



# PEACE

**LESSONS FROM THE PARABLE OF  
THE GOOD SAMARITAN**



**PEACE.**

**A CORE PILLAR OF ALL HUMAN LONGING. AND YET,  
IT SEEMS SO EVASIVE IN OUR WORLD.**

**IN ANY STORY OF PEACE, THERE SEEMS TO BE  
THREE GROUPS OF CHARACTERS;  
THOSE WHO BREAK PEACE.  
THOSE WHO FAKE PEACE.  
AND THE ALL TOO RARE BEACONS OF WISDOM -  
WHO MAKE PEACE.**

**THOSE WHO DO THE HARD WORK.  
THOSE WHO FIGHT THE GOOD FIGHT.  
THOSE WHO NAVIGATE THE WORLD AS STUDENTS, AND AS SERVANTS.**

**THOSE WHO DON'T JUST TALK ABOUT PEACE,  
DON'T JUST BELIEVE IN PEACE, BUT WORK TO CREATE IT.**

**EVEN AMIDST STEEP COSTS.  
EVEN AMIDST BEING MISUNDERSTOOD.  
EVEN AMIDST REAL DANGER.**

**THESE ARE THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO THE WORLD IS NOT WORTHY OF.**

**THE QUESTION IS - HOW DO WE BECOME THOSE PEOPLE?**

**HOW DO WE AVOID THE PITFALLS OF PREVIOUS GENERATIONS? HOW DO  
WE PREVENT PERPETUATING CYCLES OF BROKENNESS?**

**MAYBE THE ANSWER FOR THAT QUESTION AND HOPE FOR THAT TYPE OF  
FUTURE ... IS ACTUALLY FOUND IN THE PAST.**

**IN THE WORDS OF ONE WHO CALLED HIMSELF THE PRINCE OF PEACE.  
ONE WHO SAID THAT THOSE WHO WENT ABOUT MAKING PEACE IN A  
WORLD THAT RARELY SEES IT WOULD BE SEEN AND RECOGNIZED, AS THE  
CHILDREN... OF GOD.**



# THE GOOD SAMARITAN

## LUKE 10:25-37

**25** On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he asked, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?”

**26** “What is written in the Law?” he replied. “How do you read it?”

**27** He answered, “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind’; and, ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

**28** “You have answered correctly,” Jesus replied. “Do this and you will live.”

**29** But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

**30** In reply Jesus said: “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. **31** A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. **32** So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. **33** But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him.



**34** He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. **35** The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

**35** The next day he took out two denarii and gave them to the innkeeper. ‘Look after him,’ he said, ‘and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.’

**36** “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?”

**37** The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, “Go and do likewise.”





# PEACE

Matthew 5:9 NIV:

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

In the sunlit sprawl of that stunning hillside a couple of millennia ago, Jesus arrests us with a most remarkable vision, doesn't He? In a world replete with peacefaking and peacebreaking, Christ beckons us to be people who have a role to play in bringing about peace.

But wait.

Just the very briefest survey of the latest news headlines causes us to wonder how that vision and calling and heart has somehow managed to evaporate, doesn't it?

And yet what we know as followers of Christ is that His vision of a world marked by peace must actually be possible, or He wouldn't have invited us to help be a part of bringing it about, right?

Over these next few weeks, we're going to dive into a conversation about three ways people operate:

**Peacebreaking:** when we sow discord, either knowingly or unknowingly. Stirring up strife, creating rifts, and division.

**Peacefaking:** when we present an illusion of peace. Perhaps avoiding conflict or sweeping it under the rug, pretending that all is well. Yet, beneath the surface, unresolved tensions simmer.





Peacemaking: when we actively work to create harmonious environments. This happens by our refusal to shy away from addressing conflict with grace, humility, and love. This is only possible when we lean into the reality that true peace is not just the absence of conflict, but the presence of the righteousness and love of Christ.

The Apostle Paul's letter to the Roman Church drills down into the practical aspects of Jesus' soaring invitation from Matthew 5:

*Romans 12:18 NIV: "If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.*

That instruction feels kinda' real and approachable, doesn't it?

Paul expresses what we who live with the daily prickliness of ourselves and others well know: that peace is never easy nor always achievable. But can only come to pass when we set about extending olive branches, even into environments that are not entirely receptive.

