

**New Year 2022**

“How to be a Peaceful Peacemaker”

James 1:19; Proverbs 18:2

The Bible calls us to be peacemakers in our families, in our churches, and in our communities.

Matthew 5: <sup>9</sup> “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

Romans 12: <sup>18</sup> If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Romans 14: <sup>19</sup> Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

Ephesians 4: <sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

**Biblical Peacemaking**

Biblical peacemaking is about actively seeking to \_\_\_\_\_ conditions for human thriving. It’s about seeking restorative justice and righteousness.

That means it isn’t about conflict \_\_\_\_\_ or even an absence of conflict. It’s not about avoiding tough topics. It’s not about bowing to the will of tyrants and bullies in our families or the places we work or in our churches.

But seeking to restore conditions of human thriving is not an \_\_\_\_\_ for being argumentative and quarrelsome and nasty. In fact, peace is about reconciliation, and long-term human thriving requires strong families and united communities.

**Peaceful Peacemakers**

Peacemakers speak truth from a heart of \_\_\_\_\_. ((Psalm 85:10; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 6:23; 1 Thessalonians 5:13; 2 Timothy 2:22; 1 Peter 5:14; 2 John 14; Jude 2; 2 Corinthians 13:11))

James 1:19 shows us how to be peaceful peacemakers, but it’s more than a technique or \_\_\_\_\_.

Proverbs 18: <sup>2</sup> Fools find no pleasure in understanding but delight in airing their own opinions. [= The wise find pleasure in \_\_\_\_\_.]

1. Peaceful peacemakers explore \_\_\_\_\_.

"... she went on and started crying and it was a moving thing. And I started crying, and I realized that for the first time in my life, I was starting to love my own mother." (Quentin Shultze)

Listening not only leads to understanding, it also has the potential to unlock \_\_\_\_\_ and compassion, even for someone with whom you vehemently disagree or for someone who has hurt you.

"Very quickly I went from feeling like the holiest 12-year-old in the world to feeling like the worst possible 12-year-old in the world—the one that was so awful that nobody could even bother to warn me that someone like me could exist." (Greg Coles)

2. Peaceful peacemakers \_\_\_\_\_ to find common ground.

We are all God's image-bearers and God, by his grace, shares from his goodness, joy, knowledge, and wisdom with everyone (the doctrine of common grace).

"A movement is made up of so many different voices, and they aren't all singing from the same hymn book. They're singing different songs. They're singing in different voices." (Julia Wood)

3. When peaceful peacemakers speak, they speak gently and \_\_\_\_\_.

Being "slow to speak" isn't about shutting up or not sharing an opinion or perspective or concern. It's about speaking from a deeper understanding and speaking from love.

We don't get a pass on Galatians 5:13-16,22-26.

"Critical generosity" is a mode of critique that's "appropriate to the demands of the historical condition." (David Roman)

"Uncle Charlie" isn't \_\_\_\_\_, but can you, when you speak, having listened, having deeply understood Uncle Charlie's backstory, having found common ground, can you apply "critical generosity," pointing out where and how you agree and speaking compassionately to his fears, before critiquing something he holds sacred that you deeply disagree with? Can you walk in the Spirit, speaking with gentleness, kindness, and love?

## Personal Reflection & Small Group Questions

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. Read James 1:19 and Proverbs 18:2. What can we learn about peacemaking from these two verses?
3. What is a context where you find it difficult to be a peacemaker?
4. What did you learn that you can try to apply in that difficult situation in making every effort to be a peacemaker?