

# Christian Counseling & Conciliation

## Mediation Process

- G** Greetings and Ground Rules
- O** Opening Statements
- S** Storytelling
- P** Problem Identification and Clarification
- E** Exploring Solutions
- L** Leading to Agreement(s)

**Greeting and ground rules** are led by the mediator(s), last about 20 to 25 minutes, and include a short devotion.

Ground rules generally include:

1. Commitment to confidentiality
2. Honesty and openness
3. Respectful communication
4. No interrupting
5. Take notes
6. No assuming motives
7. Address new offenses quickly
8. No disruptive departures
9. Caucuses and caucus reports
10. Breaks
11. Conciliator communications
12. Amend ground rules if needed

During **opening statements** each person has the opportunity to explain what they believe needs to be accomplished in order to resolve their differences (what his/her hopes and expectations are for the process). Each party will have 2-3 minutes to do this.

During **storytelling** each party has the opportunity to tell his/her story so that everyone can hear the story and better understand the storyteller's perspective. This is the lengthiest part of the mediation process and can take several hours. The mediator(s) will help to clarify both the facts and the perceptions relating to the details of the story. From this point on, the parties will be encouraged to confess their wrongs and seek forgiveness from those whom they have offended.

**Problem Identification** begins after the stories have been told and begins the process of focusing parties' attention on the key issues that need to be resolved. An "issues list" will be developed by all parties working together.

**Exploring solutions** occurs when the parties work together to search for specific solutions to the issues and then evaluate the possible solutions. During the evaluation process, some solutions will be eliminated in favor of better solutions.

**Leading to agreement** occurs when the parties reconcile and reach agreement on the substantive issues. The agreements reached by the parties are recorded by the mediator(s) for the parties to review and edit if necessary. This document may reflect issues resolved, issues remaining that need further attention, biblical principles that guided the process, actions to be taken in the future, and when and how the results will be evaluated.