So why's peace matter so much, anyway?

For the simple reason that the heart of God has always been reconciliation and peace. The grandest narrative in all of human history is God's heart and aim to reconcile a fallen world back to Himself through His One and Only Son, Jesus Christ. The very essence of God Himself is love and peace. Which means that our joining Him in His grand, peacemaking endeavor fully aligns us with Who God is at His very core.

As we journey down this road in the coming weeks, you'll come to see how peace-making is the furthest thing from passive and weak. More than anything, it takes a remarkable strength of character to stand up against the tide of discord and division, especially in a world that so often rewards the loudest voices of strife. You'll be stretched to, with great courage, address issues rather than ignore them, choosing love over enmity, unity over division.

In a world where peace-faking and peace-breaking are standard operating procedure more often than not, may we be emboldened to be about Jesus' clarion call upon the lives of every single one of us who call ourselves His sons and daughters, the call to genuine peace-making.

May each of our lives be marked by the words and example of Jesus, and may every step we take toward peace, however small, be a step toward manifesting God's Kingdom coming, right here on earth, just as it is in Heaven.

**BRIAN HOPKINS**







A close-up, soft-focus photograph of an olive branch with several green olives. The leaves are elongated and have a silvery-green hue. The background is a bright, out-of-focus light green.

**WEEK 1**  
**BREAKING PEACE**



# Breaking Peace

**N I C O L E   H O O V E R**

In the parable of the good Samaritan, Jesus taught us to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and love our neighbor as ourselves (Luke 10:27). Anyone in need is our neighbor. The Samaritan helping the Jew shows we are called to cross the boundaries of nation, race, and social class.

If we want to answer the call to be peacemakers, we must face the things that break peace in the world and our hearts. If unity is the goal, then anything pulling us out of unity is a peace breaker. Anything that devalues or idolizes another person is a peace breaker.

The hard part is facing the music and looking within. We need to look inward and recognize the subtle, sly, peace breakers we allow into our lives and hearts. Remember, the enemy is the craftiest beast that God ever made (Gen 3:1). Something can be good or neutral but used for destruction in the wrong hands. Here are just a few.

News content. It is everywhere! Whether you watch it on TV or catch it online, we can find out what is happening just about any time and anywhere. It is good to be aware of what is going on in the world, but if we give it our attention for too long, we start to buy into fear and anger instead of truth and hope.

Politics. Much like the news, politics are hard to escape. However, I don't believe that we should. Having the ability to vote and fight for the rights of people is part of peacemaking! However, if I am consuming political content too often, I inadvertently start building the walls of my very own echo chamber. We start labeling people as the opposition and idolizing others! At this point, we have become unable to listen and love those who think differently. We become unable to work together to create biblical peace.



