

# Peacefakers, Peacebreakers, and Peacemakers

## Introduction to Peacemaking

### Introduction

1. Overview of the class
  - a. Timeline of Class
    - i. Sept. 11 – Dec.
    - ii. Every Sunday Except Nov. 27<sup>th</sup> (After thanksgiving)
  - b. 1<sup>st</sup> Six Weeks: Overview of Biblical Principles for Conflict Resolution
  - c. 2<sup>nd</sup> Six Weeks: More Detailed Practicalities for becoming Peacemakers
2. Overview of Today
  - a. Group Discussions
  - b. Show why Peacemaking is a high calling for all in God's Kingdom
  - c. Present the framework of Faith, Hope, and Love
3. Group Discussions (3 min.)
  - a. Describe a time you were impacted by someone who chose to be a peacemaker.
  - b. Describe/share a time you desired peace in a situation but it didn't come.

### Peacemaking and the Gospel (10 min.)

1. **Big Idea:** Peacemaking is the heartbeat of our Christian calling because conflict is central to our existence
2. Explain how **Faith, Hope, and Love** is a helpful guide
3. *Faith is formed by the Gospel: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21*

**\*How does this passage change the way you view yourself – your past, your present, and/or your future?**

- i. Notes
  1. “For Christ’s love compels us... no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again” – Motivated by love for our savior, we no longer live for ourselves.
  2. “God reconciled us to himself through Christ” – God is the ultimate peacemaker!

3. “Ministry of Reconciliation” – Peacemaking is your calling, so steward it well.
4. “Christ’s Ambassadors, God making his appeal through us” – Christ uses his people to bring about peace.

ii. Point: God is the peacemaker who reconciled us in Christ. He took the initiative and has blessed us with the calling and ministry of reconciliation... all Christians are called to be peacemakers – ultimately with God but also with others. As we strive to be peacemakers, it’s Christ who is bringing peace through us by his Spirit.

iii. Faith Undermined

1. What is faith?

a. Faith is primarily tied to past experiences

1. Remembrance of the past redemptions of God
2. You recall stories of when you were protected or provided for
3. When you walk in faith, you’re aware of life’s awfulness, but you’re more aware of the goodness and awesomeness of God
4. Faith helps us to see themes in our story
5. Faith/trust in the Lord enables us to rest

b. This is both true with God and other people

2. Broken trust or betrayal undermine faith

- a. When was a time you trusted someone, and they burned you? What was that like?
- b. Question the author of your story: Is God good? Real?
- c. We can feel ashamed for putting trust in that person
- d. Responses to broken trust or betrayal:
  1. Paranoia
  2. Fatalism
  3. Refusal to need others
  4. Unrealistic Optimism

iv. *Significance for Peacemaking*

- a. People have faith (or no faith) in other people
- b. This faith often runs deeper and reflects on God
- c. People act according to their beliefs
- d. People fail to engage in peacemaking because they're holding a belief that prevents them from engaging.
- e. Examples:
  1. People genuinely don't care, so I why should I
  2. People will always let me down, so I won't trust
  3. If they knew this part of me, I would be rejected
  4. If I'm not successful, pretty, powerful, perfect, or \_\_\_\_\_, then people won't love me or appreciate me.

\*Which of the above examples do you resonate most with?

\*Are there any others you could add?

\*How can you see diminished faith playing itself out in your conflicts, either relationally or circumstantially?

\*What would it look like to not act according to your undermined faith?

## **Hope Undermined**

1. What is hope?
  - a. Hope is primarily tied to the future
  - b. Hope is a remembrance of what is to come
  - c. Includes dreams, desires, longings, and imaginations of what could be
  - d. Invites you into the "already not yet"
2. Experiences of powerlessness undermine hope
  - a. Remembering past betrayals reminds you of what is to come... you become hopeless for change
  - b. Can result in a "loss of voice"
  - c. Results from hopelessness:
    - i. Cynicism – "It will never be different"
    - ii. Conformist Mindset – "It'll be easier to just go with the flow"
    - iii. Unrealistic Resolve – "If no one else will or can, I'll change things and make a difference... no matter what"

\*What are some ways that hope can be restored?

## **Love Undermined**

1. What is love?

- a. Love is primarily tied to the present
- b. Purposeful, sacrificial giving
- c. Mutually enjoying and taking pleasure in one another
- d. A commitment to helping others be what he ought to be
- e. It is empowering and acts for the good of another

## 2. Uncertainty will undermine love

- a. What happens when you give your heart to someone you love, and they reject it?
- b. Ambivalence (ambiguity) is the coexistence of opposing attitudes or feelings toward a person, such as love and hate or trust and distrust.
- c. Examples:
  1. You want to confess your selfish anger to your spouse, but don't know how they'll respond
  2. You want to care for the homeless person by your car window, but you don't know how they'll use the money
  3. Your siblings hate each other and become hostile every time they get together, but you don't know if entering in will help or make things worse.

**\*Choosing to love is a risk that is shaped by your faith and hope. In what ways are faith and hope playing out in the examples above?**

## 3. Wrapping Up

In what ways does the faith, hope, love framework help you better understand conflict?

How does the Gospel uniquely provide solutions to our faith, hope, and love?

What are you most looking forward to about this class on being a Peacemaker?

What are you the most nervous about?