Hope in the Face of Conflict
Making Peace with Others the Way God Makes Peace with Us

Group Discussion

Stage 9: Exercising Faith
The Disputants Trust the Peacemaker to Make Peace Between Them

Opening Bell

Scottish philosopher David Hume (1711-1776), told a story about two farmers who didn’t trust each other. “Your corn is ripe today; mine will be so tomorrow. It is profitable for us both that I should labor with you today, and that you should aid me tomorrow. I have no kindness for you, and know that you have as little for me. I will not, therefore, take any pains on your account; and should I labor with you on my account, I know I should be disappointed, and that I should in vain depend upon your gratitude. Here then I leave you to labor alone: You treat me in the same manner. The seasons change; and both of us lose our harvests for want of mutual confidence and security.”

What are your thoughts on this story? Why is it so difficult to trust those we are in conflict with? Why might it be easier to trust a third party peacemaker?

Brief Review of Stage 8

Why are reparations so important to the peacemaking process?

Scriptural Basis for This Stage

1. How does the New Testament define faith? (212)
2. How essential is putting faith in Jesus, our mediator (1 Timothy 2:5, John 14:6)? (212-213)

3. Do you think the analogy between Jesus’ mediatorial work and a “bridge” is a good one? Why or why not? (213)

Like Father, Like Son

In the same way people place their trust in Jesus as the mediator to make peace between them and God, so the parties in dispute place their trust in their mediator to make peace between them. (213)

Discussion: The Relevance of Faith

1. Summarize the description of a mediator’s work on the top of page 214 and compare it to what President Carter did (also p. 214). Is this work the kind you can see yourself doing? Have there been situations where you have already played this role? Please explain.

2. What are the three major differences between Jesus as mediator and a human mediator? (215-217)

3. What factors contributed to Dr. Ralph Bunche’s success in his work between Israel and the surrounding Arab states in 1947? (217-220)

4. Do you think this agreement would have been reached without his help? Why or why not?

General Application and Closing Discussion

1. Please explain why you agree or disagree with the following statement:
   “Peacemakers do for other what they cannot do for themselves, that is, make peace.”

2. Why is it that people reach a point where they can no longer resolve their own conflicts?

3. What is the most important lesson you gleaned from this study?

4. Final thoughts?