# Breaking Peace, cont.

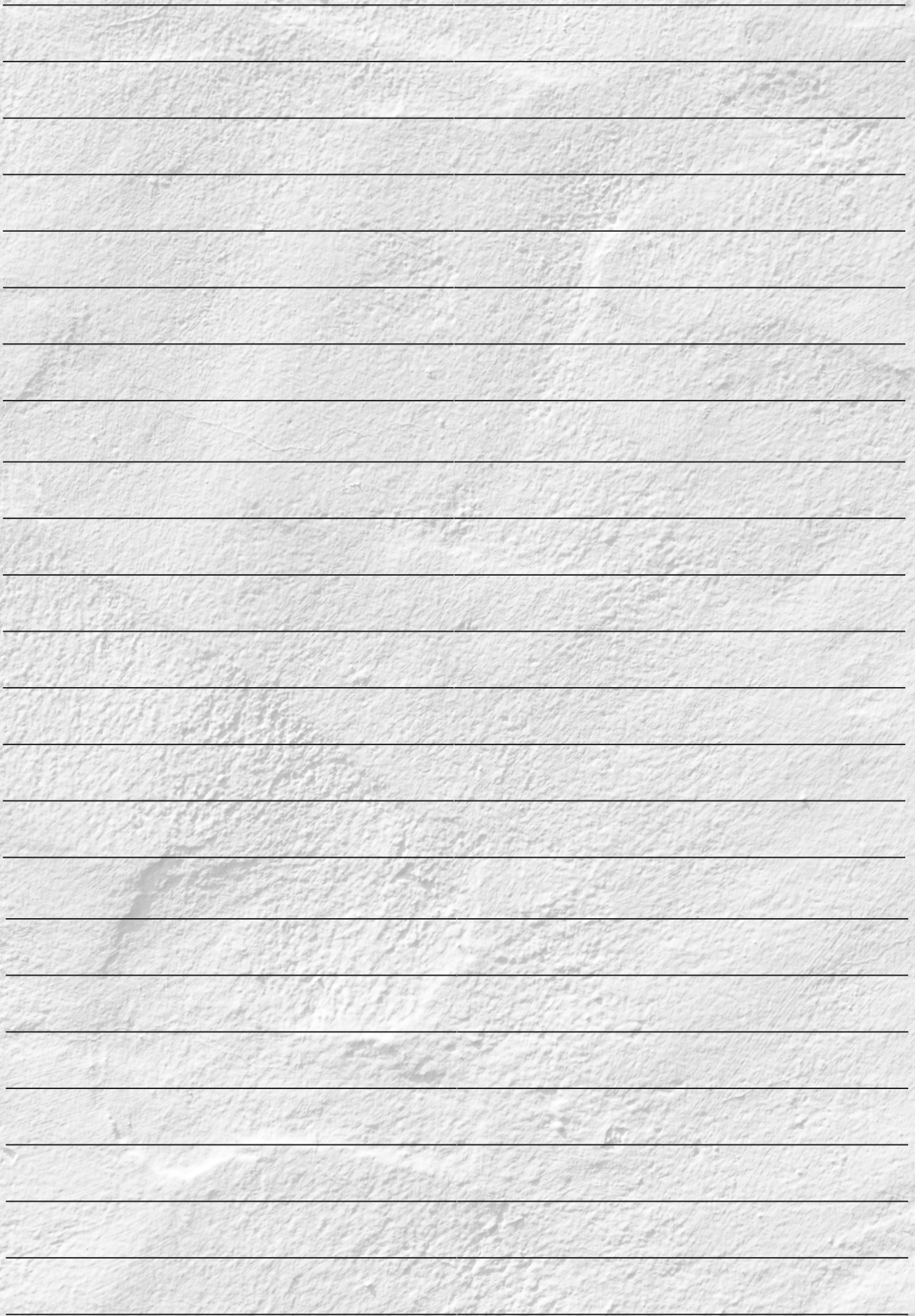
Social Media. Keeping in touch with friends and family is good. The internet and social media have made this so easy. However, communicating online has also removed the face-to-face aspect that reminds us of the other person's humanity. It is so easy to speak our minds without consequence. We so easily judge one another for the opinions we post but do not seek to understand or reconcile any of the hurt.

Let us renounce bigotry, party zeal, and echo chambers that close us off and harden our hearts toward others. Let us fight to listen, love, and serve those who are hurting, no matter who they are. May we be thankful for God's grace, that when we believe in Jesus, we receive forgiveness and are united with Christ and one another (Acts 10:43; Phil. 2:1-2). It is His power that will transform us from peace breakers into peacemakers.













**WEEK 2**  
**FAKING PEACE**



# Faking Peace

**D U S T A N   D R O O G M A N S**

What is a peace faker. A "Peace Faker" is someone who intentionally or mistakenly accepts the absence of conflict for real peace, they overlook the issue. The peace faker may have peace in the outset, but it will never give the definition of what real peace is or can be. More often than not, the sense of peace was only temporary. And since the issue was never truly resolved for the peace faker, they will find themselves in a place of conflict once again. How do we find what true peace is? What is the opposite of a peace faker? What is true peace then?

When I think of true peace, I think of the Hebrew word, *šālôm* (shalom). To walk in shalom means to walk with a true sense of completeness, soundness, well-being, and harmony. It's a word that goes deeper than the general conception of a relaxing day, or sitting outside next to your fire pit on a quiet evening. Shalom is a peace that associates itself with righteousness and truth. It's a peace that finds its wholeness outside of our own natural ability to cultivate it while at the same time finding its way into the deepest chasms and hidden places of our souls. Shalom is the most real, authentic, and holy sense of peace one can have. It's a gift from God to his people, by the way of his son Jesus Christ, and imparted to us by the Holy Spirit.

