

# The Six Dimensions of Shalom

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# The Six Dimensions of Shalom

Living in shalom means living with integrity, fullness, and purpose, cultivating healthy and just relationships. It involves experiencing shalom in six fundamental dimensions:

1. Shalom with yourself.
2. Shalom with others.
3. Shalom with God.
4. Shalom with my community.
5. Shalom with God's mission.
6. Shalom with my city and the world.

These dimensions represent the shalom that God desires for us to embrace and pursue in our lives. Below, we will explore each one in detail.



## Shalom with yourself

Many people live with a deformed sense of self. Some are mired in shame, denigrate who they are and think of themselves as “less than” or “not enough”, while others have an inflated sense of self, believing they are superior to others and entitled to higher positions of power and wealth. Sadly, neither will experience shalom, unless they rebuild a sense of shalom with self.

The good news is that God created you to live in peace with yourself and experience profound psychological and emotional peace within. In fact, Irenaeus, the second-century church father, paints a beautiful picture of what God desires for us: “The glory of God is man fully alive,” he says. In other words, God receives external glory and is delighted when we are truly alive; when we are at peace with who we are, in good relationship with others, and using our creative capacities and talents to live out our vocational calling. So, how can we become fully alive? How can we live lives of abundance? How can we be in shalom with ourselves?

First, accept change in your life and allow God to shape you more into His likeness. That may mean dying to whatever in our social surroundings has shaped us inauthentically, including such things as greed, false patriotism, xenophobia, toxic masculinity and femininity. It will include letting go of the past, forgiving yourself and joining God in what he desires to do in and through your life.

Second, it will imply a re-shifting of priorities; not only thinking of your own interests but also of the interests of others. When you do that, understand that your peace is not dependent on everything running perfectly, and cast your worries and cares on God, you start breathing and living more freely. Those who trust in the Lord, find inner security; therefore, they can sleep well, says the Psalmist (Psalm 4:8). God gives “perfect peace”, quietness and confidence forever to those who steadfastly set their minds on him, adds the prophet (Isaiah 26:3; 32:17).

Third, the great freedom of faith is that you are not perfect and aren’t expected to be. You don’t have to pretend to be someone you’re not. It’s when you accept your true self and let go of your false self, that you become more authentic and free. Restoring a right relationship with self, therefore, involves learning how to dwell graciously in your own body, with your own personality, and your own story. When you become truthful and integrate your inner and outer life, you will be able to truly “live in dwelling places of shalom”, for the truth will set you free.

Fourth, you will experience greater shalom when you know and accept yourself as beloved. Even though the messages you may have received tell you that you’re not enough and not worthy of love, God sees things differently. In fact, He doesn’t want that shalom with yourself turns only into an occasional encounter. Instead, he deeply longs for you to embrace who he created you to be, beautifully and wonderfully made. As you lean into embracing yourself as beloved, you will live with greater peace and inner security and grow more able to become all that God meant for you to be.

In summary, God desires for you to live in shalom with yourself so you can become a source of strength to others. As Thomas a Kempis denotes: “First keep peace with yourself, then you can also bring peace to others”. As you seek to have more shalom with yourself and grow into an emotionally mature person, you will have to take moral and personal responsibility. Some aspects of this maturing process will take time and be painful, but know, that God will always be on your side and help you to stand on your feet. Remember: “The glory of God is man fully alive.”

## Shalom with others

Ethnic strife, conflicts, disagreements, political polarization, ostracism, oppression, violence, greed, injustice, hostilities, deportation, and war have created much hardship, pain and suffering over the course of human history. Even where people peacefully co-exist, this might not mean that they care for each other, particularly when they seek to avoid those who are other than them, refuse to embrace them in their otherness and set up systems to



live in segregation.<sup>1</sup> The result is a deeply felt lack of shalom, that permeates all of society, for the exclusion of the other is an exclusion of God, since the other is equally made in the image of God.

