

Why Promoting Peace Is Useless Without This Vital Truth

"I don't usually post things like this, but ..."

Have you seen a lot of that on social media lately? I have. What follows are heartfelt, passionate, sick-to-death or desperate commentaries on the recent violence surrounding race and police or about the Presidential election. There are countless layers to the situations that surround us at this moment in history. But these extraordinarily complex issues seem to boil down to two main questions:

What's the real problem? And what is needed to bring peace?

We can offer all manner of explanations, thoughts, feelings and personal experiences. We can ask sincere questions and earnestly ponder. We can look to friends and leaders for possible answers. We can offer action steps and possible solutions. We can take those steps and actively seek those solutions. But unless we grasp the current truth of this ancient plea from the book of Jeremiah, we're doomed to fail:

"They have healed also the brokenness of the daughter of My people superficially, saying, 'Peace, peace,' when there is no peace" (6:14).

The problems we have and the peace we seek can only be fully accomplished in Christ. As we analyze the conflict, violence and brokenness that surrounds us, the only sure and true lens we have is the truth of God.

True Peace

What's the real problem? We are a people in utter need of a Savior to rescue us from sin and its effects. We are a people in utter need of a God who both tells us and shows us how to live.

What is needed to bring peace? People willing to admit that need for a Savior. And people willing to sincerely, consistently live the way God describes and displays throughout His Word.

We're seeing the results of superficial and temporal peace all around us. While good and necessary action steps have been taken in the past toward peace, and good and necessary action steps must still be pursued, they will always fail to bring true, lasting peace if they are not coupled with the truth of the gospel:

That sin entered the world through the people God created (Gen. 3:6). That there is an enemy at work in our world (1 Peter 5:8). That God both promised (Gen. 3:15) and provided a perfect payment for the sins of the world through His Son, displaying His great love for us (1 John 4:10). That apart from Christ we are nothing (John 15:5) and without hope (Eph. 2:12). But through trust and faith in Christ, we have a sure and everlasting hope (1 Peter 1:3).

Putting It into Practice

In a few days we'll send our 13-year-old daughter from our suburban home into downtown Detroit for a week to serve children in one of the poorest sections of the city. Instead of giving in to the temptation to worry for her safety in the midst of a city often known for racial and civil unrest, I am doing three things:

1. **I am planting compassion in her heart.**

We're discussing the sad and scary events of recent days, and I'm reminding her that the children she'll be serving live in that kind of reality daily. I am reminding her that while she won't be able to understand or answer every question or circumstance, she can show Christ's love and truth to those kids. There are good and necessary action steps she can take toward peace.

2. I am arming her with truth.

I'm reminding her of the truth of the gospel that has been planted in her and assuring her that even as a 13-year-old girl, she has that truth and the power of the Holy Spirit in her as a follower of Christ.

3. And I'm praying.

Not just for my daughter, but for every person in our country and world:

"Finally, brothers, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, and live in peace, and the God of love and peace will be with you" (2 Cor. 13:11).

As you watch the news, read someone's Facebook status or have a conversation about all that surrounds us in the coming days, God and His Word offer true hope to stand on. You can respond with compassion—showing love and sharing truth. You can arm yourself with truth by diving straight into God's Word. And you can pray. Pray for the grieving, the frightened, the weary and the confused—for those in need of wisdom and those in need of salvation.

What will you do? How will you respond? Let us all flee from the superficial peace and run toward the hope found in Christ alone.

Copyright © 2001-2016 *Revive Our Hearts*. **Heidi Jo Fulk** is passionate about teaching and encouraging woman to love and

live God's Word. She is wife to her high school sweetheart, Dan, and mom to their four young children—Emma Jo, Gretchen, Tucker, and Brock. Heidi leads women's ministries at her church.