Shalom is pure. It's real. It can't be falsified. Shalom requires full submission to the practice and way of Jesus. It's a complete absence of hostility. It's a humble heart posture resulting from a humble walk with Jesus. In Matthew 5, Jesus tells us if there is any quarreling among us as brothers and sisters in the church, we are to "first go and be reconciled" to each other before coming to the Lord in worship. Our shalom is authentic when the true, and oftentimes the difficult, work is done to reconcile our relationships in a holy and pleasing way in the sight of Jesus. What is your role? What can you do to experience shalom in your life?



# Faking Peace, cont.

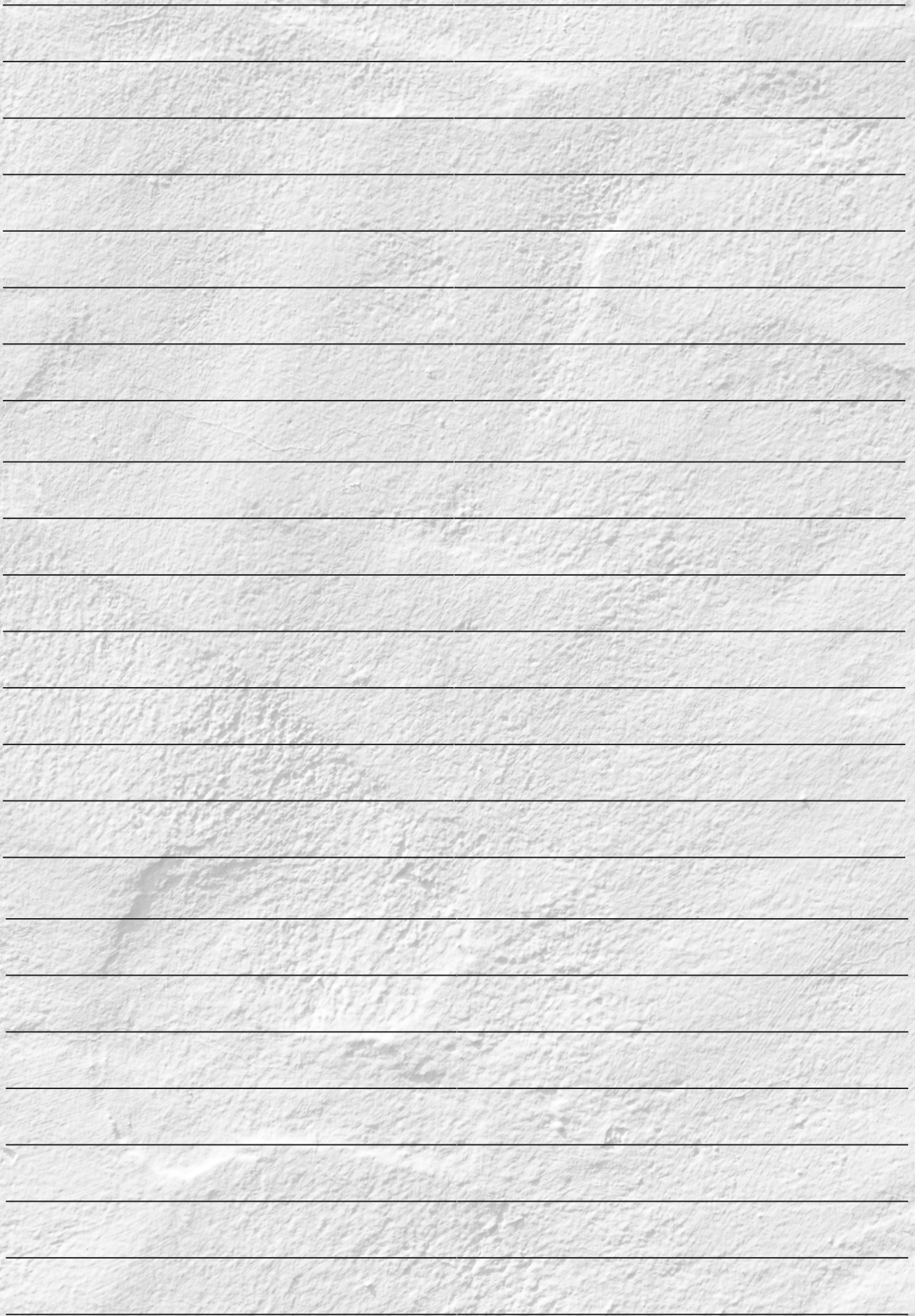
In Romans 12, Paul properly applies our role in how to live in authentic and real peace with those around us. Paul says 'If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.' We must, as far as it depends on us, live at peace with everyone. God has conscripted us to follow through on his prescriptions to pursue peace in our relationships in the way of Jesus. Not to run from conflict, but rather to do what we can to eliminate any fake peace in our own lives. And to walk the path of shalom.