God desires for us to fully experience the joy and abundance of life He has in store for us. Being part of a wholesome community where we feel like we belong, experience encouragement and are inspired to grow is part of how we come into this abundant life. However, we will only be able to experience such shalom, when we open ourselves to others, live in connectedness and build healthy relationships. Yet how do we create the kind of spaces where we can learn to love? How can we create room in ourselves for those other than us? How can we be in shalom with others, starting in our family, with our neighbors, co-workers and others in our city, nation and world?

First, learn to listen empathetically. Be curious, don't jump to preconceived conclusions, and allow yourself to hear from those who see the world differently from you. While you may not always agree, it will allow you to better appreciate their outlook on life. Listening generously can open doors to deeper friendships; it overcomes divides, helps you to let go of harmful prejudices and a propensity to objectify others, while making it possible for you to see the humanity in the other.

Second, a lot of conflicts fester and remain unresolved because we tend to speak "about" others, instead of learning the art of speaking directly to them. You will be able to experience more shalom with others, when you gather the courage to say what needs to be said but do so with love. In fact, speaking the truth with love, is also critical when confronting those who denigrate God's image in the most vulnerable.

Third, the more you learn to give the benefit of the doubt, the better you will be able to build deeper connections and friendships with other. We all have an innate need to "be seen and understood". So, when we feel another person is truly interested in us doesn't judge us but seeks to understand who we are and why we do what we do, it lifts our spirits and makes us feel alive. In a similar vein, your relationships will improve, when you truly seek to "see" and encourage others.

Fourth, we've all been hurt and have reason to distrust others. Holding onto grudges and cutting others off from our lives is always a tempting pathway. Yet, a lack of forgiveness holds us captive, makes us bitter and hinders us from living in shalom. That's why it's critical you learn to heal broken relationships in your life by extending forgiveness, including to yourself. Doing so, may restore shalom in your life, particularly when you recuperate lost relationships. At the same time, remember that forgiveness is not about the other, but about you, your emotional health, your growth and inner peace.

In summary, God desires for you to live in shalom with others. Particularly as a follower of Jesus, God wants you to learn to live a lifestyle marked by forgiveness, where you grow in your capacity to embrace and love those around you, for in doing so, your life will be enriched. In fact, as Howard Snyder points out: "Until the kingdom of God can be demonstrated in our relationships of love with one another, we have nothing credible to say to an unbelieving and broken world." But when we do, we become more whole and fully who we were made to be, as God's image in us takes deeper roots.

## Shalom with God

One of the most powerful revelations in Scripture is that God's heart for us is good. Again and again, God seeks us out and strives to establish a loving relationship with us. Unfortunately, many people live with a strained relationship with God due to a distorted image of Him. While they may intellectually affirm the traditional attributes of God—such as His love, omniscience, and omnipotence—inside, they perceive Him more as a forbidding, emotionally distant, and punitive figure.

Of course, these negative images deeply affect our relationship with God, as it is impossible to experience an authentic, passionate, and loving connection when our perception of Him does not inspire trust or love. An image of God filled with tension not only damages our relationship with Him, but also distorts our self-image and our way of understanding the world.<sup>2</sup> This is why God deeply desires that we restore our relationship with Him and come to know Him for who He truly is: Yahweh Shalom<sup>3</sup>— one in essence, yet a community of love, care, justice, passion, understanding, respect, and goodness.<sup>4</sup> Interestingly, in the early church, one of the most powerful images used

to describe the Trinity was that of a dance of coexistence and interconnectedness. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit dwell in an eternal and joyful dance of love and honor, rhythm and harmony, grace and beauty, giving and receiving. The universe itself was created as an expression and extension of this divine dance.<sup>5</sup>

Knowing Yahweh Shalom allows us to be part of the family of God, to understand ourselves better, to grow in character, and to live with greater integrity. John Calvin, the 16th-century reformer, expressed this truth clearly: "Almost all wisdom consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and the knowledge of ourselves... it is not easy to discern which precedes and gives rise to the other."<sup>6</sup> In other words, knowing ourselves begins with knowing God, and vice versa. Therefore, to know, worship, and follow the God who desires to bless us with a sense of belonging and who wants to provide for every need is the essence of living in shalom. The question then is: how can we grow in our knowledge, understanding, and love of God, who longs to pour shalom into our lives and into the world?<sup>7</sup>

