



BE SWIFT TO CHOOSE PEACE

November 20, 2016 | WONDERFUL MERCY CHURCH

Hebrews 12:14a; 13:20-21 (PASSION)

In every relationship be swift to choose peace over competition ... ^{13:20} Now may the God who brought us peace by raising from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ so that he would be the Great Shepherd of his flock; and by the power of the blood of the eternal covenant ²¹ may he work perfection into every part of you giving you all that you need to fulfill your destiny.

Hebrews 12:14a; 13:20-21 PASSION

And may he express through you all that is excellent and pleasing to him through your life-union with Jesus the Anointed One who is to receive all glory forever! Amen!

Lee Grady's Observation

“Mr. Trump is president now. And the church faces a huge challenge. Exit polls show the election was most definitely decided along racial lines, since 88 percent of African Americans and 79 percent of Hispanics voted for Clinton. How do followers of Jesus Christ—who is the ultimate reconciler—minister to people from all kinds of ethnic and political backgrounds when the election divided them?” [\[http://www.charismamag.com/blogs/fire-in-my-bones/28086-building-and-repairing-bridges-in-a-divisive-season\]](http://www.charismamag.com/blogs/fire-in-my-bones/28086-building-and-repairing-bridges-in-a-divisive-season)

The Challenge is Real

- “We don’t want to feel that someone has been elected by throwing away some of us to appeal more deeply to others.” (— Van Jones, CNN commentator)
- “We have got to find our way to each other.” (— Glenn Beck, NBC election night interview)
- Hebrews 12:14a “In every relationship be swift to choose peace over competition”



Are We Who We Say We Are?

- Are we embodying the wonderful mercy of God, choosing love, and standing with those who are suffering regardless of whether we agree with their thinking, politics, perspectives, conclusions?
- Does their heart cry make a demand on us? Does it require something of us?

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- “The word ‘make every effort’ or ‘pursue’ is a uniquely aggressive word. It is often used in the sense of ‘to chase after one’s enemies—to persecute.’ We must chase after peace!” [R. Kent Hughes, *Preaching the Word – Hebrews, Volume II: An Anchor for the Soul*]

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- “Peace with all people is a fine ideal; but this writer...knows it won’t always happen. You must pursue it, chase after it, do all in your power to accomplish it.” [N.T. Wright, *Hebrews for Everyone.*]

What is This Peace?

- In Hebrew thought and language, peace is not simply freedom from trouble, the absence of conflict, or healing divisions in relationship
- It includes these ideas but is richer still: peace is everything which makes for another's highest good
- Anything that is not God's highest good for your neighbor, co-worker, countryman is an enemy of peace!

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- In this time where there is so much that divides so many, *“We have got to find our way to each other.”*
- This doesn't mean changing anyone's mind or telling anyone how to live
- It means saying, “I will come into your battlefield. I will listen to your heart and to your hurt. And I will go to war against anything that is an enemy of peace in your life”

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- **Matthew 5:9** NIV
“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.”
- Heaven’s declaration of our identity as sons and daughters follows when we aggressively pursue everything which makes for another’s highest good

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- The Lord is calling WMC to peacemaking in this hour, to coming alongside the brokenhearted and hurting and go to war against everything that is an enemy of peace in their lives



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