



1



2

Two platforms that bear witness to the Christian Gospel.

Responding to the **ups** and **downs** of life in this world.

Responding to **diversity** in the Body of Christ.

The world is watching.

3

With diversity conflict is inevitable, but combat is not.

John 14:27

“Peace I leave with you; **My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you.** Let not your heart be troubled, **nor let it be fearful.**”

Matthew 5:9

“Blessed are the **peacemakers**, for they shall be called sons of God.”

Romans 12:18

“If possible, so far as it depends on you, **live peaceably** with all.”

Matt.5:23-24,38-48, 18:15-17, Rom.12:17-21, 14:19, Eph.2:13-18, 4:1-3, Col.3:15, 1Pet.3:8-11

4

James 3

“¹³ Who among you is **wise and understanding**? Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the **gentleness of wisdom.**”

“¹⁷ the **wisdom from above** is first pure, then **peaceable, gentle**, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. ¹⁸ And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is **sown in peace** by **those who make peace.**”

Jesus came into the world to bring peace through **reconciliation with God and between people.**

Wisdom from above is a peace this world cannot give or take away.

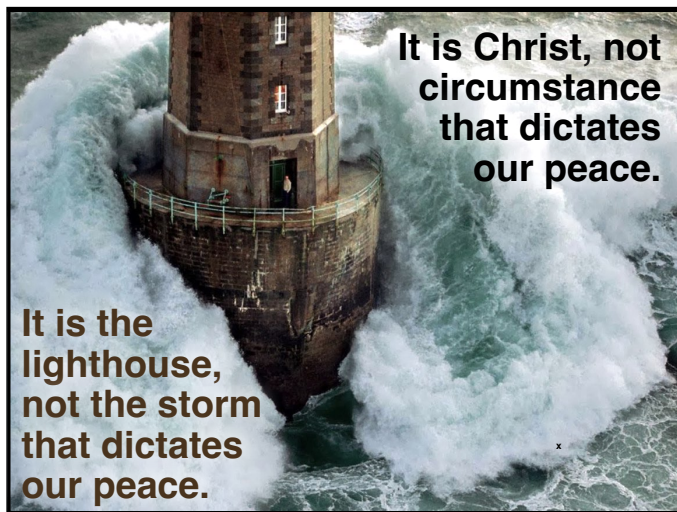
“Wise decision-making” comes from **Peacemaking, Alien, Ambassadors.**

5

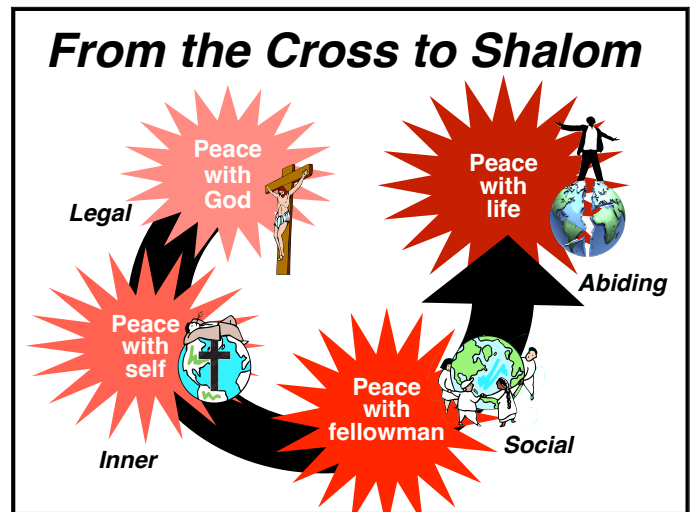
How is Christian peacemaking unique?

1. Its origin is the **“God of Peace”** (Rom.15:33; 16:20; Phil.4:9; 1 Thess.5:23; Heb.13:20) **(not humanity).**
2. **Christ’s death and resurrection** make peace with God available through grace and faith, **(not human achievement).**
3. Disciples of Jesus are peacemakers though the **Gospel message** **(not political or military power).**
4. The message is **sacrificial love and forgiveness,** **(not meditation or mere absence of conflict).**
5. It is based on **a change in inner responses,** **(not changing the outer circumstances).**

6



7



8

Some divisive conflicts are necessary (separating truth from error)

1 Corinthians 11

"17 But in giving this instruction, I do not praise you, because you come together not for the better but for the worse. 18 For, in the first place, when you come together as a church, I hear that **divisions exist among you**; and in part, I believe it. 19 For **there must also be factions among you, in order that those who are approved may have become evident among you.**"

Many divisions are unnecessary & destructive (making minor issues major issues)

1 Corinthians 1

"10 Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree, and there be no **divisions among you**, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment. ... 12 Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "**I am of Paul,**" and "**I of Apollos,**" and "**I of Cephas,**" and "**I of Christ.**" 13 **Has Christ been divided?**"

9

How to distinguish major from minor issues.

1. Respect the **CONTEXT**.

- We live in a **New Covenant community**.
- We are all a "**kingdom of priests**" who need each other and are needed by each other.
- The "stronger" are **sensitive** to the "weaker".
- The **Word and Way of the Cross** are the heart of the New Covenant Gospel.
- We are motivated and empowered by the **embedded Love of God**, not external Law.

10

2. Remember that we are seeing dimly.

1 Corinthians 13

"9 For **we know in part**, and we prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I used to speak as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. 12 For **now we see in a mirror dimly**, but then face to face; **now I know in part**, but then I shall know fully just as I also have been fully known. 13 But now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these is love."

- Punctuate doctrinal convictions wisely.

(?) (,) (.) (!)

Wisdom does not mean that we know it all, but rather that we **know what is needed** in any given **circumstantial context**.