First, strengthen your faith by learning about God's story. Discover how He has acted throughout history, how He has revealed Himself, how He has drawn near to humanity, and how He seeks to establish shalom and fulfill His dream on earth as it is in heaven. Then, take steps to trust in God—who is good, beautiful, and compassionate—with your life decisions, including your finances and the way you prioritize your time and resources. As you align your personal story with His and begin to seek His Kingdom rather than pursuing only your own plans, you will experience deeper growth and become the person you were truly created to be.

Second, we become what we worship, and we worship what we value most. When we seek pleasure, beauty, and truth outside of God—whether in ourselves, others, or things like wealth and status—we end up trapped in a cycle of pain, confusion, and disorientation. Instead, make God the center of your worship. Do not divide your life between a religious identity and a secular one. Worship Him with all that you are—in your work, in the way you live, in your relationships, and in community with others. As you do, your life will be transformed.

Third, work as if for God. Your work is valuable, and the way you do it matters. When you understand this, you stop seeing it merely as a means to make money or survive. Instead, by using your gifts and talents to reflect Jesus in your workplace, your work becomes a vocation—a form of worship—through which you serve and bless others, bringing more shalom to the earth. Working as if for the Lord allows you to experience more of God in your everyday life, as you integrate into His work in the world, playing the role for which you were designed: to do good and advance His Kingdom in your spheres of influence.

Fourth, do not live to work; work to live. This means setting aside time in your week to rest, reflect, and enjoy quality moments with friends, family, and God. When you cultivate these connections, the stress and worries of life lose their power over you. By receiving the gift of rest—honoring the Sabbath and taking regular breaks from the uncertainty, anxiety, and insecurity that often surround us—you will experience more shalom, greater serenity, tranquility, and peace in your life.

Fifth, rejoice always. This does not mean, as some have misunderstood, that you must always be happy. Even Jesus was not always happy. However, our souls come alive, and our experience of God's presence becomes more real when we adopt an attitude marked by gratitude rather than bitterness, by joy rather than despair. When we choose not to let pain and frustration drown our joy and, instead, learn to find joy in the small things—in friendship, in the beauty of nature, in the presence of God—we experience a deeper shalom.

In summary, God longs for us to know Him as Yahweh Shalom, so that His peace may flow into our hearts, lives, relationships, workplaces, and systems. God is on our side, not against us! Although we cannot control the uncertainties and challenges of life, in the presence of Yahweh Shalom, we find hope, perspective, joy, strength, courage, and peace to face each day. That is why Augustine of Hippo, the 4th-century North African bishop, said: "Falling in love with God is the greatest romance; seeking Him, the greatest adventure; finding Him, the greatest human achievement."<sup>8</sup>

# Shalom with your community

Christian faith is not a private faith, nor does it primarily exist to provide us with individual peace and salvation. Rather, it is a shared faith, through which we find belonging, purpose, and a common mission. South African missiologist David Bosch expresses it this way: "The Christianity that does not begin with the individual, does not begin; but the Christianity that ends with the individual, ends."<sup>9</sup> In other words, we were created to live in community, because it is in relationship with others where we grow and are transformed. It is there where we learn to love and embrace, bless and serve, and look beyond ourselves. The words of French mathematician and philosopher Blaise Pascal reflect this same truth: "It is not the God of philosophers and scholars... It is not a God that can be 'learned' or reached in isolation, but a God bound to a human family, which can only be found within this community. The purpose of the mission of God's people is to form a community—to awaken not only a faith, but a shared faith."<sup>10</sup>

