

Sunday Assembly Reflection

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REFLECTION: Jim Reynolds addressed the tragedy of the recent killings and said that we are also in a verbal warzone, and our hate-filled speech is fueling the war. But, we as the church are the very body of Christ and are here to do Jesus' work of peacemaking. The same stereotyping, discrimination and prejudice going on today was going on when Jesus walked the earth, but Jesus was socially scandalous and jumped over the barriers to reach the socially marginalized - women, foreigners, the sick and broken. He went to Cornelius' house - a despised Roman soldier. He struck up a conversation with a Samaritan woman - doubly scandalous because she was a woman and because Jews had hated Samaritans for 600 years. And though the Pharisees hated Jesus, He called the most zealous of Pharisees, Saul, to become his apostle. Jesus purposefully jumped over huge barriers to bring peace.

The answer to our world's problem does not lay with the government, but with the church, we who are called to walk out the kind of peacemaking that Jesus demonstrated on earth. We share His same mission of crossing barriers with the gospel of life and forgiveness.

But the church has not done a good job of carrying out our mission. Jim challenged us to ask ourselves "Why are you scared?" "Why are you angry?" What keeps us from jumping over barriers to reach those we don't like or trust? Jim warned us that fear freezes all our virtues, all of our goodness. He said it's not just complicated. It is impossible. We need the Holy Spirit to love through us those we cannot love, and He will do the work for us if we repent and ask for help.

The hatred in our world seems so big and my ability to make a difference seems so pointless, so I repent of being passive and hopeless and am asking the Holy Spirit for help. I don't want to be a frozen spectator anymore. Jesus help me jump over barriers.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS: *Please pick one of the questions below to answer in your small groups; more if you have time. Be sure to pray for each other at the end.*

- Have you been participating in the verbal war zone? On social media, in personal conversations? What could you do to be more of a peacemaker on social media, with your friends, at work or school?
- Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your mind any of these attitudes and ask for help to change:
 - Stereotyping - smearing an entire race or all police with the sins of a few
 - Discrimination - unfairly treating one race differently from another
 - Prejudice - judging someone before they spoke a word

Sunday Assembly Reflection is written by Lake Highlands Church members for Lifegroups and individuals to receive more from the spoken Sunday Assembly message through reflection and quick discussion. It is published on the first three Monday's of the month. If you are interested in knowing more about a Lifegroup or have a question about the reflection, please contact Donjalea Crane, donjalea@lakehighlandschurch.org or contact one of our Lifegroup leaders by going to lakehighlandschurch.org/Lifegroup-listings.

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