



SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE  
FOR ALL SAINTS SMALL GROUPS

“In, Under, Around, and Through” | Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt | October 20, 2019

**Isaiah 58:2-3, 6-10**

They seek me daily and delight to know my ways, as if they were a nation that did righteousness and did not forsake the judgment of their God; they ask of me righteous judgments; they delight to draw near to God. 3 ‘Why have we fasted, and you see it not? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you take no knowledge of it?’ Behold, in the day of your fast you seek your own pleasure, and oppress all your workers... 6 “Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? 7 Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh? 8 Then shall your light break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up speedily; your righteousness shall go before you; the glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard. 9 Then you shall call, and the LORD will answer; you shall cry, and he will say, ‘Here I am.’... 10 if you pour yourself out for the hungry and satisfy the desire of the afflicted, then shall your light rise in the darkness and your gloom be as the noonday.

**James 3:1-6, 13-18**

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness. 2 For we all stumble in many ways. And if anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able also to bridle his whole body. 3 If we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us, we guide their whole bodies as well. 4 Look at the ships also: though they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are guided by a very small rudder wherever the will of the pilot directs. 5 So also the tongue is a small member, yet it boasts of great things. How great a forest is set ablaze by such a small fire! 6 And the tongue is a fire, a world of unrighteousness... 13 Who is wise and understanding among you? ... 17 The wisdom

**Intro Question**

How can we make peace in our time, reweaving *Shalom* through our lives, the lives of those around us, and the world?

**Background**

**The meaning of *Shalom*:**

*Shalom* includes spiritual, physical, interpersonal, and intrapersonal harmony with God, signifying wholeness and health on all levels.

Tim Keller: “a rich state of affairs in which all God-given gifts are faithfully and fruitfully employed.”

The Genesis 1 starting point for God’s creation is *Shalom*, including God-given work for man and beauty in both the created physical world and in Eve.

Adam’s poetic response to Eve expresses belonging and commitment to each other, bought at the cost of Adam’s own broken body (rib and side) and shed blood, mirroring Christ’s sacrifice for man.

**Images of Peace:**

First, what peace is not—a pile of aggregate, unrelated objects or elements, disconnected and without strength to hold up under stress. The nation of Israel in Isaiah 58 has abdicated any commitment to end wickedness, injustice, oppression, hunger, homelessness, and nakedness. They have abandoned essential ties of responsibility towards each other and seek only their own ends.

God blesses Peace-makers, not peace-wishers or peace-lovers. Peace only exists in a complex and flexible network of connections and ties, much like the strength of a woven piece of cloth when compared to a single thread. Alone the thread can do nothing; but when woven skillfully, a beautiful, strong, and intricate tapestry provides a picture of lives interconnected and woven through with God and His peace. By working to care for others, even our enemies, we weave the tapestry of God’s *Shalom*.

**The Way of Peace:**

As a first step, God’s people must confront shame. Jesus gives three examples of confronting shame: turning the other cheek, giving your cloak when asked for your tunic, and carrying the burden a second mile. All three examples highlight the shame of the one who abuses power, reminding those who would exercise *Shalom* to treat others with respect as God’s creatures. If we are planning revenge against an abuser or if we are the abusers ourselves, Tim’s warning is to wake up and to stop. Seek peace. Recognize injustice and suffering and make peace.

**Conclusion/Application**

Jesus was tried unjustly, slapped, stripped naked, and forced to carry his own cross, and yet he prayed for those who persecuted him. He never asks us to do anything he hasn’t already fully and completely done. He plunged into our chaos to wake us up and to reweave us into God’s *Shalom* in order that we can be reweavers of God’s *Shalom* ourselves.

**Discuss:**

1. Can you identify an instance of injustice or wickedness that you should address? How will you do it? When?
2. Do you see other peacemakers who need help? How can you come to their aid? How can you identify others who could help you?

from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. 18 And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. Reader: The Word of the LORD. People: Thanks be to God!

**Matthew 5:9, 38-41, 43-45**

9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God... 38 "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' 39 But I say to you, Do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. 40 And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. 41 And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles... 43 "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' 44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven."

3. Are you afraid to bring injustice or need into the open? What can you do to arm yourself to be God's Shalom in your world?
4. What other fears or weaknesses could be preventing you from being an agent of Shalom to those around you?