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THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Bereans “received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily, to see whether these things were so.”

1

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THE BEREANS


ACTS 17:11

Prov. 18:13
Lesson #27
How to Unify
11/30/2025

2

“If we accept that a mother can kill even her own child, how can we tell other people to not kill each other? Any country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people to love, but to use any violence to get what they want.”


Mother Teresa



3

“Senator, when you took your oath of office, you placed your hand on the Bible and swore to uphold the Constitution. You didn’t place your hand on the Constitution and swear to uphold the Bible.”

Jamie Raskin
(law professor & congressman)



4

Why is “peacemaking” so important in God’s agenda for His Kingdom in cultivating soil for the Gospel?

- ✓ Life is full of paradoxes and challenging circumstances.
- ✓ The natural response is to try to change the circumstances by addressing three things in two different ways:
 1. Who or what is the problem?
 2. Who or what is to blame?
 3. Who has a solution that is clear, simple, & quick?
- ✓ Two frustrating & futile plans must be challenged.
 1. Those who seek to exaggerate paradoxes with drama (THIS WEEK).
 2. Those who seek to eliminate paradoxes with dogma. (Next weeks lesson)

God’s call for “peacemaking” is to quiet both plans so that the world can hear the Gospel?

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How to be a “peacemaker” if you are a DRAMATIZER and need to COOL the DRAMA & BROADEN your views.


Proverbs 18:13

“He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him.”

Four subjects that we can address as examples:
Abortion, Socialism, Israel, Homosexuality

The reason we don’t want to address these issues may be that we fear it will just make things worse.

Could our fear come from the way we understand and address them?



6

State public policy is not intended to reflect Kingdom ethical Standards without its King.

Public ethics



outside the community of faith

Parochial ethics



within the community of faith

7

We are to be sensitive to not force Kingdom ethics on those outside the family of faith.

1 Corinthians 5

¹² For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? ¹³ But those who are outside, God judges. Remove the wicked man from **among yourselves**."

We are to be sensitive to the lesser of two evils.

Matthew 19

"7...Why then did Moses command to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?" ⁸ He (Jesus) said to them, "**Because of your hardness of heart, Moses permitted you** to divorce your wives; but from the beginning it has not been this way."

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Making peace in the USA?

Abortion

- ✓ **Scripture** gives support for the recognition of pre-birth humanity (bearing the Image of God).

Jeremiah 1:5

"Before **I formed you in the womb** I knew you."

(Ps. 139:13-16, Job. 10:8-12, Lk. 1:41-44)

- Many Christians hold a pro-life view personally.
- But should it be the law of the land without the consent of the governed?

- ✓ **The Constitution** grounds ethical legislation in "common sense" not special revelation.
- The majority of the people must embrace it.

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Common or natural law sense.

In a pluralistic state, the Pro-life argument must be based on **common sense points** -



Both are alive and share the same DNA but no one thinks of a pinecone as a pine tree.



Depending on the age of the mother, some 10-50% of pregnancies are miscarriages but not generally treated like the death of a child.

We celebrate "birthdays" not "conception days".

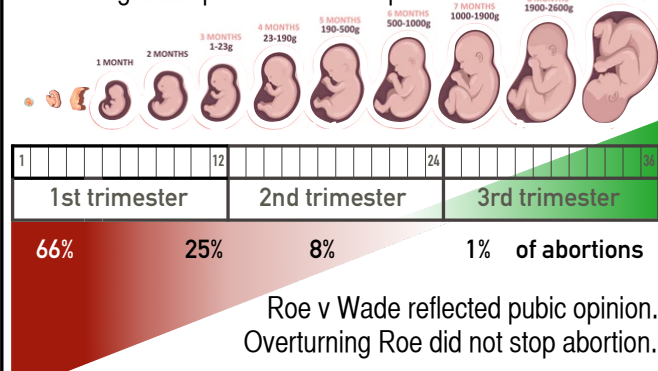
- Address the motivations for, implications of, and alternatives to abortion.

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Prenatal development, **viability**, and **abortions**

Don't ignore factual truths that may lessen the drama.

Twinning takes place after conception.



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How might a peacemaking, pro-life, Christian present its case to a secular state?

- ✓ **Use common sense reasoning** rather than a Bible verses for making your point.
- ✓ **Put the issue in proper context**
 - an unwanted result to an **unwise free choices**
 - a **civil rights** conflict between mother & child
- ✓ **Respect facts**
 - When does personhood **begin**?
 - Use common facts in proper **context**.
- ✓ **When in doubt be pro-life** because human life is too sacred to risk termination for any reason.

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Making peace in the USA?

Socialism

- ✓ **Scripture** teaches theocracy and models communism not democratic capitalism.

(Old Testament Israel)

- When **Israel** asked for a **democracy**, Got put them in political “timeout” and is still waiting for repentance.
- The **early church's** “**Spirit filled**” impulse looked very socialistic not democratic.

