



- Where are we going?**
1. Character and Christianity
  2. Character and the image of God
  3. Character and the Body of Christ
  4. **Challenges that shape and show character.**
    1. Vision - direction & expectations
    2. Fear - faith
    3. Relationships - community
    4. **Conflict - differences**
    5. Change - growth
    6. Success & Failure - stress
    7. Private life - the heart

challenge #4

Godly character makes for peace.

- Persons of Godly character discern the difference between:**
- peacemakers, pacifism, and empathy fatigue.
  - necessary & unnecessary conflict.
  - conflict and combat. (next week)

- Persons of Godly character discern the difference between:**
- peacemaking, pacifism and empathy fatigue.

<b>Peacemaker</b>	<b>Pacifism</b>	
The Cross of Christ is supreme	Physical peace is supreme	
Peace is always in the context of the Cross	Jesus is a poster-boy for social harmony	

## Peacemaker

The Cross of Christ is supreme

Peace is always in the context of the Cross



Pacifists strive to avoid all physical conflict.

*Luke 3:14*

“Some soldiers were questioning him, saying, “And what about us, what shall we do?” And he said to them, “***Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse anyone falsely, and be content with your wages.***””

- Note: Jesus does not ask the soldier to become a pacifist in order to follow him.

*Matthew 11:12*

“From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and ***violent men take it by force.***”

- Israel had an appetite for the kingdom but not with Jesus as the King.
- Those who seek peace more than or apart from Christ do violence to the kingdom and the King.
- **Do we come to Jesus only insofar as he gives us an “abundant life” here and now?**

## Peacemaker Empathy fatigue

The Cross of Christ is supreme

Feeling good is supreme

Peace is always in the context of the Cross

Love means never hurting anyone's feelings



## Peacemaker

The Cross of Christ is supreme

Peace is always in the context of the Cross



Strive to avoid all personal, emotional conflicts.

*2 Corinthians 7*

“<sup>8</sup> For though ***I caused you sorrow by my letter***, I do not regret it; though I did regret — for I see that that letter caused you sorrow, though only for a while — <sup>9</sup> I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made ***sorrowful according to the will of God***, in order that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. <sup>10</sup> For ***the sorrow that is according to the will of God*** produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation; but the sorrow of the world produces death.”

- In a culture of radical pluralism, passion and power define morality.
- **Are we willing to help others even when we know it will initially hurt their feelings?**

## Persons of Godly character discern the difference between:

- **necessary and unnecessary conflict.**

## When should I make peace and when must I disturb it?

celebration contentment confusion conflict combat

How much should I sacrifice for unity?

Is unity more important than making the right decision?



Should I oppose everything that is evil?

When should I disturb the peace?

### Three kinds of conflict in the church

*necessary*

*unnecessary*

**Loving Discipline**

Respecting God-given boundaries

1 Cor.5

**Healthy Debate**

Respecting corporate discernment

Acts 15

**Destructive Combat**

Disrespecting God-given diversity

1 Cor.12

### 1 Corinthians 1

“<sup>2</sup> to the church of God which is sanctified in Christ Jesus, **saints by calling**, with all who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours: <sup>3</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>4</sup> I thank my God always concerning you, for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, <sup>5</sup> that **in everything you were enriched in Him**, in all speech and all knowledge, <sup>6</sup> even as **the testimony concerning Christ was confirmed in you**, <sup>7</sup> so that you are not lacking in any gift, **awaiting eagerly the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ**, <sup>8</sup> who shall also confirm you to the end, blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>9</sup> God is faithful, through whom you were **called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.**”

**In but not of the World?**



**All Christians are called and equipped to be the Body of Christ in this world**

1. **united in Christian faith, hope, & love**
2. **alien ambassadors in an evil age.**

### 1 Corinthians 3

“<sup>1</sup> And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to babes in Christ. <sup>2</sup> I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, <sup>3</sup> for **you are still fleshly**. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and **are you not walking like mere men?**”

- **Are we cultural thermostats or thermometers?**

**Character flaws in the Corinthian church**



**They had made peace with the world's values.**

**They were conflicted with fellow believers, over personal tastes.**

**Character flaws in the Corinthian church**



**At the root of all this was their declaration of independence from Christ or any external authority.**



**Sign #1 of a combat culture - dysfunctional church style.**

**Avoid toxic environments.**



**Rigid Control - invites overt or covert dissension.**



**Refusal to submit to Christ - or anything outside the sacred SELF.**



**Radical Chaos - creates insecurity & disorder.**



**Ephesians 1**

**“22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as *head over all things to the church,* 23 *which is His body,*”**

- The Body of Christ is not headless nor does it have numerous heads.
- The essence of worldliness is willful, functional, independence from God.
- **Is Jesus mine or am I his?**

**1 Corinthians 12**

**“1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware. 2 You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the dumb idols, however you were led. 3 Therefore I make known to you, that *no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is accursed;” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.*”**

**Is our main thing to keep the main thing the main thing?**

**1 Corinthians 6**

**“1 Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? 2 Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world is judged by you, *are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts?* 3 Do you not know that we shall judge angels? *How much more, matters of this life?*”**

- The church is competent to judge matters of conflict and should do so.
- **Are we willing to enter conflicted situations when it may be messy?**

**When does a peacemaker become a disturber of the peace?**

**When the King is displaced by the kingdom or anything else!**

**When the Body of Christ is being disrespected or damaged!**

*1 Corinthians 12*

“4 Now there are **varieties** of gifts, but the **same** Spirit. 5 And there are **varieties** of ministries, and the **same** Lord. 6 And there are **varieties** of effects, but the **same** God who works all things in all persons. 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. . . 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

- **Many of our differences are not earned or owned but given.**

*1 Corinthians 12*

“14 For the body is not one member, but many. 15 If the foot should say, “**Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body,**” it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, “**Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body,**” it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body.”

- **We shouldn't feel inferior because we do not have a “lead” or “dramatic” role.**

*1 Corinthians 12*

“21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, “**I have no need of you**”; or again the head to the feet, “**I have no need of you.**” 22 On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary; 23 and those members of the body, which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our unseemly members come to have more abundant seemliness, 24 whereas our seemly members have no need of it.”

- **We shouldn't feel superior because we have a power role.**

**Our spiritual maturity is measured not by our gift or role but by your character.**

**We willingly make peace through self sacrifice.**

**We fearlessly disturb the peace when necessary.**

*What can I do?*

- ✓ *Lone ranger Christians disturb the peace and have a hard time as peacemakers.*
- ✓ *Don't confuse peacemaking with the worship of pacifism or empathy fatigue.*
- ✓ *Peacemakers have a heart for the big picture and resist the temptation to empathize with solitary examples.*
- ✓ *Be willing to disturb the peace, but only when necessary.*