



Making Peace

December 6, 2023

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“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”

Matthew 5:9

Peace is the theme of the second Sunday of Advent.

What is peace? Is it only the absence of war? Freedom from conflict? Tranquility?

With wars and civil wars raging in the Mideast, Ukraine, Sudan, and elsewhere, we can think of Jesus’ call for blessed peacemakers to be an impossible task for most of us. We don’t control the governments or entities involved and have no power to bring peace to these places.

Before you throw up your hands in resignation, realize the ways you *can* make peace. For those global peace needs, keep praying. (Remember, too, prayer is never “just” praying. It is a vital ministry in and of itself.) You can also advocate to your government officials as you feel called.

Closer to home, we are confronted with conflict at work, with friends, colleagues, and in our families. That is where we can be seekers of peace. Few of us like conflict and try to avoid it whenever possible. Yet, ignoring conflict only lets it fester and grow. Instead, we need to lean into our discomfort and address the matters at hand. We can’t force peace, demanding others agree to a solution of our creation. To be peacemakers, we have to set aside our agendas and listen. Listen to what is being said and what is not being said. What lies under the presenting problem?

If you don’t feel called to be a peacemaking mediator, you still can be a maker of peace by your own interactions with others. Some of the things I try to remind myself are to not jump to conclusions about others’ motivations, to listen more than talk, to be honest how my own actions have caused misunderstanding or even harm, and to rectify my mistakes.

Sadly, there will always be conflict and disturbances that take away tranquility and work against peace. Yet, Children of God, we can still work to alleviate the conflict near at hand. Then we will live into our calling to be Peacemakers and a blessing to others.

Grace and *Peace*.

Lisa

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