

I remain confident of this: I will see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.
Psalm 27:13 (NIV)

Khushbakht Peters is a doctor in Peshawar, Pakistan. Twice selected as a delegate to the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women, she writes blogs for the Anglican Communion News Service.

THERE IS STILL GOOD OUT THERE

As Pakistani Christians we have faced persecution a number of times. One such example is the double suicide attack that took place at All Saints Church in Peshawar in September 2013 killing around 100 and injuring around 150. It is a lesser known fact that when the blasts took place, Muslim women living around the church, and shopkeepers from the surrounding cloth market, rushed to the site to help the injured taking them in cars, taxis ... whatever they could find, to the hospital.

Others took the mutilated bodies to graveyards, helping to dig the graves, and bury them. If the world has terrorists, it also has a greater number of good and noble people. The ordinary people of Pakistan are peace loving. During the past two decades they have also lost loved ones in the terrorist attacks, and most of them feel our pain when we as Christians go through persecution.

1 Corinthians 13:13 says, 'And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.' Even though we belong to different beliefs or communities, we can work harmoniously for a better and peaceful world. And when hatred tries to blind us, let the gift of love that God has placed in our hearts help us see more clearly.



PRAYER

Lord God, our heavenly Father, bless us as we come before you and hear our prayer. We pray to you for peace in our country, for tolerance in our hearts, and for wisdom to see the good in others. All this we ask in your Son's Name. Amen

ACTION

Reach out to the people from other faiths in your community, especially the youth. Arrange an interfaith sports event or a weekend camp, make groups consisting of people from different faiths and give the groups tasks to perform together.

Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.
James 3:18 (NIV)

Stuart Noble is Bible Society's Director of Strategic Partnerships.

HARD WORK OF MAKING PEACE

If peace comes easily, if peace comes without hard work, is it truly peace? Sow, reap, harvest. The agricultural metaphor at the heart of this verse on peace implies hard work, faithfulness, a toiling in and out of season. All peace-making is hard work. Whether this is the peace we make in our families and communities or peace-building between nations. It requires time, energy, attentiveness and patience, but James' promise is that those who do the hard work will reap a harvest of righteousness. In the words of the Iona community, true peace is:

not an easy peace; not an insignificant peace; not a half-hearted peace... but the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

PRAYER

God of Peace, grant us the energy, passion and determination to do the work of peace. May we be those who sow in peace and reap a harvest of righteousness. Not an easy peace, not an insignificant peace, not a half-hearted peace, but the peace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, 'If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace...'
Luke 19:41-42 (NIV)

Joel Goodlet lives in Birmingham with his wife and three children, seeking the welfare of local neighbourhoods from a foundation of prayer.

HE HIMSELF IS OUR PEACE

If you've ever sat with a human being as they grieve desperate loss, you may find that words fail as you try to bring peace. But if a deeply trusted friend comes close, then very often peace begins to return without the need for words. When the depth of pain in a fresh wound is met by a greater depth of love, peace becomes possible. When God wanted to bring peace to the most troubled city in the history of our planet, he didn't send words or ideas. He stepped through its gates

with tears in his eyes. The Bible tells us that 'he himself is our peace'. His desire is to come close enough to touch our troubled lives.

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, where there is pain, please come close. Where I need you, please come close. Where my people need you, please come close. Where my world needs you, please come close. Please open our eyes to 'the things which make for peace'.

I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.
John 15:5 (ESV)

Rob Hare
is a Project Manager for Bible Society.

PRACTISING PEACE

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, invites us to stay close and connected to him. Before his death, he spoke to his followers in the Upper Room. Using the metaphor of a vine and branches, Jesus explains that we can receive his life of love, joy and peace, just like branches that bear fruit because they receive sap from the vine. Without the sap, they will dry up and die. Even in the midst of life's challenges, pressures, anxieties and fears, it is possible to know confidence and security.

If we abide in Jesus, through the power of the Holy Spirit we can experience what the apostle Paul calls the 'fruit' of peace, joy and love (Galatians 5:22-24).

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, amongst the many distractions challenges and fears in our lives, help us to draw near and stay connected to you so that we may receive your peace, joy and love. May these fruits grow and increase in our life.

Take my yoke and put it on you, and learn from me, because I am gentle and humble in spirit; and you will find rest.
Matthew 11:29 (GNT)

Liz Kam
is a Church Related Community Worker at Levenshulme Inspire Manchester.

LET PEACE START WITH ME

Ever been overwhelmed by images of violence and war on TV, and prayed for peace, not knowing what else to do? Jesus calls us to find rest in him from such sorrows and take up his yoke. Following the bombing of Manchester arena, we witnessed people of all faiths and none standing together arm in arm, refusing to be manipulated into hate. Manchester's rich tradition of people reaching out, smashing boundaries and building community, created a platform for peace. When we take up the yoke Jesus offered, we participate in the

often mysterious work of the kingdom. Jesus teaches us to do what we can, where we are, and suddenly small acts of community become a peace imperative.

PRAYER

God of community, let peace start with me. As I pick up your yoke, clothe me in gentleness and humility, tempered with a little righteous anger. Give me rest from feeling inadequate, so that your peace flows through me, infecting all of my relationships, and building a platform for hope.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
Matthew 5:9 (NIV)

Andy Frost
is the Director of Share Jesus International.

PEACEMAKERS

I notice more and more how my two young kids imitate what I do. They imitate some of my facial expressions and my mannerisms but more importantly they imitate some of my values. The good news of the gospel is that Jesus entered into the mess of human history to make peace between humanity and our heavenly Father. His life and death and resurrection enable us to know our true identity as children of God. And as we discover our true identity, we discover that we are invited to continue the mission of Jesus, bringing peace to the world - between warring family members, colleagues and communities. Ultimately,

discovering our true identity means discovering we are entrusted with the gospel message to invite others to know God's peace in their lives. As I watch my kids imitate me, let's look to how we can imitate the love and the grace of our Father in heaven.

PRAYER

Father, remind me of my true identity as your child. Jesus, Prince of Peace, thank you for the peace you freely give me through your life, death and resurrection. Spirit of God, empower me to be a peacemaker in the world today. Amen

For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not evil, to give you a future and a hope.
Jeremiah 29:11 (NKJV)

Latifah Forrest
works for the Peace Alliance, a charity that works in partnership with the police, government agencies, the corporate sector, and faith and voluntary organisations.

THOUGHTS OF PEACE

The Kingdom of God is righteousness and peace. True wisdom is never argumentative or quarrelsome. It does not strive. It maintains harmonious relationships with everyone, as far as possible. It is impossible to quarrel with man who is filled with divine wisdom, for such a man is peaceable man. Zac Poonen

PRAYER

Thank you Lord for what I am going through in life; the ups and the downs. I trust that your Word will prevail in my life, as you have said that the thoughts you have for me are of peace and not evil, so I will abide in your abundant mercy all the days of my life through Christ Jesus.