in relationships. As the people of God, we commit to overcome our offenses in a biblically prescribed manner leading to resolution and peace. Bitterness, resentment, and broken relationships are not acceptable for the people of God.

The church has adopted as its practice the principles taught in Ken Sande's book, *The Peacemaker*,² which provides wise biblical counsel for resolving disputes.

When two church members cannot resolve a conflict privately, they should seek the help of other wise church members. The church's elders also are trained and desire to assist members in mediating disputes. If a dispute becomes long-standing without successful reconciliation, members should seek help from the elders.

According to I Corinthians 6:1-8, Christians should never bring a dispute among believers before a civil law court. Instead, they should seek the mediation of the church through elders; if one or both parties prove to be refusing to turn from sin that produces the conflict, the elders should seek to apply the steps of church discipline to restore peace and order in the church. Church members agree to refrain from filing any lawsuits between Christians and to seek means of reconciliation through the church, unless a minimum of two elders review their situation and confirm that litigation is biblically legitimate.

¹ Philippians 2:12

² Ken Sande, *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, 2nd Edition, Baker Books, Grand Rapids, Mich., 1997.