The dream of this Shalom community is a golden thread that runs through the entire biblical narrative. Throughout Scripture, various writers and leaders describe it with different names: the kingdom of peace, the new heaven and new earth, the kingdom of God, the New Jerusalem. Jesus founded the *ekklesia*—the assembly of those called to seek the shalom of their city—to give concrete shape to this Shalom community through their shared life. Their redeemed relationships were meant to be a living testimony that, in a fragmented world, separation, alienation, and barriers of all kinds could be overcome by the reconciling power of Christ.<sup>11</sup> Dallas Willard expresses it this way: "God's objective in history is the creation of an inclusive community of loving people, including Himself in that community as its primary sustenance and most glorious inhabitant." Therefore, "church planting cannot be the final objective of mission, only the beginning."<sup>12</sup> The ultimate goal is a vibrant, loving church that actively works for the well-being of the community in which God has placed it.<sup>13</sup> The first *ekklesia* understood that their mission was not just individual salvation, but the proclamation of the kingdom of God, the practice of a new way of life, and the restoration of creation.<sup>14</sup> But how can we be the body of Christ on Earth? Where and how do we begin?

First, take responsibility for your church. It is your community of faith, learning, growth, and belonging. Don't delegate everything to the leaders; instead, get actively involved in the life and mission of your church. Use the gifts and skills God has given you to bless others. Stop being just a religious consumer and become an active member of the body of Christ. Along with others, participate in the task of glorifying God, serving your neighbor, sharing the truth, restoring the world, and living as God's people in shalom.

Second, celebrate unity and enjoy diversity. Just as the human body is composed of different parts, the body of Christ is made up of a variety of people, gifts, and experiences. No one is more valuable than another; each one has an essential role to play. Therefore, it is crucial that you listen to and consider the ideas and experiences of those who are different from you. When you do so, your life is enriched. Participate in building a community of shalom, welcome those who are different from you, and maintain an open attitude to learn from them and minister together in a spirit of unity within diversity.

Third, find strength in belonging. As Christians, we are not only called to believe, but also to belong. We were not designed to live solitary lives, but to be part of the family of Christ and active members of His body. The church exists to be a meaningful community where believers can receive support, care, encouragement, and friendship. However, belonging is not automatic; it requires an intentional decision. You must be willing to draw near to others, open-up, and make yourself vulnerable. When you choose to genuinely get involved, you will experience a deeper shalom.

Fourth, practice hospitality by creating a space where others feel welcomed and at home. Unfortunately, "Christian culture is often a barrier to people falling in love with Jesus," as it is often rigid and exclusionary rather than warm and inviting.<sup>15</sup> Why does this happen? In the first *ekklesia*, community life revolved around gatherings in homes, with a focus on sharing a common meal.<sup>16</sup> In contrast, many churches today are structured primarily around liturgy and Sunday services, with a preacher, stage, and worship team at the center of the experience. To build a culture of shalom, it is crucial for the church to reclaim its essence as a community of hospitality, where welcoming others, sharing the table, and breaking bread together are foundational practices. This will transform the church from a group of religious spectators into a true community of friends.

In summary, God desires you to experience the joy of belonging to a community where you are welcomed and accepted. The church exists so that its members support one another and walk together in faith. When we understand that the church is not just a spiritual refuge, but also God's agent for the redemption of the world, we understand why the writers of the New Testament were so insistent on the importance of reconciliation. They urge us to leave behind bitterness and slander, to forgive one another, and to walk in love, just as Christ loved us. When we live this way, shalom becomes a tangible reality in our individual lives and in our community. Our shared life becomes a living testimony, an attractive fragrance to those around us, in our environment, our work, and our city.

## Shalom with God's mission

Our God is a missionary God, a God who sends, deeply committed to the restoration of the world, far more than we could ever be. He made the greatest sacrifice by sending His Son to start a movement of shalom on earth, giving His life so that, through His blood shed on the cross, God could reconcile all things—both in heaven and on earth—and make shalom with His creation. This *Missio Dei* (God's cosmic mission) is the thread that runs through all of Scripture, from the original creation in Genesis 1 to the new creation in Revelation 22. The most amazing thing is that God invites us to participate in this mission. Jesus said, "As the Father has sent me, I am sending you" (John 20:21). This means that, if we truly want to know the God of mission, we must engage in His work and become missionaries ourselves. It also implies that we are called to take on the mission of Jesus and follow His steps: to bring the Good News to the poor, proclaim freedom for the prisoners, give sight to the blind, set the oppressed free, and announce the year of Jubilee (Luke 4:18-19).

