

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Ephesians 6:15

Lesson #49

Peacemakers

07/22/2018

Spiritual Warfare

- **Conflict and struggle are expected** parts of the Christian life in a fallen world.
- **The armor consists of things we “put on” and use** as a part of our new life in Christ.
- **The focus is not on the things we must “put off”**. The Law focuses on sin - what we must put off.

This is perhaps why repentance, discipline, exorcism, the Law, etc. are not a part of the armor.

1

Ephesians 6:11

“Put on the full armor of God so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.”



2

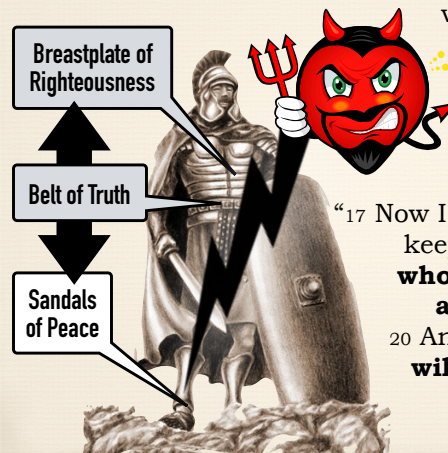
Ephesians 6:15

“and having shod your feet with the preparation (readiness) of the **gospel of peace;**”

Romans 16

“17 Now I urge you, brethren, keep your eye on **those who cause dissensions and hindrances. . .**

20 And the **God of peace will soon crush Satan** under your feet.”



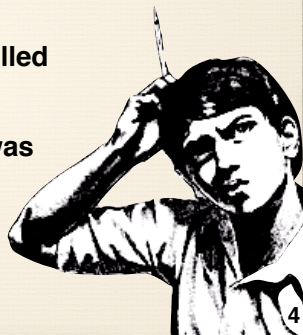
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Christians are called to be peacemakers.

Matthew 5:9

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”

- Jesus was prophetically called “Prince of Peace.”
- Jesus’ unlike Muhammad was never a military leader.
- Early Christians were noted for their pacifism.



4

Hope

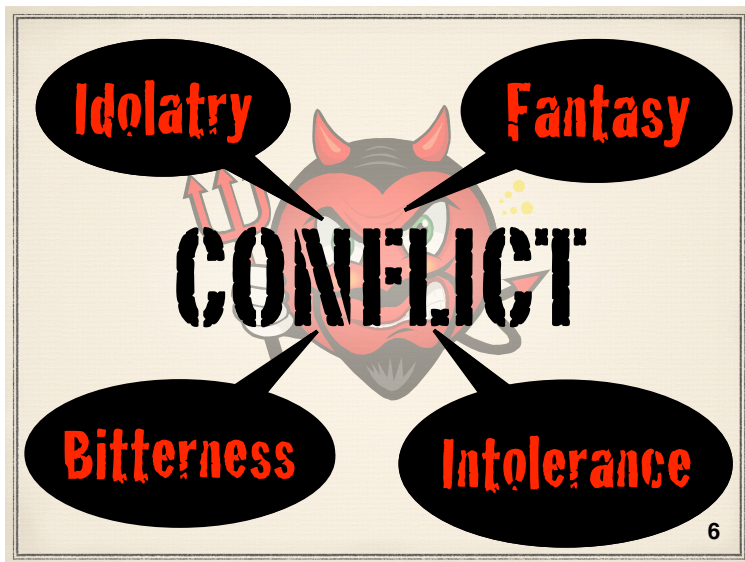
Reality

Peace

Love

Grace

5



Obstacles to peacemaking

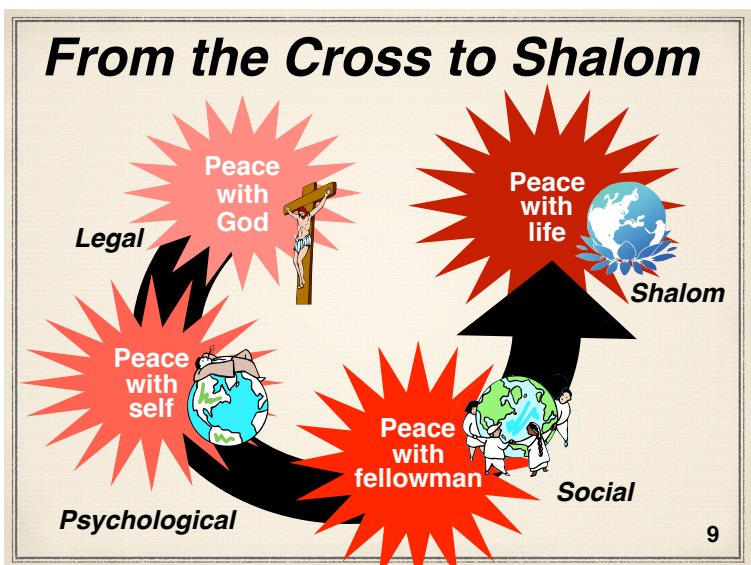
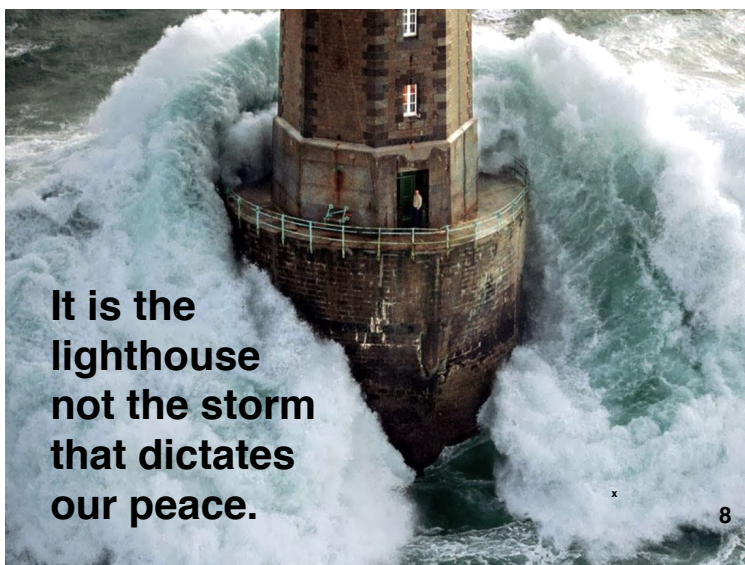
1. **Idolatry** - misplaced hope.

