

a meeting. The petition should be in writing and signed by at least one team member. Specific charges should not be made in the petition, but simply a statement regarding the conviction that a conflict conference is needed.

When the conference convenes, the team leader should begin with prayer and the reading of appropriate Scripture such as 1 Cor. 12:12ff, and Eph. 4:1-16. The team leader or the petitioner (in the case of a meeting called for by a team member) should outline the reasons why the meeting was called. The petitioner may, in fact, be a guilty party who wants to clear his conscience by confessing his fault to his brethren. "Brethren, I asked Bob to call this meeting because I want to confess to you that I have been harboring a grudge against several of you for some time, and I want to make things right with the Lord and with you."

In this case, the man's repentance is evident in his attitude. If there is a known procedure for providing such an opportunity to clear one's conscience, it is more likely that this kind of thing will be done. If it is done, many potential conflicts will be eliminated before they start. There will be a greater sensitivity to sin that divides and a desire to deal with it before it goes very far.

It is not always necessary to go through a formal procedure. Such confessions may come in an informal meeting or a regular Bible study and prayer time when the Scriptures and communion with God presses the guilty conscience. Much depends on the atmosphere within the team. If a man knows he is loved and accepted for what he is by the others, he will not fear to confess his faults. If he is rejected or senses rejection by the others, he will fear making such an admission.