

4. Be Peacemakers

Ephesians 2:11-18; Ephesians 4:3; Matthew 5:9

A few weeks ago I found myself acting as a peacemaker with my daughter. She came to me wanting me to intervene to resolve a conflict....and not just any conflict... one between her and her brother. Now for those of us with children, the task of helping make peace between siblings is a very common task. This situation, however, was a bit different. My daughter doesn't have a brother! So, I had to dig a bit deeper to find out that she was talking about her imaginary brother Klukluz! According to my daughter, Klukluz had been naughty and pushing her.

So, there I was, being asked to be a peacemaker with a toddler and an imaginary person! I could have easily dismissed her request as just make believe, just another distraction in a day full of tasks and conversations. I couldn't see or hear the conflict. What was I supposed to do?

What prompted me to action was two-fold: Fundamentally my love for my daughter meant that I wanted her to be at peace. Secondly, whether or not this was an imagined argument, her response to conflict was real and I wanted to validate her feeling. She was upset and there was something that I could do to bring peace. So, I turned to the space that Klukluz was imaginatively occupying and asked him to stop. I lowered myself to what I imagined to be his height and calmly explained that he should love and protect his sister and not otherwise. Then I reported back to my daughter, explaining that he is still learning and asked if she wanted to help me to teach him the stuff he doesn't know yet, to which she agreed with a smile. This seemed to be the response my daughter needed. She calmed down and gave me a hug. She inevitably also learned a lesson and everyone had dinner happily together. Peace settled once again in our living room.

"Jesus himself said, 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.' The verse comes right before the one that says, 'Blessed are those who are persecuted'. Peacemaking is no easy calling. Standing in no man's land is likely to see us getting shot at from both sides. But peacemaking is a family trait. This is the way people will know that we are children of God..." (p. 38)

BE: When have you felt most connect to Jesus as a peacemaker? When have you experienced peace and facilitated peace?

SAY: List the situation of conflict and separation where you live and work. Pray into those situations and come up with some strategies for being a peacemaker.

DO: Choose one of the situations of conflict discussed above and think how you could be a peacemaker or bring a peace offering today to bridge the division.