

How to be a Peacemaker When You're Hot-Blooded

Upside Down series

by Pastor Chris Famisaran

Let's pray, Father in heaven. Thank you, Lord, for your good and your mercy to us forever, as we now continue to dive into our second to last week, Lord of our Upside Down series. You with us. In Jesus name, Amen.

Do you ever experience anxiety? fear? Well, there's a story told. Actually, it's not a story. It's a place. There's a I don't remember who wrote I think it was C.J. Green shares that there is a place called The Prison Inside Me. A mockingbird, the Mockingbird blog noted of a mock prison where people would spend \$90 to spend 24 hours in solitary confinement away from their phones, their clocks, the people. And in fact, photographer Kim Hong-Ji showed inmates meditating. They would be resting. They would put their cell phone into a basket. And I don't know, for some people that might sound appealing because then you could just put away all of your stress, everything, at least for 24 hours. For us, we call that Sabbath Well, for other people there, they have to go out and just say, you know what, I have so much stress. I have so much chaos, I have so much noise. I just need to stop now. Park Hye-ri, I'm sorry. These names are challenging. She said I was too busy as she was sitting in this 44 square foot cell. How big is that? She said I shouldn't even be here right now, given the work I need to do. But I decided to pause and look back at myself for a better life. So when you go into this prison inside of me, they give you a blue prison uniform, a yoga mat, a tea set, a pen and a notebook. They sleep on the floor. There's a small toilet inside and no mirror. For your meal you can have a sweet potato and a banana shake for dinner and rice and porridge for breakfast. Now the co founder, Noh Ji-Hyang, said the mock prison was inspired by her husband, who would often work 100 hours a week as a prosecutor. It's not a lot of time for sleep. Amen. And he said he would rather go into solitary confinement for a week, take a rest and feel better For her, that was, as she was saying, that was the beginning. Now, I don't know if spending 24 hours or 48 hours in a little solitary confinement cell sounds appealing. I get why you would want to be able to take away all the distractions and just be able to have

silence for just a little bit. But to be confined, I don't know. But essentially what they're seeking is they need they're seeking peace, they're seeking tranquility, they're seeking quietness to be able to think and to hear without any pressure around. And we live in a crazy, chaotic world. Amen.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall see God. And in this world that we live, that's chaotic, crazy. It's easy to become fearful, to become anxious. And yet Jesus is calling us to be peacemakers. And in order to do so, we have to be ourselves at peace. Amen. Is that easy? Not always right. What brings you anxiety? Share with me the calendar. The calendar time. All right. Your kids. We can be honest, right? Our families, our neighbors, our boss, the freeway bills. These are just a handful of things that can quietly, but slowly but surely build pressure up money. Now, our anxiety and our stress, can it inform how we treat others?

Okay, let's go to I want to go to Ephesians chapter two versus 15 to 17. I want to look at the story of the example of Jesus. Jesus is the greatest piece maker. Ephesians chapter two, verse 15, thru 17. Ok, we all there? All right. By setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations, his purpose was to create himself one new humanity out of it. Two thus making peace and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the Christ, by which He put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you, who were far away in peace to those who were near. Amen. By God's grace, God has overcome the world. God has overcome the devil, God has overcome sin and extended the gift of salvation to us. Amen. And so God has also called us out to go and share this wonderful good news, this which can bring peace to others and to the world. Amen. Now, this gospel, if we truly accept it, yes, we're saved by grace. Amen. But what is it also going to do? You going to start to slowly changes over time? Because as we continue to if we love God and we walk with God again, as I talked about it last week, do we stay the same person or do we grow together in life? We grow. And so as we grow with God, certain things about us are going to change. And if we're faithful, we're kind and we start to follow Jesus. We should start to become more kind, more compassionate, more loving. Not always. Sometimes people can be vexing. But truly, we should be changing and we can bring help, bring joy and peace to our neighborhoods, our families, our jobs wherever we go.