As we carry out this mission, we cannot afford to isolate ourselves from the world or ignore the needs around us. On the contrary, like Jesus, we have been sent to serve our communities and actively engage in the life of our neighborhoods, regardless of whether we are welcomed or not. Our mission is not simply to offer people an escape route from this world so that "they can go to heaven after they die," but to collaborate with God in making His dream of shalom a reality here and now. When we fail in this and limit ourselves to the four walls of our churches, allowing the fear of "contamination" to keep us away from the world, we lose sight of our true identity as *ekklesia*—the assembly of those called to seek the shalom of their city. Erwin McManus expresses it this way: "When the church refuses to serve the world, it begins to consume itself. It finds itself deteriorating, withering, and losing its strength."<sup>17</sup> The reformer Martin Luther said similarly: "If our preaching does not address the precise point where the world of our time is hurting, we are not truly preaching the Word."<sup>18</sup> So, the question is: how can we be an active part of God's mission on Earth? How can we help bring His vision of shalom to life in our communities and nations? Where do we begin?

First, pray and then keep praying. It is significant that, before ascending to heaven, Jesus instructed His disciples to go to Jerusalem, pray together, and wait for the fullness of the Holy Spirit. The *ekklesia* was born out of that powerful prayer meeting. We pray because God's vision goes beyond our capabilities. We pray because we need His extraordinary power and provision to be missionary witnesses in our cities and to the ends of the earth. We pray because the kingdom of God is not established only by our effort, but through prayer: "Your kingdom come." We pray because we know that apart from Him, we can do nothing.

Second, do not keep the good news of the kingdom of God a secret. Instead, share the vision of shalom by repeatedly communicating the redemptive story of the gospel. Through it, people can turn to Christ, be saved from their sins, and join in God's transformative work to restore creation to its original purpose. Remember that stories are one of the most powerful ways to connect with others on a deep level. Start by listening to the stories of those around you, without judgment. When you show genuine interest, you bless people and earn their trust, which allows you to share your own story. In that moment, speak about how you have become part of God's GREAT Story and how, day by day, you continue learning to live within it.

Third, be a disciple who makes disciples. Do not limit yourself to adhering to a religion or a cult of Jesus but live a lifestyle that reflects the love and justice of the Kingdom of God.<sup>19</sup> Learn to follow the Jesus of the Gospels, who not only transformed individual hearts but also worked for the restoration of society. Then go and make more disciples, helping them "learn obedience to their Lord in all the circumstances of life: private and public, personal



and social, spiritual and material."<sup>20</sup> Although discipleship has a cost, that cost must be compared to the even greater price of non-discipleship—both for you and for those around you, as well as for the cities and nations that could be transformed.<sup>21</sup>

Fourth, make room for others to lead. "The principle of leading a good church is not to retain or control people, but to push them to run with what God has called them to do."<sup>22</sup> This means allowing others to grow and flourish in their gifts and charisms without feeling that they are a threat to your leadership. Look at Jesus: He invested in the lives of His disciples, equipped them, and, despite their flaws, entrusted them with the task of advancing God's mission. When you give others the opportunity to lead and reproduce yourself in them, you create a movement in which multiple generations can participate together in God's mission. In this way, His work will continue far beyond your time on earth.

