

Sunday Sermon Notes ***"Instruments of Peace"***

Walls of Hostility:

Borders
Language
Culture
History
Economy
Religion

Walls of hatred in Jesus' time:

The Jews hated the Gentiles
The Gentiles despised the Jews

Jesus is our peace: (*Ephesians 2:14-18*)

By destroying the barriers
By creating a one new man
By reconciling all to God
By declaring peace to all
By giving one access to God

Living in the blessings of peace: (*Ephesians 2:19-22*)

We are fellow citizens
We are God's family
We have one firm foundation
We enjoy God's presence together

Have the walls of hostility been destroyed in me?

Tolerance of ignorance
Opinions of superiority
Feelings of entitlement
Attitudes of selfishness
Motivations of fear

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Digging Deeper

Notes for Individual Meditation and Small Group Discussion

Reviewing the Sermon:

Which of the walls of hostility do you believe cause the greatest obstacles to genuine peace?

Which of the blessings of peace mean the most to you?

In what ways have you most struggled to let the walls of hostility be broken down?

Why do you think we as Christians have failed in being instruments of peace?

Discussion Questions

(Remember that not all questions must be used)

Our discussion questions this week are based on "The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi." The prayer is printed below:

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace;
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
and where there is sadness, joy.
O Divine Master,
grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
to be understood, as to understand;
to be loved, as to love;
for it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to Eternal Life. Amen.

The prayer has three sections. The first part lists the "places" where we should direct our activities to bring peace. Let's look at each one of these:

- How do we sow love where there is hatred?
- Why is pardon needed where there is injury?
- How do we sow faith where there is doubt?
- What do we need to do to sow hope?
- How can we be instruments of light?
- What do we do to sow joy in the midst of sadness?

The next section is a prayer for unselfishness, even though we may find ourselves feeling very needy:

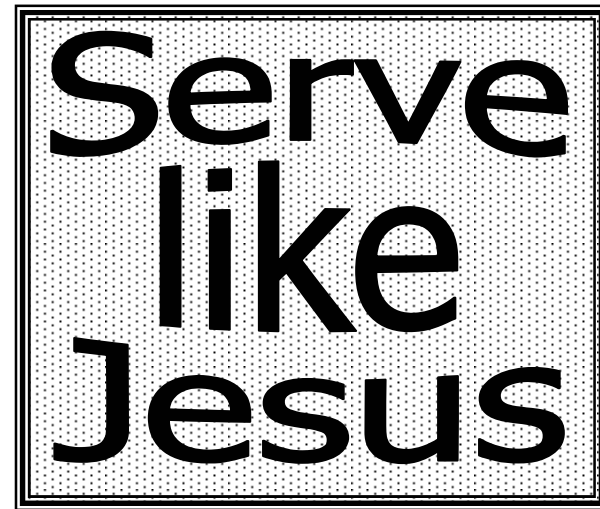
- When being consoled, what have you found to be most helpful?
- What do we need to do to be truly understanding of another person?
- Why do you think so many of us are more interested in being loved than to love?

The last section lists principles for how being "instruments of peace" bring blessings to the peacemaker:

- How does giving result in receiving?
- How does forgiving someone else help us to be forgiven?
- What do you think it means to "die." Why do we need to die to be born to Eternal Life"

Prayer Time:

Share with each other ways in which you believe God is wanting you to be an "instrument of peace." Join together in praying that we will be able to make a difference for peace in our world.



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Ephesians 2:14-22

"Instruments of Peace"

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Master copy of notes and audio version of the sermon at
www.middletownnaz.com