Colossians 1:20 verse real quickly says, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood shed on the cross, Jesus can bring us peace. Jesus grants us peace. And our lives ultimately are changed by Jesus Christ. And in many ways, because of Jesus, His is important to us and we've been changed by Jesus. We can be a value add to society. What do I mean by that? Well, Jesus has also called us to be ambassadors of peace or reconciliation, as it says here in Second Corinthians. Just real quickly, I'll just read this for you all. This is from God who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of what reconciliation That God was reconciling the world to you and to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. I love this passage because know, as I've said this before, Jesus took what? the initiative. Can we save ourselves? No, only God and so He has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We're therefore Christ's ambassadors. What is an ambassador do? what do they do? They speak on behalf of. And for instance, in our country, they speak on behalf of the United States. There's ambassadors for Japan. There's an ambassador for China, there's an ambassador for New Zealand, and they speak for the interests of their country. But more importantly, we are called to be Christ ambassadors or emissaries or representatives. And so God were making this appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God. In order to find peace. We have to know and have peace and confidence in the Lord Amen So reconcile in bringing hope to other people the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When people find Jesus, when they're reconciled with God, they'll find peace and joy. They'll find community, they'll find family, they'll find relief. Their community and world will be better for it.

In Ireland, there's a town called Londonderry. I think it's the second largest town in Northern Ireland, and I think maybe the fifth largest in all Ireland. Now, it's had some challenges over the years. Ireland at one point, if you're old enough to know they had some internal conflicts and maybe sometimes they'll do. Amen. So Northern Ireland, there's this town called Londonderry and it's so divided part of the population calls it Londonderry and others call it Derry. So in this city, the Protestants live on the East Bank and the Catholics live on the West Bank and they don't like to mix together. So one of the solutions was to build a bridge, and this bridge was nine is 900 feet and it curves like a snake. No cars can go on it. Only people who walk and those who are riding a bike. So walkers, joggers and cyclists

and they call it the Peace Bridge. And what they're trying to do is build a bridge to build peace between these two communities. It's been €14 million to build this bridge in order to be able to help these two communities try to come together. Now, ultimately, it's going to take the conviction of these people to make this work, but it's a step forward, much like the desire for these people to bring peace. We also need to be bridge builders to help others to see the peace that they can have with God and to bring peace to where we're at.

Now, to be a peacemaker is to respond, is in response. Sometimes we have to do the hard work in our life and find peace, not just with God, but with others. Do you get along with everybody? No, we don't. I wish I could say I do, and I generally do. But there are some people who may be kind of vex me sometimes. And, you know, sometimes by their actions what they've said perhaps in the past or done. And it's easy to hold on to things with people, frankly, you just don't get along with or you don't like. But is there any good in holding that anger towards that person? It's not that we may not display it, but we can try and maybe try to take it out on them through subtle ways, but just by even being difficult, it doesn't make anything good come out of that and it won't make a positive difference. Sometimes we love to see somebody just make a really harsh, critical comment towards somebody and then suddenly you may feel good. Oh yes, he justified my feelings or she said something and got her. But all that will do is make the person who received the mark become even more upset, more sad, or maybe even continue to be bullied. And there's nothing good that can come from that. True peace. True growth means having difficult conversations sometimes, if Jesus calls us to love our neighbors, we need to learn to forgive. If you want to change your life today, seek forgiveness. Forgive those who have wronged you. Have you ever been mad at somebody? If you've ever been mad at somebody and they did something to you and they had no idea that you were upset at them, how many times have you maybe been driving and somebody just cuts you off and they had no idea because they were oblivious. And in your heart and mind, your heart rate from went to like maybe 60 or 80 to 150 because they had no idea. And maybe when you try to talk to them and you try to say, hey, you did this to me, or you said this to me, or you made me feel this way. And they have no idea. Sometimes that feels even more infuriating because how could you be so blind? Now, I'm not saying there aren't malicious people out there because there are malicious people

out there, but I would hope that as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, we can be the agents of peace to help others find peace, your family and even in your own life, to be able to overcome your differences.

