



Peace on Earth  
Acts 10:34-36  
February 16, 2020

The angel announced the good news of a Savior who would bring peace on earth (Luke 2:8-14). Thirty something years later Peter mentioned the good news of peace through Jesus Christ that was sent to Israel (Acts 10:36) and then told that same good news to a Gentile audience (vv. 37-43). Today the responsibility for sharing the good news of peace through Christ has been entrusted to his church.

God's will is to tear down the barriers between people and create one new humanity of all, thus making peace, and his chosen way of doing so is through Christ (Ephesians 2:11-18; 1:10; 3:6). Once we have made peace with God through the Savior, begun to assimilate his peace into our hearts and started learning how to live in peace with others, we are called to help bring all peoples of the world together in peace through Christ.

Most of us agree that it would be good for others to come into a relationship with Christ, but many of us cringe at the idea that we need to help with it. Those who view evangelism as coercive and judgmental, may even believe it is *wrong* to try to influence others toward Christ. Many non-Christians are put off by any attempt by Christians to speak to them about Christ, and that makes it is even harder for us to want to do so. Still, though, it is God's will for the whole world to come to know Christ and be brought together as one, and he has called us to participate in this mission.

The good news is that the good news is good news! So, any heavy-handed and forceful approach is *not* something God is calling us to. What's more, there are various ways of helping with God's

mission, one of which will fit you. Plus, one of the things Jesus told us to give us peace due to the daunting responsibility of carrying out his mission is that help is available through his Spirit (John 15:26-27; 16:7-11). We are to testify, but the Spirit convicts and converts. Three important passages can equip us participate in God's mission meaningfully and appropriately.

Preparation: 1 Peter 3:15-16. To be prepared, we must...

1. Revere Christ as Lord in our hearts and lives
2. Know what our hope is and have enough of it that people notice and ask about it (in some fashion)
3. Prepare ourselves to explain the reason for our hope. The gospel is the ultimate basis for our hope, so we need to prepare ourselves to tell the good news about Jesus.
4. Develop the salt-qualities of gentleness and respect.

Process: Colossians 4:2-6. Paul envisioned the good news of peace through Christ spreading through a process of different believers participating in different degrees and ways, including prayer, proclamation, example, and conversation.

1. We can all devote ourselves to praying that God will give opportunities for people (including ourselves) to speak the message and for them to speak it clearly.
2. We can all live wisely around outsiders
3. We can all recognize and make the most of the opportunities God gives us
4. We can all converse with grace and salt (cf. Matthew 5:3-13), and determine to answer each person individually. Conversation, in which we listen without judging and don't force our conclusions, is a great way of telling the good news about Jesus. is not intrusive or coercive, many non-Christians prefer it as a way to consider Christianity, and it leaves room for God's Spirit to work.



Provision: Matthew 28:18-20 (mission offering April 5)