

Advent 2025: Recovering Wonder in an Age of Algorithms Week 2: Peace

Discussion Guide – December 7, 2025

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Eph. 2:14-18

But to you who are listening I say: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. Luke 6:27-28

Quotes

You're up against the deepest pocketed, most talented companies in the world with godlike technology who are trying to do one thing, and that is sequester you from your other relationships. They're trying to get you glued to the phone, and one of the ways they glue you to the phone is by enraging you, elevating content that makes you angry at your neighbour, elevating content that makes you start blaming the other gender or blaming immigrants for your problems. I'm in marketing. We used to think it was sex that sells. Then the algorithms found something that sells even more in terms of gluing you to a screen, and that is rage. Enragement equals engagement equals shareholder value." Dr Scott Galloway

"We who formerly hated and murdered one another... now live together and share the same table. Now we pray for our enemies and try to win those who hate us." Justin Martyr

Discussion Questions

1. The smart-lights story illustrated how peace can feel carefully curated, yet easily disrupted by forces outside our control. Where do you feel most tempted to try to "engineer" peace in your life rather than receive and practice the peace Jesus offers?
2. Ephesians 2 describes Jesus tearing down the "dividing wall of hostility" between Jews and Gentiles and forming a "new humanity." What are some of the strongest "walls of hostility" you see in our world today, and which of those do you personally feel most affected by?
3. Jesus commands his followers to love their enemies, bless those who curse them and pray for those who mistreat them. What do you find most difficult about this teaching, and what do you find most compelling about it?
4. The sermon named empathy, forgiveness and vulnerability as practices that help cultivate shalom and resist the echo chambers around us. What is one small, concrete step you could take this week to practice peace in a tense or broken relationship?