Now, just real quickly, I want to let's go to Matthew 18. I wasn't planning on doing this, but I thought, yes, let me add this. Let's go to Matthew 18, and we're going to talk about this a little bit in our small group discussions. By the way, if you have not joined a small group yet, you have two weeks, you have this week, you have next week. All right. And you can still jump in. We want to make sure, as many of you have the opportunity to study in a group. Okay. So Matthew 18, verse 15. All right, We all there? if your brother or sister sins, what should we do is go and point out their faults. Here's how you have hurt me. Here's how you have wronged me. But how many people are in that meeting? Just you and that other person? Why do we do that? Why do we why do we give them the benefit of just going to them alone to not embarrass them? Thank you, Philip. To not embarrass them. Because, number one, like I said before, maybe they had no idea or they do know. And at least it helps them to save face. Why don't you appreciate that? Maybe you made some horrible mistake and you had no idea. And if somebody puts you on blast in front of everybody, in fact, somebody puts you on blast in front of the whole church, would you appreciate that, especially when you're first hearing about it? It's not cool, right? So give them the respect in the courtesy. Hey, let's solve this. Let's work this out. Now, maybe they did do it on purpose. Well, we take it up a step. So bring somebody that you both trust and you both value and help that person to help you understand and to get past this. So but if they won't listen, take one or two others along so that every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses. Okay. So it's not just some squabble, but there's something there. You can have some people that you trust to be able to help you in this process. And if they don't listen or if they refuse to listen in verse 17, tell it to the church. And if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector. And when we hear this, a pagan or tax collector, we think is Jesus, why are you being so harsh? Why are you trying to treat them maliciously? Far from it. When Jesus said treat them as a pagan or as a tax collector, what is he really saying when we've gone over this, treat them as if what they know. Nothing. Start from the start. From the very beginning, as if they know nothing. So instead of treating them, mistreating

them or pushing them out or maligning them, treat them as if they have no idea and start from the very basics one plus one, two plus two. And by that you'll be able to help build a foundation.

Now, what's so hard about these principles? It requires having a conversation, right? And sometimes that's not always easy, especially maybe you have some pent up anger. And what we often want to do when we're anxious for stress, when we don't have peace, we sometimes tend to just lash out. And when you lash out, if you're on the receiving end of somebody just all of a sudden yelling and screaming at you, how does it make you feel? Doesn't make us feel very good, right? And then maybe you're on the defensive and you want to lash out, you want to yell. And pretty soon we don't have a discussion. We have an anger, an angry, angry fire. And it can you continue to progress? And is there anything good that's going to come from that? Why? Because nobody is listening. And so in your conversations, it's not wrong to ask for something or to share something. And if you're listening, if you're if you're the person who's receiving this information, take the time. So listen. And when you're sharing, tell them why it's important. Tell them how it makes you feel. So, for instance, you're a hard working couple. You've been wanting to take some time down and your spouse is like, No, we need to keep working. You need to save money, this or that. Yet you have the money to go on vacation and somebody says, Hey, I really feel we should take a break because I want to spend some time with you and I'm exhausted. It would make me feel so much better if we could just spend time together because we're so busy. You hardly ever see you. And I want to just spend some time with you and get away. Other partners says, Hmm, I'm hearing is I think you think we need to spend some time alone to renew our relationship because it will benefit you both, right? How many times have you tried to share with your partner? And it just goes over their head? I struck a nerve there. It's frustrating, right? Because you don't feel valid. And so in your in your conversations and it doesn't have to be a full blown argument, but just in your day to day conversations, take the time to not only listen, but to understand why if you really want to earn bonus points, help them to make sure they know that you understand by affirming what they're hearing now. Are you always going to agree on everything? No. But the difference is you have been heard, right? There be some ideas that are some really great ideas. And there may also be some ideas that may be kind of maybe we should

rethink that. But the biggest thing is you've discussed it together. When we fail to listen, we build up walls. So it also begins with the level of basic respect. Listen to them, don't start talking over them when they're talking to you. Don't be waiting to fire back, thinking what you are. Truly listen to them.

