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Pastor Connect

26th August, 2009

Peace

What a wonderful concept peace is. But what is peace exactly? Every Sunday we pass the peace, greeting one another with the peace of Christ. It's a time to say hello to one another and welcome each other to Church.

I think that we as people can often see peace as something that happens when a force or event is taken away. When the conflict stops, there will be peace. So, we put our effort into stopping that. But is striving to stop the conflict the same as working towards peace?



At first they can look like the same thing. War is by its very nature the outward appearance of conflict, so then stopping that will mean peace will occur. Right? Well, often those fighting in war have no idea why they are involved or what has actually caused the fighting in the first place. The reason is lost in the complexity of the conflict, and the longer it continues then the less relevant the original reason becomes for those involved.

So my point is this. If we just wait for the fighting to finish so we can have peace, does that actually bring lasting peace? We just have to look at the history of the 20th Century to realise that peace based on the ending of a war doesn't last. We need to find the cause of conflict, and seek to bring peace there, and not just any peace. We need to bring the peace of Christ.

In John's gospel Jesus says "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives" (John 14:27). So what kind of peace is this? This is the kind of peace that speaks to our inner most being, a peace that brings well-being and an inner rest of spirit. Jesus is saying that the peace he offers is different to what the world offers. The peace of Christ is real and present and is not something that is passive and arrives as if by chance when we are without conflict in the world, in our societies, in our neighbourhoods, in our churches, in our lives, in our relationships. It is a peace that is always available and a constant part of the offering of Christ.

The peace we as the Church need to offer the world is a peace that comes from Christ that is loving and intentional and can be offered at any stage. We don't have to wait for the conflict to end to find peace. We can still offer peace even while conflict is raging around us.

And in our own lives we need to be open to the peace of Christ that comes from looking at the face of Christ and realising that he is in control and no matter what happens to us he is constant and loving and there for us.

So when we offer the peace of Christ to one another, we are not just saying that we wish any conflict to stop, we are also giving a great life changing gift that has been made available to us by the love, grace and power of Jesus.

Blessings

Gavin

Announcements:

Sleaze Ball

Sleaze Ball is happening again this year on the 3rd October. MCC Sydney is again doing the cloak room for this party and we are looking for volunteers. It's a great way to meet other people in the church while helping to raise money and the awareness of MCC in the community. Each shift is 3 hours long and you get a free pass into the party! If you are interested in volunteering, please email me at pastor@mccsydney.org.

Women's Retreat

The women's retreat will be happening from November 6-8 and will be held at Kedumba House, Katoomba. The theme is 'finding inner peace'. Contact Lee & Sarah for more details on sarah.lee@inet.net.au. You can also contact the church office of 02 9569 5122 or office@mccsydney.org for more details.

Video From Last Week

The video of last Sunday's services with Rev Greg Smith preaching are up on our youtube site. www.youtube.com/user/mccsydney

SERVICES THIS WEEK

10am Service - Traditional

All are welcome at our 10am traditional service. This week we are looking at what are the important parts of the Church as we come to worship.

6:30pm Service - Crave

This week we are having a special event. We will be showing the movie "Call Me Troy", which documents the life of Rev Troy Perry and his founding of Metropolitan Community Churches. It's a very special movie to watch and a story of great courage and faith of a man who has made and is making a difference to so many people. You can view a trailer of the movie at www.youtube.com/watch?v=B5tvATGIT64. Troy also has a website at www.revtroyperry.org/.

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