"How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" Isaiah 52:7











A background image of an olive branch with green leaves and small olives, overlaid with a semi-transparent white filter. The text is centered over the branch.

**WEEK 3**  
**MAKING PEACE**



# Making Peace

**M I S U N M C I L R E E V Y**

We all experience making amends after an argument, misunderstanding or offense. We feel relief because a sense of peace is restored. There are times when relational gaps get filled with an apology, and/ or understanding becomes the bridge to the other side, bringing both people or parties back together. In its simplest form this is peacemaking. However, Jesus' way of peacemaking elevates it to a radically different perspective and practice. According to Jesus, in Luke 10:25-37, He tells about a beautiful act of peacemaking that was completely countercultural in that day and still is today, because it involves the participation of only one person.

In these verses Jesus answers a lawyer's question, "Who is my neighbor?" by telling a story of a good Samaritan, who on his journey found a man, presumably a Jew, half dead. Two religious elitists passed by, but the Samaritan, filled with compassion, treated and bandaged his wounds. Furthermore, he took him to an inn to be cared for, and used his own resources to pay for the lodging and treatment expenses.

Often, when reading this, I have thought about the infrequent contact with a stranger in need. But what if this story emphasizes the importance of our daily or frequent interactions as much as it emphasizes our infrequent ones? What if the avoided, half-dead man represents someone who annoys us, or someone we don't feel is worthy of our time, commitment, or mental and emotional energy, these being our resources? The avoidance could be due to a rocky history, much like the Jews and Samaritans had, a very personal history, or could represent an unconscious bias we have towards another. Maybe we think or know that they are incapable of offering us an olive branch in return. Therefore, we justify our avoidance &/or act in self righteousness, walking right past the one who needs love and mercy shown to them, forfeiting the opportunity to be a peacemaker.

Remember, in God's economy, peace-making has nothing to do with involvement from both parties. Instead, it starts with recognizing one another as inherently valued because God created us in His image, and seeing as the Samaritan did, through the lenses of love and compassion. Just like God, when he saw humanity broken, and sent Jesus to die on our behalf, paying the price that we could not pay and never repay. Jesus is our ultimate Peacemaker.



# Making Peace, cont.

The lawyer asks “who is MY neighbor?”, notice the use of my. This may be the same personal question we should be asking Jesus. Who do I/you need to live out love, mercy and peace to, having received these from Jesus, ourselves? The lawyer may have started the conversation with the question, but Jesus finishes the story by asking His final question to the lawyer: “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” The expert in the law replied, “The one who had mercy on him.” Jesus told him, and tells us, “Go and do the same.” Let us live the way of the Peacemaker.

**PLEASE NOTE: NONE OF THIS DEVOTIONAL ENCOURAGES OR ENDORSES PEACEMAKING WITHIN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP. PLEASE SEEK PROFESSIONAL HELP THROUGH OUR COUNSELING CENTER.**