Acts 4:32

“And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own; **but all things were common property to them.**”

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2 Corinthians 8

“13 For this is not for the ease of others and for your affliction, but by way of **equality** — 14 at this present time your abundance being a supply for their want, that their abundance also may become a supply for your want, that there may be **equality**; 15 as it is written, “**He who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little had no lack.**”

- ✓ **AMERICAN Christians** are eager to quote the Bible on abortion issues, **but not on political system issues.**
- ✓ **Note the CONTEXT** - This was not a common pattern mandated for the church through the ages.
- ✓ **The POINT** - Disciples of Christ should not be too fearful of a socialistic spirit in government. **Their concern should focus on the spiritual quality of human leadership in any system.**

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Tip Sharing

Why is it done?



- To maintain fairness when many different individuals may be serving the same person.
- To provide an incentive for greater overall quality of service to the customer.
- To encourage a sense of teamwork and mutual support among those offering service.

“promoting the general welfare” & looking like spiritual “salt & light”.

15

A healthy community and leadership, teach, model, encourage, & maintain a culture that is:

Truthful

Transparent

Trusting

Trustworthy

Thankful

Tolerant

Tender

Tough

A peacemaking community needs compassion, cooperation, & compromise.

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How might a Christian view various types of government?

- ✓ **Respect the need for civil order** in a broken world with broken people.
- ✓ **Recognize the importance human leaders.**
Christianity had its beginning under **Nero**.
Christianity was weakened under **Constantine**.
- ✓ **All political systems are risky.**
- ✓ **The American system** (like others) is a hybrid of individual freedom and “common good” regulations.
- ✓ **Vote for leaders who are “civil”** in relationships & “servants” to the general welfare of all people.

17

Making peace in the USA?

Israel

- ✓ **God promises to bless** the seed of Abram

Genesis 12:3

“And **I will bless those who bless you**, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed.”

- Some Christians **fear the curse of God** will come on America if it doesn't support Israel no matter what.
- Israel's present occupation of & behavior in Palestine **may not be a part of God's promises of Gen.12:3.**

Check out Deuteronomy 30:1-5

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Deuteronomy 30

"1 So it will be when all of these things have come upon you, the blessing and the curse which I have placed before you, and you call *them* to mind in all the nations where the Lord your God has scattered you, 2 **and you return to the Lord your God and obey Him with all your heart and soul** in accordance with everything that I am commanding you today, you and your sons, 3 **then the Lord your God will restore you from captivity**, and have compassion on you, and will gather you again from all the peoples where the Lord your God has scattered you. . . . 5 The Lord your God will bring you into the land which your fathers possessed, and you shall possess it; and He will be good to you and make you more numerous than your fathers."

Israel's present occupation of Palestine does NOT seem to have shown spiritual repentance nor do its policies reflect Kingdom values.

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True Israel is marked not by "bloodline" but by "faith" and "Spirit".

Romans 9

"6 **But it is not as though the word of God has failed. For they are not all Israel who are descended from Israel;** 7 neither are they all children because they are Abraham's descendants, but: "*through Isaac your descendants will be named.*" 8 That is, **it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.**"

Galatians 3:29

"**And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.**"

(Rom.2:28-29, 4:11-12, Gal.3:7,26-28, 6:16, Phil.3:3)

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Making peace in the USA?
Homosexuality

- ✓ **God's visual aid** reminds the human race that its spiritual choices are unnatural to His Image.

Romans 1

"22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and **exchanged** the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of **corruptible** man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures..... 26 For this reason **God gave them over to degrading passions**; for their women exchanged the natural function for that which is **unnatural**, 27 and in the same way also the men abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing **indecent acts** and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error."

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- ✓ **God's visual aid** parallels Egypt's fate when they refused to obey God.

Exodus 5:1

"Let My people go."

Exodus 11

"4 Then Moses said, "This is what the Lord says: 'About midnight I am going out into the midst of Egypt, 5 and all **the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die**, ... 6 So there shall be a great cry in all the land of Egypt, such as there has not been *before* and such as shall never be again."

- ✓ **Homosexuality is a visual aid for the whole human race, not a sin of the gay community.**

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How might a peacemaking Christian view the homosexual person?

- ✓ **Homosexuality is unnatural** and a **visual aid** for the whole human race for choosing to worship something other than God.
- ✓ **It is a sign for the whole human race.** Like the family of the first born of Egypt, it is bearing the visual aid for all humanity.
- ✓ **Support gay people's civil rights** but not their behavior.
- ✓ **Show compassion, empathy, & social inclusion.**
- ✓ **GET THE POINT**, share the shame, show love.

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Why is "peacemaking" so important in God's agenda for His Kingdom in cultivating soil for the Gospel?

- ✓ Two frustrating & futile plans must be challenged.

1. Those who seek to exaggerate paradox with drama (THIS WEEK).

- Be a PEACEMAKER - render to Caesar and to God. Respect the distinction between ch. and state.
- Be a PEACEMAKER - respond with being quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to anger. Jas.1:19

2. Those who seek to eliminate paradox with dogma. (NEXT WEEK)

God's call for "peacemaking" is to quiet both plans so that the world can hear the Gospel?

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