



Rick Love (PhD, Fuller Theological Seminary) is an internationally-recognized expert in Christian-Muslim relations. He is President of Peace Catalyst International, which devotes much of its resources to peacemaking between Muslims and Christians, and serves as Associate Director of the World Evangelical Alliance Peace and Reconciliation Initiative.

A Brief Q&A with Rick Love

What exactly is peacemaking?

Rick Love: If I had to choose only one verse in the whole Bible to summarize biblical peacemaking it would be Romans 12:18, “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” It is both concise and comprehensive—a virtual “peacemaking for dummies.” Each part of the verse offers valuable insights on peacemaking: acknowledging it’s not always possible to make peace (“If it is possible”), affirming proactive peacemaking (“as far as it depends on you”) and encouraging comprehensive peacemaking (“live at peace with everyone”).

The Bible’s teaching on peacemaking summarized by Romans 12:18 is comprehensive. I describe a biblical basis and practice for peacemaking in six spheres: personal, interpersonal, social, urban, national, and international peace. Each of these six spheres of peacemaking is biblical, each builds on and encompasses the previous sphere, and each is more complex than the former.

How did you become a peacemaker?

Rick: I did not choose to be a peacemaker; it chose me. My experiences mediating conflict and pursuing peace as a pastor, an international church planter and as the International Director of Frontiers led me on a pursuit to understand and practice peacemaking. Then the evil of terrorism crashed into my life. The events surrounding 9/11 pushed me further into peacemaking. My focus until then had been interpersonal peacemaking. But after 9/11, I sensed that God was leading me to address broader social dimensions. Christian-Muslim peacemaking became a priority.

Describe what readers will find in *Peace Catalysts*?

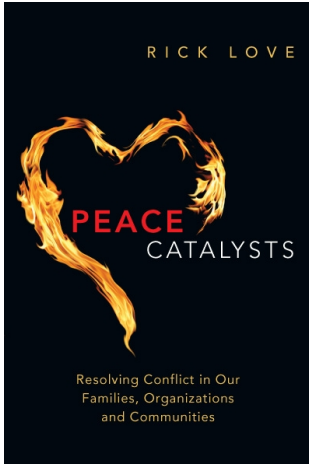
Rick:

1) I introduce the readers to the peacemaking graphic which outlines the breadth and depth of God’s work of peace in the world around four foundation stones (the God of peace, the peace of God, the gospel of peace and God’s blessing on peacemakers) and eight pillars (pray for peace, pursue peace with all, take responsibility, lovingly reprove, accept reproof, ask for forgiveness, forgive others, love your enemies). The four foundation stones teach that peacemakers are blessed . . . to represent the God of peace, pursue the peace of God and share the gospel of peace. The eight pillars of peacemaking exhort us to pray for peace and give practical ways we can proactively pursue peace with everyone.

2) I describe six recurring “conflict zones” on teams and organizations: character problems, growing pains, cultural differences, gifting fit, philosophy of ministry and personality differences. I illustrate these six areas of conflict through three biblical stories of conflict on

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Peace Catalysts: Resolving Conflicts in Our Families, Organizations and Communities

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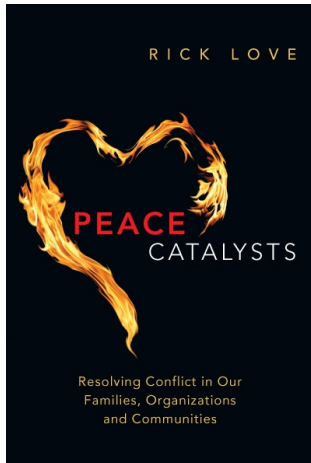
teams (conflict on Jesus' team because of James and John; conflict in the early church because the Greek speaking widows were overlooked; conflict between Paul and Barnabas because of Mark).

3) I describe the relationship between peacemaking and evangelism, highlighting God's comprehensive peace purposes and providing an integrated approach to peacemaking and witness. I also put a strong emphasis on right motives. We do peacemaking not as an evangelistic strategy but as a God-glorifying good deed. In this context we model the very message we seek to communicate.

What is the purpose of *Peace Catalysts*?

Rick: I've discerned three gaps in evangelical practice and literature. First, the gap between theological education and ministry experience. Evangelical Bible schools and seminaries generally fail to equip their pastors and leaders in peacemaking. This book will help fill that gap. Second, my bookshelf reveals the second gap. There are many books focused on either interpersonal peacemaking (one end of the peacemaking spectrum) or on preventing war through nonviolent resistance (the other end of the peacemaking spectrum). There is little literature that fits in between that gap. *Peace Catalysts* does just that. Third, books on peacemaking often fail to show the strong relationship between peacemaking and the gospel of peace. *Peace Catalysts* provides an integrated perspective on peacemaking and witness.

Peace Catalysts is a practical guide to Christian peacemaking, providing a biblical framework for resolving conflict in all spheres of life.



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Rick Love, founder and president of Peace Catalyst International, shares the principles that have guided his peacemaking efforts around the world. Masterfully blending Scripture and personal experience, he provides a biblical framework for how the God of peace seeks restoration for all who experience conflict—in the home and workplace and even across international borders.

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A Reluctant Peacemaker

On October 13, 2007, 138 influential Muslim clerics, representing every school and sect of Islam from around the world, wrote an open letter to Christians everywhere, calling for dialogue based on the common ground of “love of God and neighbor.” This open letter was called “A Common Word.” The most famous response to this call for dialogue was issued by the Reconciliation Program, which in turn resulted in a global conference at Yale University on July 24–31, 2008.

The leaders of the Yale Center for Faith and Culture asked me to help them put on the conference at Yale. So instead of simply studying about peacemaking, I got a chance to learn practically about it during my sabbatical. I did some research, but most of my time was spent preparing for and putting on the Common Word Conference.

Seventy-five high-level Muslim leaders joined seventy-five high-level Christian leaders for a week of dialogue about the Great Commandments. This unprecedented global conference was a turning point in my life. I have never met so many Muslim scholars, sheikhs, grand muftis and princes. More importantly, learning about Islam directly from these Muslim leaders and getting to know them personally over meals impacted me profoundly. I began to devote myself to becoming a full-time peacemaker and to breaking down barriers between Christians and Muslims. God was calling me to be a bridge builder.

Think about this: Christians and Muslims comprise over half the world’s population. If we can’t have peace between Christians and Muslims, then it will be virtually impossible to have peace in the world. As I continued to ponder and pray, I sensed God calling me to start Peace Catalyst International, the nonprofit organization I currently lead.

On the way to changing the world, the Lord changed me. Everywhere I turned, people held grudges, harbored hurt feelings and experienced broken relationships. Once I began making peacemaking a major theme of my life, a good friend and coworker said to me, “It must be great to be known as a peacemaker.”

“Well,” I said, “peacemaking is no fun. It’s really hard. But I do it because this is what Jesus taught. Peacemaking is a commitment to obey Christ’s commands regarding relationships. Peacemaking is love in action.”

I am a reluctant peacemaker. You might be too. Welcome to the journey!

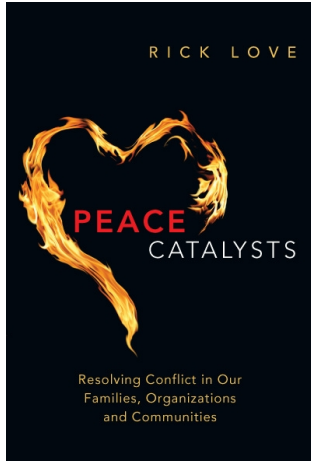
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