



Going Deeper - Weekly Sermon Discussion Guide

The Future of the Church: Calling all Peacemakers

12/20/2020

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, goodwill toward men." Luke 2:14

Five miles from Jerusalem, sacrificial lambs were raised out in the open in compliance with ritual regulations. The shepherds had to keep a watchful eye as the lambs were to be without blemish. Imagine being out under the open night sky with no light pollution, staring up at an amazing array of stars overhead. One night, suddenly, crazy light just appeared. Maybe it was like standing directly in front of a spotlight – blinding. The blinding light was heavenly creatures that appeared out of nowhere with a message of peace, and how did the shepherds react? They were “sore afraid”, terrified!

When their adrenaline settled down, they went to witness what the angels had declared, the Prince of peace. The shepherds who spent their time overseeing the sheep that would be sacrificed for their sins knelt before the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world.

This Prince of peace was born into a society that was waiting for a leader to spearhead a revolution for freedom from Rome. Although this phrase was coined much later, they believed that ‘might makes right,’ that war would bring peace. That, however, was the antithesis of Jesus’ mission. Jesus did come to lead a battle, the same battle we have been born to fight, but that battle is not against flesh and blood. It is against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

In this world there will be trouble but in the midst of a world of conflict we will find peace in the person of Jesus. We must be at peace with God so we can be at peace with one another. This does not mean we avoid strife or conflict, we do not appease those who oppose or differ from us. Peace is not the absence of conflict, it is not quiet, it is not passive. But peace is powerful and we are to pursue it and become peacemakers. We do this by pursuing the beauty and presence of God. The future of the church will be marked by peace and full of peacemakers.

Our world is in desperate need of revolutionary peace and we are positioned to become powerful peacemakers. Now is the time. Jesus is the way. Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called sons of God.

So Consider...

Reflect - what does peace look like? In your heart? In your home? In your world?

What is the path for you to become a peacemaker?

How can your status as a peacemaker be sustained?

Take Action: Consider reading the book: *The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict*, by Ken Sande - Experience the healing power of biblical peacemaking as you learn to apply scriptural principles to conflict in the world around you. Parse the elements of arguments and begin to see that there's not really any difference that can't be overcome with the right perspective. It's practical guidance for resolving all types of conflict and hope for relationships you thought were unsalvageable.

Our pastoral leadership can help you process any thoughts, emotions, or questions that this message may bring up in you. Contact them at info@northendcollective.org.

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. ~Tess