In summary, "The Scriptures are clear that God's purpose for the church is broader than evangelism. It is broader than church planting. It is deeper than spiritual discipleship. It is vaster than addressing social injustices. It is bigger than feeding the hungry."<sup>23</sup> Rather, God wants us to be part of the *Missio Dei*, aligning our lives and priorities with His mission. When we truly live this—imitating the mission of Christ, bearing witness to the whole Gospel, making disciples who form more disciples, and mobilizing others to fulfill their calling—the world, especially those who are broken physically, socially, or emotionally, will be able to more easily understand God's compassion and His dream of shalom.<sup>24</sup>

## Shalom with your city and world

In cultures where individualism predominates, integrity and well-being are often understood primarily at the personal level. Therefore, our religious, cultural, and political systems tend to emphasize the needs, rights, and interests of the individual: my salvation, my spiritual growth, my relationship with God, my health, my wealth, and my well-being. However, Scripture makes it clear that God's perspective is much broader and collective. As South American theologian René Padilla points out: "If Jesus Christ is the Lord of the entire universe and has been granted sovereignty in heaven and on earth, His dominion extends to the economic and political spheres, to the social and cultural, to the aesthetic and ecological, to the personal and to the communal." This means that God is not only concerned with our individual shalom but is deeply committed to the shalom of communities, cities, societies, and nations. That is why, through the prophet Jeremiah, God instructed the Israelites in exile: "Seek the shalom and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you into exile. Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers and has shalom, you too will prosper and have shalom" (Jeremiah 29:7). God calls us to work for shalom not only in our homes, workplaces, neighborhoods, and cities, but also for the shalom of the "other"—those who are different from us, because our shalom is tied to theirs and can only flourish when God's abundant blessing flows through us to them.

At the same time, God's concern is not limited to human life alone but extends to all of creation. His desire is for everything He created to be healed, restored, and to live in harmony, interdependence, and fullness.<sup>25</sup> Shalom, therefore, calls us to a right relationship with the whole earth. As God is the Creator, owner, and ruler of this world, we are called to be responsible stewards of His creation, promoting its flourishing in His name.<sup>26</sup> Caring for what God has made is a natural consequence of our love for Him, for ultimately, everything belongs to Him.<sup>27</sup> God could certainly intervene supernaturally and unilaterally correct everything that is wrong in the world. However, He has chosen to limit Himself and act primarily through people who trust in Him, are obedient to His calling, and embrace their vocation to be His hands of mercy and love on earth. As citizens of His kingdom, we are called to influence all spheres of life, trusting that God "works powerfully within us and is able to do much more than we ask or imagine" (Ephesians 3:20). But how? How can we work to establish shalom in our cities and in the world?

First, join your hands with others in God's ongoing work to restore order in a world marked by chaos. Although we are saved by grace through faith, and not by our works<sup>28</sup>, our actions are still fundamental to God's plan. "For we are God's masterpiece, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do" (Ephesians 2:10). This means that we are not saved by good works, but for good works. Everything we do with purpose and obedience is part of the process of renewing God's creation. However, we are not called to do this

alone. God designed us to collaborate with others, because when we work as a team, we achieve more and have a greater impact.

Second, give joyfully to advance God's Kingdom. Look beyond your own needs and interests and care for the needs of your neighbors—their sustenance, shelter, economic security, justice, peace, education, healing, and restoration—along with their fundamental need for Jesus Christ.<sup>29</sup> While Scripture often speaks of giving money, God asks for much more. He doesn't want just our leftovers or excess, but our first fruits and the best of us. He calls us to be "living sacrifices," offering Him everything we are and have: our talents, bodies, time, financial resources, and influence. Imagine what God could do with a life fully surrendered to Him.

Third, serve others, especially those beyond your immediate circle of family and friends. Imitate the life of Christ by building meaningful relationships with those in need of care, support, and restoration—the widow and the orphan, the disadvantaged, the sheep wounded by bad shepherds, and even those who have been abandoned. Recognize that this embodied love may require sacrifice and self-denial. However, by living it out, you will inspire others to break free from cowardice, despair, and the wounds of the past, helping them regain their dignity and self-worth. Moreover, through service, you will learn to love more like God and less from your ego. As Martin Luther King Jr. said: "Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve."<sup>30</sup>

Fourth, live righteously and act justly. "We are called not only to understand the problem of evil and God's justice but to be part of His solution."<sup>31</sup> This begins with our own lives—treating others with fairness and dignity, listening to their cries, and feeling deeply any injustice committed against them. It continues with the commitment to defend the vulnerable, unafraid of the backlash from the powerful. Even when we face realities where "there are waves of injustice against which not even the most faithful can stand," we do not fall into despair.<sup>32</sup> Instead, we continue fighting against corruption and advocating for those who cannot raise their voices, trusting in the ultimate truth of God's justice: "One day every knee will bow, and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord."

