

August 5, 2018

Peace that Heals

Ephesians 2:11-22

The Church is not a place for parishioners to come into, but instead they are the household where God chooses to live. People who live together after hostility form the kind of community in which God abides. Paul describes Christ's peace as reconciling "both groups to God" (vs. 16) We imagine reconciliation involves two parties. We forget human schisms cause an even greater separation than the hostility between clans, tribes, and nations. They alienate us from God. Our reunion in Christ reunites us not only with one another. It is the path to our reunion with God (E. Searcy, 2009).

God saw our brokenness and sought to extricate us from it—but only with our cooperation. God will not cajole or bully us, but wants to woo us for our own sakes. The Bible is the story of God's attempt to effect atonement, bringing us back to our intended condition of relatedness. God was, in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself. Each of us is called to be an ally of God in this work of justice and reconciliation (J. Buchanan, 2003).

Because of Christ, we have a bold assignment to engage in difficult situations, because Christ has already established peace. Because of His reconciling work in us, we can interrupt and linger in hard places, knowing Christ Himself will intervene.

What places near us need reconciliation?

Who would be encouraged by our presence/faithfulness?

Who is Jesus bringing near to us, so they will meet Him?

Next week: *Missionaries, LuVerne & Rachel Ward, S. Africa*

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SCRIPTURE READINGS FOR THIS WEEK:

Today: *Psalm 105* (What is God saying to you?)

Monday: *Deuteronomy 7:6-14*

Tuesday: *Exodus 16:1-21*

Wednesday: *Romans 8:31-39*

Thursday: *2 Corinthians 5:16-21*

Friday: *Colossians 1:1-14*

Saturday: *Revelation 19:1-10*

Almighty God, send the light of Your Son into our lives anew today. Let Your presence touch our minds and hearts with Your mercy, grace, and truth. Direct our thoughts, words, and steps to the end that we may walk in Your way today and always. May we be agents of Your peace. In the Name of Christ, Amen.

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