

Village Guide

Current Series: Boundless

Texts: Matthew 5.38-45, John 4.1-30

Core Value Focus: Peacemaking: We practice nonviolence and contend for others.

Big Ideas from the Message:

- The Problem: Christianity has a violent past... and present.
- Peacemaking Practices:
 - See | Pay attention to the humanity, dignity, and image of God in others and notice their plight.
 - Immerse | Humbly enter the radical center of need/struggle – engaging in the narratives of others – in order to understand rather than be understood.
 - Contend | Join in the story of need/struggle to take concrete action steps to come alongside a cause that requires costly and creative initiative.
 - Restore | Commit to the ongoing work of costly, creative initiative with a vision for the flourishing of all people involved.
- On John 4.1-30 (Woman at the Well): Jesus saw a woman who was an “enemy,” immersed into her story, contended for her inclusion, and restored her status.
 - “Friends, God’s restoration continues to be realized in our world today as we embrace our vocation as everyday peacemakers. As we see, immerse, and contend, we are restored ... others are restored ... broken systems are transformed ... and God’s peace becomes real in our world.” (Jer Swigart & Jon Huckins in *Mending the Divides: Creative Love in a Conflicted World*)
- Peacemaking Practices for Villages:
 - #1 Identify our own interpersonal conflicts (family, coworkers, neighbors, etc.)
 - #2 Identify a local injustice or space of difference (racial inequality, homelessness, etc.)
 - #3 Identify an international struggle (Israel-Palestine, sex trafficking of children, etc.)
- Peacemaking is the calling, vocation, and posture of every Christian.

CONNECT (5 min)

- Question chosen for open group discussion or someone pre-invited to share their story.

HEAR (5 min)

- Spend some time in your group sharing what you recall from Sunday’s message. Give a loose theme or subject of the sermon to jumpstart everyone’s thoughts and recollections. (Example: “On Sunday, Kurt continued our series, Boundless, and talked about our value: Peacemaking. Who was there on Sunday? Could you recap the content for us?” What struck you, and what questions did it leave you with?)
- Read John 4.1-30 (Woman at the Well). What did Kurt say that these passages reveal about God? About us? Do you see anything differently?

TALK (20 min)

*Note: This format is intentionally less linear in an effort to generate discussion. It is not meant to be followed left-to-right, nor do all the questions need to be asked. As a facilitator, stewarding good discussion means modeling **true listening**, which also means a conversation without an agenda. Use your discernment to see what your group needs to talk about.*

| <i>Conceptual</i> | <i>Practical Implications</i> | <i>Spiritual Formation</i> |
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| <p>Peacemaking in Scripture</p> | <p>Peacemaking and regular life</p> | <p>Peacemaking and spiritual formation</p> |
| <p>Do you think Jesus was a peacemaker? If we were to grant that he was/is, how does that challenge common notions about what peacemaking is or isn't?</p> <p><i>Pangea is a "peace church," meaning we believe that Jesus, the apostles, and even the book of Revelation (which we won't get into today ;-)) unanimously teach nonviolent resistance for disciples of Jesus. What is the difference between nonviolence and passivity? Do these ever get confused? Can someone resist without being violent?</i></p> <p><i>We often keep peacemaking as a lofty goal or as an impractical ideal. How does Jesus demonstrate that peacemaking is practical—even while being creative and costly? Do you see this in The Woman at the Well story? Do other stories from the New Testament come to mind?</i></p> | <p>Can you remember a time when you were in the midst of a conflict that led to some sort of good resolution?</p> <p>What excites you about engaging in peacemaking as a Village? What scares or overwhelms you about peacemaking?</p> <p><i>Social media floods us with conflicts, disagreements, and negative stories from around the world. No human in history has had that much exposure to the world's pain at one time. How does the information age help us to be more "practical" as peacemakers? How might it distract or 'paralyze' us from practical action?</i></p> | <p><i>Take a few minutes of silence to think of what your current experience of life these past couple weeks have been like. (Give a few minutes for reflection before asking the question).</i></p> <p>Do you ever struggle with inward peace? How might connecting with Jesus relationally resource you to become a more inwardly peaceful person?</p> <p>Many well-known Christian peacemakers, such as Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (and numerous others), had/have deep prayer lives. Why might this be?</p> <p>Is there a spiritual formation practice that might help shape your soul as a peacemaker?</p> |

(Space for your own questions or notes)

LIVE (20 min)

- Is there anything specific that you feel like our discussion here tonight will impact you in this next week?
- How might we pray for each other in light of our discussion and other highs/lows in each other's lives?