James 4

“¹ What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you? Is not the source your pleasures that wage war in your members? ² You **lust** and do not have; so you **commit murder**. You are **envious** and cannot obtain; so you **fight and quarrel**. . . .”

Conflict is first resolved in us and then through us.

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Obstacles to peacemaking

2. **Fantasy** - unrealistic expectations of fallen people living in a fallen world.

Ephesians 4

“¹ I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all perseverance, and moral discipline, compelling the disobedient among you to repent, preserving the **holiness** of the church through strict adherence to the Law of God.”

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Obstacles to peacemaking

2. **Fantasy** - unrealistic expectations of fallen people living in a fallen world.

Ephesians 4

“¹ I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ² with all **humility** and **gentleness**, with **patience**, showing **forbearance** to one another in **love**, being diligent to **preserve the unity** of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

3. **Bitterness** - penalizing others for being lousy as MY messiah.

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Conflict is an opportunity for Christians to respond with wisdom and grace as peacemakers.



1 Cor. 13:4-7

Love is a response to:

patient
kind
not jealous
does not brag
is not arrogant
does not act unbecomingly
does not seek its own
is not provoked
does not take into account a wrong suffered
does not rejoice in unrighteousness
rejoices with the truth
bears all things
believes all things
hopes all things
endures all things

trials
insults
success of others
success of self
power and authority
freedom
competition
challenging confrontation
injustice
failure of others
gossip and slander
loss
doubts
discouragement
delayed expectations

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Obstacles to peacemaking

4. **Intolerance** - "falling short" of the grace of God leading to bitterness & defilement.

Hebrews 12

"12 Therefore, **strengthen** the hands that are weak and the knees that are feeble, 13 and **make straight** paths for your feet, so that the limb which is lame may not be put out of joint, but rather be **healed**. 14 **Pursue peace** with all men, and the **sanctification** without which no one will see the Lord. 15 See to it that **no one comes short of the grace** of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled;"

13

Zealots are not peacemakers

Too much faith & hope in political solutions

Too much passion associated with politics

Equating political views with spiritual orthodoxy

Destruction of temporal structures to establish the spiritual

14

Peacemakers stay cool - avoiding three mistakes.

- They are not surprised by conflict.



- They are not afraid of conflict.



- They are not fomenter of conflict.



They are not easily shaken

15

Peacemakers build bridges not bunkers.

- They have faith that Christ can reconcile.



- They see conflict as opportunity.

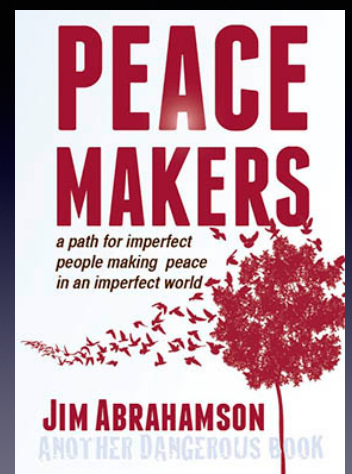
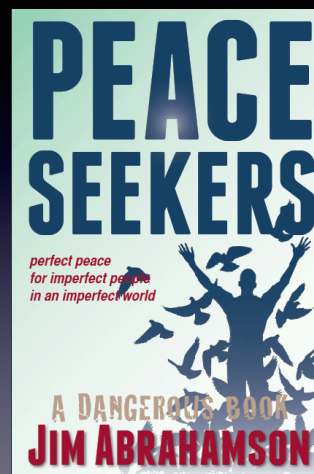


- They project a sabbath rest spirit.



They are instruments of reconciliation

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17

PEACE SEEKERS

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------------|
| 1. Grace and Holiness | <i>Position</i> |
| 2. Grace and Law | <i>Freedom</i> |
| 3. Grace and Faith | <i>Hope</i> |

PEACE MAKERS

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 4. Grace and Sabbath | <i>Worship</i> |
| 5. Grace and Repentance | <i>Humility</i> |
| 6. Grace and Forgiveness | <i>Empathy</i> |

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How can I know that I am armed with the Gospel of Peace?

- When I stop looking for life in all the wrong places.
- When I am fearless in the face of a broken world full of broken people.
- When I view conflict as a challenge to build a bridge not a bunker.
- When the love and grace of God are no longer threatened by the holiness and wrath of God.
- When I take my baptism seriously - know myself, accept myself, forget about myself, and give myself.

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