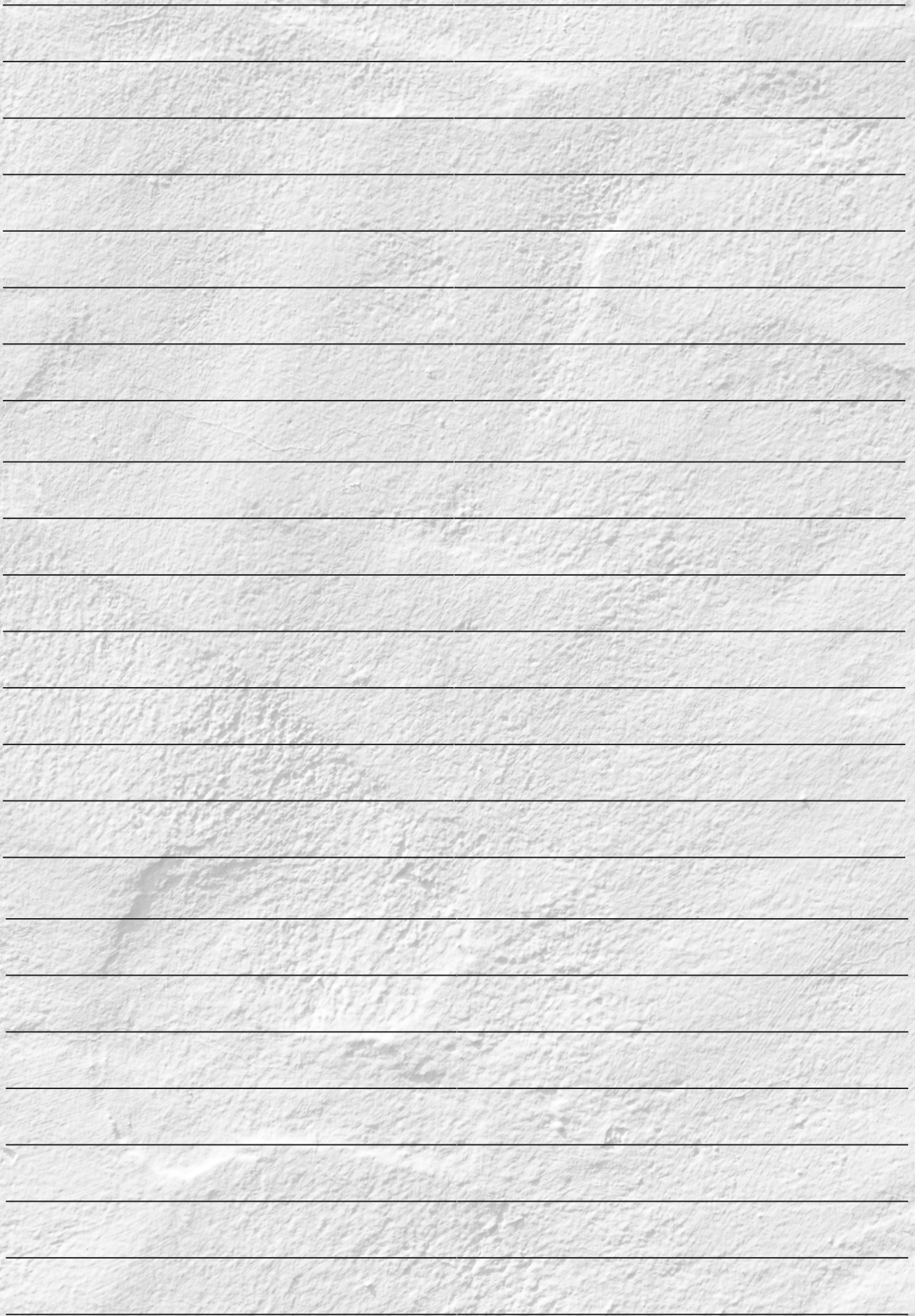


**SCAN THE CODE FOR MORE  
INFORMATION  
ON BAYSIDE COUNSELING**











# wrapping it up..

There I was. Just a 6'1" young man sitting with my knees pressed uncomfortably into the seat back in front of me on another long flight.

Yep, you guessed it, Economy class.

You know, the one where you board in group seven, they won't let you take a carry on, and tell you that if you're lucky you may get a cup of water and an empty lavatory at some point? But even if it's empty there will somehow be urine on the floor and no paper towels left?

Yep, that economy.

After we reached our cruising altitude (which no matter how many times I fly, is the first time I can take a deep breath on a plane...) I pulled out a Readers Digest. I know what you're thinking,

"Brannon, what in the 1984 is going on here!?"