Fifth, you have been sent—now go. *"Despite what many people think, the point of Christianity is not simply to go to heaven when you die."*<sup>33</sup> God did not create human beings to live in heaven; He created them for the earth.<sup>34</sup> So, make your life count. Embrace the vocation God has given you and join His transformative mission, bringing the future of shalom into the present. Remember that the Good News and good works are inseparable.<sup>35</sup> As you walk in this mission, live with the determination to do good, following this wise exhortation: *"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."*<sup>36</sup>

In summary, God longs for His shalom to come alive in our cities and in the world, and He invites us to join Him in this work. However, we must resist the temptation to take shortcuts, relying primarily on political power or supernatural manifestations to address the needs and injustices our communities face. Placing more Christians in public office, launching social welfare programs, or holding large-scale campaigns with signs and wonders—on their own—will not solve our problems. Instead, we must confront corrupt powers in a way that truly disarms them. This will require persistent prayer, collaboration with others, generosity, service to the marginalized, and the courage to bring their needs into the public eye. It also involves exposing the lies embedded in the systems of our cities and nations, confronting unjust power structures, and engaging in just advocacy.

This is challenging and, in many cases, dangerous work because "God's new order is a threat to any established order; the coming of the Kingdom, as it breaks into the old order, provokes an intense reaction." Yet, as God's people, this is our mission. And we can only fulfill it if we live under Jesus' yoke, take up our cross, embrace humiliation—even obedience unto death—and trust fully in the risen and exalted Christ. The good news is that "the Kingdom can come with power in this present world and transform all human relationships, but it will never do so without suffering."<sup>37</sup> Even so, this is our calling: to hear the music of the future and have the courage to dance in the present.<sup>38</sup>

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Miroslav Wolf, quoted on "New Starting Points in the Ecumenical Peace Dialogue," *Questia*, accessed November 2024. <https://www.questia.com/library/journal/1G1-83375481/new-starting-points-in-the-ecumenical-peace-dialogue>
- <sup>2</sup> Gregory A. Boyd, *Is God to Blame? Moving Beyond Pat Answers to the Problem of Suffering* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 21.
- <sup>3</sup> In Judges 6:23-24 Gideon calls God Yahweh Shalom, which is one of the names the Bible gives God. Shalom thus originates from God, since God is Shalom.
- <sup>4</sup> Arthur F. Glasser, *Announcing the Kingdom: The Story of God's Mission in the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003), 130.
- <sup>5</sup> Brian McLaren, *The Secret Message of Jesus: Uncovering the Truth That Could Change Everything* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 147.
- <sup>6</sup> John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book I, Chapter I, Sections 1-3.
- <sup>7</sup> Isaiah 48
- <sup>8</sup> "15 Augustine Quotes That Helped Shape Modern Christian Thought," *Relevant Magazine*, accessed online on November 5, 2020. <https://www.relevantmagazine.com/faith/15-augustine-quotes-helped-shape-modern-christian-thought/>
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- <sup>10</sup> Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, trans. A. J. Krailsheimer (London: Penguin Classics, 1995).
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- <sup>21</sup> Dallas Willard quoted on Brian D. McLaren, *The Secret Message of Jesus: Uncovering the Truth That Could Change Everything* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2006), 234.
- <sup>22</sup> Brian Hathaway, pastor from The Atatu Bible Chapel en Auckland, New Zealand, quoted on Ronald J. Sider, *Cup of Water, Bread of Life: Inspiring Stories About Overcoming Lopsided Christianity* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2010), 94.
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