

Advent: I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

Life Group Questions | Sunday, December 6, 2020

During the sermon, John made the clarification that the idea of peace (*shalom*) in scripture is not just about an absence of conflict, but is more holistic: it means that everything is how it ought to be. What is an area of your life that needs shalom?

Read Isaiah 9:5-7

How do you respond to God's approach to peace? In other words, how do you respond to God's answer to the violence and evil in the world being the birth of a baby?

Read Luke 23:33-35, then Acts 7:54-60, then Romans 12:9-21

Through these passages we get a series of stories that show how God is establishing His kingdom of peace through radical forgiveness; Jesus died on the cross and forgave those who crucified him. Stephen, knowing Jesus' forgiveness, forgave those who stoned him-including Saul. And Saul (who became Paul) went on to be killed by the gentiles: the same people he preached the gospel to.

How does this history of the Church affect the way we read Paul's writing on living at peace with others?

What does carrying on the example of Jesus, Stephen and Paul look like for us as followers of Jesus today?

John talked about the difference between being peacekeepers and being peacemakers. How can you actively make peace instead of just keeping peace?