11

Peacemaking starts with spiritual eyesight.

Matthew 6

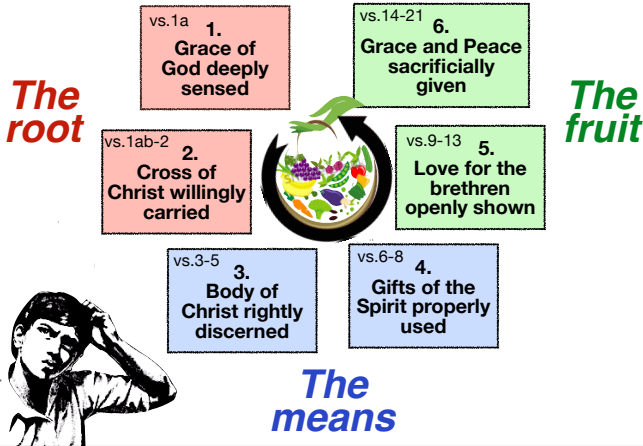
"22 The lamp of the body is the eye; **if therefore your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.** 23 But if your eye is bad, your whole body will be full of darkness."

Recognize that peacemaking is:

- a **basic part of Christianity**.
- a **core part of the Gospel message** and its witness to the world.
- a **challenge for the church** (from the 1st cent. on).
- a **major theme in the Apostles' teaching**.
- **not without limits and context**.

12

Romans 12 - A profile of the church's mission



13

Romans 12

"14 **Bless those who persecute you**; bless and curse not. 15 Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. 16 **Be of the same mind** toward one another; **do not be haughty in mind**, but associate with the lowly. **Do not be wise in your own estimation**. 17 **Never pay back evil for evil** to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, **be at peace with all men**. 19 **Never take your own revenge**, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. 20 "But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals upon his head." 21 **Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.**"



14

Conflict is an opportunity for Christians to **respond with wisdom and grace as peacemakers**.



1 Cor. 13:4-7

Love is

patient
kind
not jealous
does not brag
is not arrogant
does not act unbecomingly
does not seek its own
is not provoked
does not take into account a wrong suffered
does not rejoice in unrighteousness
rejoices with the truth
bears all things
believes all things
hopes all things
endures all things

a response to:

trials
insults
success of others
success of self
power and authority
freedom
competition
challenging confrontation
injustice
failure of others
gossip and slander
loss
doubts
discouragement
delayed expectations

Conduct a spiritual audit. **Grade yourself on your response to each of these issues that comes up this month.**

15

Why it is important for Christian congregations to respect and welcome the whole Body of Christ?

- **Making disciples of Christ** is incomplete without it.
- **Humble, openminded, community** is the fruit of it.
- **Separating MAJOR from minor** doctrine needs it.
- **The glory of God** deserves and demands it.
- **Reaching the world** is hindered without it.
- **Breadth and depth** of spirituality shows it.



16

A "HAMSTRUNG" congregation is where:

- **mission** is focused on one aspect (only) of Body life (evangelism, charismatic experience, social reform, sacraments, bibliolatry, denominationalism, etc.)
- **unity** is tied to minor issues (behavioral or belief).
- **legalism** is reducing faith to ethical & confessional rules.
- "orthodoxy" = confusing Old & New Covenant cultures.
- **membership** excludes parts of the Body of Christ.
- **health** is measured by nickels and noses.



17

Peacemaking is a powerful testimony to God's Gospel of Grace.

1. **Teaching the Full Gospel** - adopted, anointed, alien, ambassadors. (Word & Way of the Cross)
2. **Relating to one another** - functioning as diverse, body parts that love one another.
3. **Responding to the world** - life's ups & downs.
4. **Nurturing** the weak & immature with patience.
5. The way we relate to the outside world is a **show / tell** ministry of our faith, hope, and love.

18

Obstacles to peacemaking

1. **Idolatry** - looking for life in all the wrong places.

James 4

"¹ What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that **wage war in your members**? ² You **lust** and do not have; so you **commit murder**. You are **envious** and cannot obtain; so you **fight and quarrel**. . . ."

Conflict must first be resolved **IN US**
and then it can be resolved **THROUGH US**.

We MIGHT identify our "functional" messiah by noting:

1. what do we worship, make sacrifices for, & invest in?
2. what triggers our anger or anxiety?
3. what makes us feel alive?

19

Obstacles to peacemaking

2. **Fantasy** - unrealistic expectations of fallen people living under the Mosaic Law of God.

Ephesians 4

"¹ I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, **with all perseverance, and moral discipline, compelling the disobedient among you to repent, preserving the holiness of the church through strict adherence to the Law of God.**"

3. **Anger & Anxiety** - expecting and penalizing others for not supporting (or being) **OUR MESSIAH** (lifegiver).

20

Wise Decision Making

Previous lessons

Seek **WISDOM** through the **N.C. (Spirit)**
not the **O.C. (law)**

See ourselves from a **Spiritual MINDSET**:
Kingdom - adopted, anointed, (life)
World - alien, ambassador, (light)

Submit to the **BODY OF CHRIST's** diversity -
put your best foot forward without losing
your balance or kicking your neighbor.

Today's lesson

Soothe conflicts as **Disciples of the Prince of Peace**
Conflict is inevitable, combat is not.

21

Peacemakers stay cool - avoiding these common mistakes:

They are not
surprised by
conflict.



They are
not afraid
of conflict.



They are not
fomenters
of conflict.



They are not
easily shaken

22

Decision making

Next Week
Justin Wu

The Promise
and Peril of
Prosperity

23

APTOTTEACH
A bishop then must be... apt to teach 1 Timothy 3:2

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LISTEN WATCH

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