I know.

And no, I'm not a subscriber. I just so happened to get one delivered to my house with a random person's name on it (none of my neighbors) as I was about to drive to the airport and thought, "Why I not take it with me, there's bound to be something in there worth reading."

And boy was I right. I read articles about dogs, a woman who almost died sky diving, and a former criminal who saved a cops life. But in one short, column article, there were two quotes that struck me to the core...





**“WE SEEK PEACE, KNOWING THAT PEACE IS THE CLIMATE OF FREEDOM.”**

**—DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER**

**“IF WE HAVE NO PEACE, IT IS BECAUSE WE HAVE FORGOTTEN THAT WE BELONG TO EACH OTHER.”**

**—MOTHER TERESA**

Somewhere in the collision of those two quotes is where it hit me. The thought, “Peace is the climate of freedom, and when we’ve lost it... it’s often because we have forgotten that we are our brothers and sisters keeper.”

This whole series has been about the outworking of peace. (If you’re looking for a series on internal peace, you can find that online in our series called, “Sound Mind”)

The outworking of peace that we aim to “make” in our homes, in our relationships, in our workplaces, in our city, in our world, etc. And as this series comes to a close....I’m left with one word that I just can’t shake...

Sacrifice.

Peacemaking requires sacrifice.

Sacrifice to be your brothers & sisters keeper so that we can live in the climate of freedom together. Sacrifice to make the appropriate amends. Sacrifice of our comfort zones. Sacrifice of our time and resources.

No one ever made peace be known in the world without sacrifice. Case in point, you have peace with God only because of Jesus’ sacrifice (Romans 5:1).

So where do we go from here? As those who move forward aiming to not be those who break peace, or put on a facade of fake peace, but those who actually make it?

We sacrifice.

And we take what has entered our ears and hearts and move our hands and feet in faithful labor.

Thomas Murton once wrote, “Peace demands the most heroic labor and the most difficult sacrifice.”

So what is that place of sacrifice for you? I won’t pretend to know but I trust as you are reading these words that God is leading you to a thought, a person, a situation. A place where His desire is for peace to reign, but it requires your sacrifice and effort.



Wherever that place is, friend, go for it! I can't promise that all things work out perfectly. But remember, you're not the one holding all things together, that's not your responsibility. Your responsibility is surrender and faithful action. To be one who contends for peace.

Paul's said it like this to the Romans...

"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." (12:15)

**As far as it depends on you, make the effort.**

As the flight I was on (Remember? The economy flight) was drawing to its end, I looked out the window. I found myself overlooking the roads down below, thousands of homes, all while sunlight burst forth between the constellation of clouds. And I found myself praying the words from the quotes above along with the words of Jesus, and In conclusion, I invite you to pray them as well - if it seems fit...

"Father, help me seek peace - knowing that it's the climate of freedom. And give me a tender heart, a clear mind, and open hands to remember that i am the keepers of my fellow brothers and sisters. Help me love them well and to sacrifice when needed to establish peace. All in light of your sacrifice, Jesus. You promised if we made peace, people would recognize us as your own kids. By the power of the Spirit, let it be so. In Jesus name."

**BRANNON SHORTT**









# PEACE

## THE PODCAST

Tune in each week as an extension of our Sunday services. We are bringing local guests to share about their experiences and facilitate conversations around breaking, faking, and making peace.

**EPISODE 1: PEACE BREAKING**

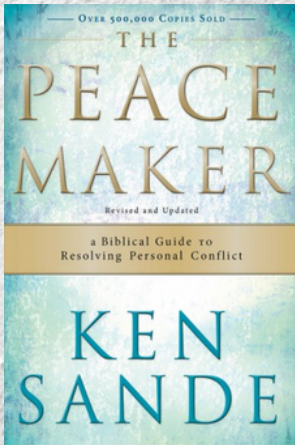
**EPISODE 2: PEACE FAKING**

**EPISODE 3: PEACE MAKING**





# Resources



Author Ken Sande writes, **The Peacemaker: A Biblical Guide to Resolving Personal Conflict**. Sande takes readers beyond resolving conflicts to true, life-changing reconciliation with family members, coworkers, and fellow believers.









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THE GOOD SAMARITAN**

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