

## Intro to Christian Peacemaking

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God. (Matthew 5:9)

And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. (James 3:18)

And work for the peace and prosperity of the city where I sent you into exile. Pray to the LORD for it, for its welfare will determine your welfare. (Jeremiah 29:7)

### Five Biblical Paradigms for Christian Peacemaking

1. *Christians proclaim the gospel of Christ and teach people how to live in peace with God and one another.*

<sup>16</sup>On the cross Christ did away with our hatred for each other. He also made peace between us and God by uniting Jews and Gentiles in one body. <sup>17</sup>Christ came and preached peace to you Gentiles, who were far from God, and peace to us Jews, who were near God. <sup>18</sup>And because of Christ, all of us can come to the Father by the same Spirit. (Ephesians 2:16-18)

2. *Christians live as salt and light within the imperfect systems of the culture. They are called to be agents of peace, justice, and integrity even within these corrupt systems.*

<sup>13</sup>“You are the salt of the earth, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? It is no longer good for anything except to be thrown out and trampled under people's feet. <sup>14</sup>You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. <sup>15</sup>Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. <sup>16</sup>In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 5:13-16)

<sup>12</sup>Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him, “Teacher, what shall we do?” <sup>13</sup>And he said to them, “Collect no more than you are authorized to do.” <sup>14</sup>Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or by false accusation, and be content with your wages.” (Luke 3:12-14)

3. *The church's communal life should embody a radical “contrast community” that demonstrates the peace, justice, and reconciliation that characterize life in the kingdom of God.*

<sup>42</sup>And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. <sup>43</sup>And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. <sup>44</sup>And all who believed were together and had all things in common. <sup>45</sup>And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. <sup>46</sup>And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, <sup>47</sup>praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved. (Acts 2:42-47)

<sup>25</sup>But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, <sup>26</sup>for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. <sup>27</sup>For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. <sup>28</sup>There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:25-28)

4. *Christians also help hurting people who are outside the church community.*

<sup>27</sup>“But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, <sup>28</sup>bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. <sup>29</sup>To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. <sup>30</sup>Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. <sup>31</sup>And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them. (Luke 6:27-31)

So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith. (Galatians 6:10)

5. *Christians speak the truth of God's word in a way that challenges oppression in the world.*

<sup>8</sup>Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute.<sup>9</sup>Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy. (Proverbs 31:8-9)

<sup>1</sup>Woe to those who decree iniquitous decrees, and the writers who keep writing oppression, <sup>2</sup>to turn aside the needy from justice and to rob the poor of my people of their right, that widows may be their spoil, and that they may make the fatherless their prey! (Isaiah 10:1-2)

### **Questions for Reflection**

1. How has your relationship with Jesus helped you to find peace and purpose in your own life?
2. What opportunities do you have to be salt and light within your daily life and your existing relationships?
3. How can you share the love and compassion of Jesus with hurting people in your city?
4. Who are some peacemakers that you admire? What can you learn from their example?