

Aldersgate UMC of Butte, Montana
Pastor Matthias Krier
Sunday, December 5, 2021

Background to Scripture

Matthias Krier

There are two passages from the Gospel of Luke this week from our Christian lectionary readings. One that you will hear in a few moments, but the other is Luke 3:1-6. This is a familiar passage as well proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. It also includes these words from the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the wilderness, prepare the way of the Lord."

This begs the question: are we or are we not preparing the Way for the Christ Child to be born in our midst? There is no season of Advent without preparation!

What exactly does this mean to prepare the Way? Interesting choice of words, since the early Christians were not called Christians. They were called followers of the Way. Bear this in mind as we hear these words from the gospel:

Scripture Lesson: Luke 1:68-79

Terri Belke

⁶⁸ 'Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,

for he has looked favourably on his people and redeemed them.

⁶⁹ He has raised up a mighty saviour for us

in the house of his servant David,

⁷⁰ as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,

⁷¹ that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us.

⁷² Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,
and has remembered his holy covenant,

⁷³ the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham,

to grant us ⁷⁴that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies,

might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to his people
by the forgiveness of their sins.

⁷⁸ By the tender mercy of our God,
the dawn from on high will break upon us,

⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,

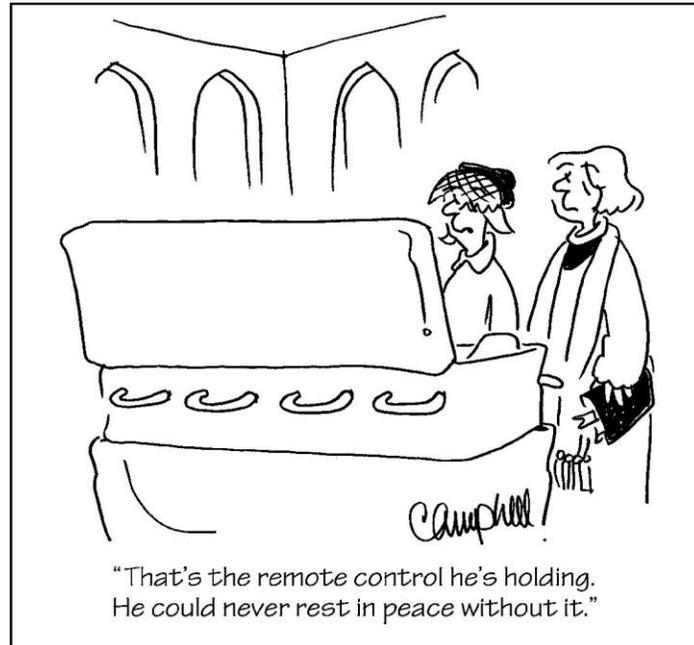
to guide our feet into the way of peace.'

The Word of God, for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Message *To Guide Our Feet into The Way of Peace*

We live in a world that is sorely lacking in peace. Why is that when it seems relatively simple when the Prince of Peace brought to us this peace, right?

Well there is peace and then there is peace ...



A church member approached me a couple of weeks ago after speaking about peace and harmony. He said something to the effect that there is no real peace without living in harmony with one another. He went on to say that unless we somehow find ways to live in harmony we will never know real peace.

On the one hand he is right. How can we know a collective peace as a community, as a nation, and as a world unless we find a way to live in harmony with one another?

Unless we can truly live by the Golden Rule ...



... how in the world can we ever hope to live in peace? We hear the word from the Beatitudes: *“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.” Matthew 5:9*

Historically, when has the world ever been at peace? Historically, there have been periods of time when certain cultures have been at peace, but when has the entire world ever experienced a complete and total peace around the world?

It would seem that due to fear, greed and ignorance, there will always be a lack of peace and harmony somewhere in the world at any given time.

As a people, as a nation and as a world, we may never truly know real peace unless we find ways to live in harmony with one another. This seems so very simple and yet so difficult to live out. Hear these words from the Dalai Lama:

“Because we all share this planet earth, we have to learn to live in Harmony and Peace with each other and with Nature. This is not just a dream but a necessity.”

This is so important, I would invite those of you who would strive to live in harmony with one another, to share in these words with me a second time. Let us share in these words together: *(recite words again with congregation)*

Now the 64,000 dollar question is, “HOW?” How in the world can we live in harmony with one another? If you cannot read these affirmations on screen ... I would invite you to take your insert and we are going to alternate reading these. I will read the odd numbered and I will invite you to read the even numbered affirmations. Let us begin: **(refer to insert)**

20 AFFIRMATIONS FOR LIVING IN HARMONY

1. I AM GRATEFUL TO BE ALIVE.
2. I AM GIVING ATTENTION TO WHAT REALLY MATTERS.
3. I CHOOSE TO BE A HUMBLE SERVANT.
4. I'M FEELING IMMENSE GRATITUDE.
5. JOY IS MY NATURAL STATE.
6. THE UNIVERSE GIVES ME EVERYTHING I DESIRE.
7. I ENJOY BEING PRESENT.
8. I LOVE AND APPRECIATE MYSELF.
9. LIVING PROSPERITY IS MY DAILY PRACTICE.
10. I GIVE AND RECEIVE LOVE EFFORTLESSLY.
11. I CHOOSE TO LIVE THE LIFE OF MY DREAMS.
12. I FEEL THE INTUITIVE NUDGE TO TAKE INSPIRED ACTION.
13. MY HEART IS OVERFLOWING WITH PERPETUAL BLISS.
14. I AM DOWN TO EARTH AND DIVINELY CONNECTED.
15. I TAP INTO THE ORGANIC CREATIVE FLOW.
16. MY WILL IS ALIGNED WITH THE SOURCE.
17. PERSISTENCE AND PATIENCE COME EASILY TO ME.
18. I HARMONIZE THE SITUATIONS IN MY LIFE.
19. THE ENERGY OF THE UNIVERSE IS WITHIN ME.
20. I AM LIVING IN ACCORDANCE WITH MY HIGHER PURPOSE.

MOTIVATINGMEMES.NET

Now, you may or may not be thinking, well, these sound fine and good, but you still may be asking the “HOW?” How can I have the courage, strength and wisdom to live out these affirmations. Well you can't, at least not on your own.

I believe that the HOW of living in harmony with one another must come from a Source and a Power that seems beyond us, but isn't. The how of how we live in harmony with one another must come from within as well as without. What I mean is that unless we connect to a Higher Power and the Source of all Life, living in harmony may only be a pipe dream. As many of you know, I am a mystic and I believe in miracles and one miracle is from

Yeshua; the miracle of this peace that surpasses all understanding. Yeshua promises something that millions are unaware of in this verse:

“Peace, I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:27

I could not stand here before you as a pastor unless I have personally experienced this peace that surpasses all understanding ... this peace that Jesus promises. While we may not have a collective peace in this world, we can know this peace, right here, right now because the followers of Yeshua then and the followers of Yeshua today KNOW this peace.

While world peace may be but a dream, may this inner peace that comes from Jesus be a living reality as the Prince of Peace lives in and through us. May the lyrics of this song become our prayer:

Let there be peace on earth

And let it begin with me

Let There Be Peace on Earth

The peace that was meant to be

With God our Creator

Children all are we

Let us walk with each other

In perfect harmony. Amen.

Special Music ...“Let There Be Peace on Earth”

Fred Crase