What's the benefit of being a peacemaker? If you have peace around you, what's what are you going to feel? You're going to feel relief right? There's a Salem, Massachusetts. There was a moment of reconciliation between two young boys, Dominic Serrano, who is nine years old, and Ryan Decker, who is 11, and Kevin Kefalas, who was the owner of a sausage den that was close to the boys homes. The boys had a lemonade stand, and yet Mr. Kefalas also had, in addition to selling the sausages, he also sold lemonade and Mr. Kefalas sent out a cease and desist order to the two boys. You guys are selling these things way too, cause I have already been here. All he wanted was the boys to move their lemonade stand. And so he actually called the cops on these two boys. Really did. And in doing so, guess what? The boys got slapped with word from the city. Do you have a business license which costs how much? \$2200. Oh, the shame. Oh, the outcry. Well, the mayor, fortunately enough, was reasonable. And he said, hey, let's come together. The boys had only made \$130 over I don't know how long, but \$130 for two boys, nine and 11 years old. It's pretty good money. So, yeah, one of Mr. Kefalas employees at the beginning of August snitched on the boys. Well, after an on an impromptu outdoor meeting between the mayor, the two boys, Mr. Kefalas, and the boy's parents, they came to an agreement that the boys would be subcontractors to Mr. Kefalas. It would move their stand a little bit over and they would be able to work in harmony and the boys would not be slapped with a \$2200 fine. Amen.

As you work through peacemakers, let's not try to solve or to win your side. Let's come to find solutions that there might be peace. Amen. in heaven will there be fighting and bickering? No. And if Matthew is saying these are the principles that we need to live by, why don't we start living these principles today? Let's start living them out instead of waiting. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall see God, may you have peace, comfort, joy, knowing that God has saved you and is redeemed you and desires to live a life with you, to walk with you. But may you also be a peacemaker in your own neighborhood that others may know and see who Christ is. But that you also may thrive and have healthy, awesome, great

relationships within your home, in your work, within your neighborhood, at the grocery store, wherever you go. Maybe if you also have a lemonade stand, it's going to take revival in our hearts sometimes. Amen. Because maybe you're mad at somebody and I want to pray for that. Pray that we have revival.

So this week, what do you need to make peace with in your life? Who do you need to make peace with in your life? And this week, I want you to choose one person in your life and go reconcile with them. Not this week. I want you to reconcile with them Today You have your phone. Call them. I'm not joking. Okay? I would challenge with this a couple of years ago. And guess what? I went and met with somebody very significant in my life and we were able to hash out a lot of years of frustration and anger with a conversation and a willingness to listen. And when you do so, when you've had a conversation, you've hash things out. Does it feel so much better? Amen. I want you to have that peace. So go ahead. Go make a phone call. Or if they're here, go and see them today.

Father in heaven, Lord, today you have called us to be peacemakers. Thank you, Lord, for your gift of salvation to you. Lord took the initiative to bring peace and to reconcile the world. And you've also called us as your ambassadors to do so as well, to bring reconciliation, to be your ambassadors, to show that their grace and love is possible through you, but also, Lord, in our practical lives, Lord, help us be change agents. And even in our own lives where we have our disagreements, but theirs help us to find peace and Lord as well. When we say peace, though, it's not just an opportunity for others to be able to steamroll us because you were not steamrolled, you also were firm in your convictions and stand your ground. May we also have the ability to be able to articulate why it's important as well. So Lord grant us wisdom and peace in these conversations that we're going to have this week. Leading guidance and obviously to continue to be ambassadors. You've called us to be wherever we go. Lord bless us with wisdom, bless us with empathy and understanding. And above all, Lord bless all of our families of struggles that we're going through. Lord, help us to overcome them, forgive us of our sins, or because we are simply sinners saved by grace. Help us, Lord, to remember all the good things that you're doing in our lives. Be with those things that are on our hearts. Help us to go forth with peace in Jesus name Amen.

Grace and peace everybody.