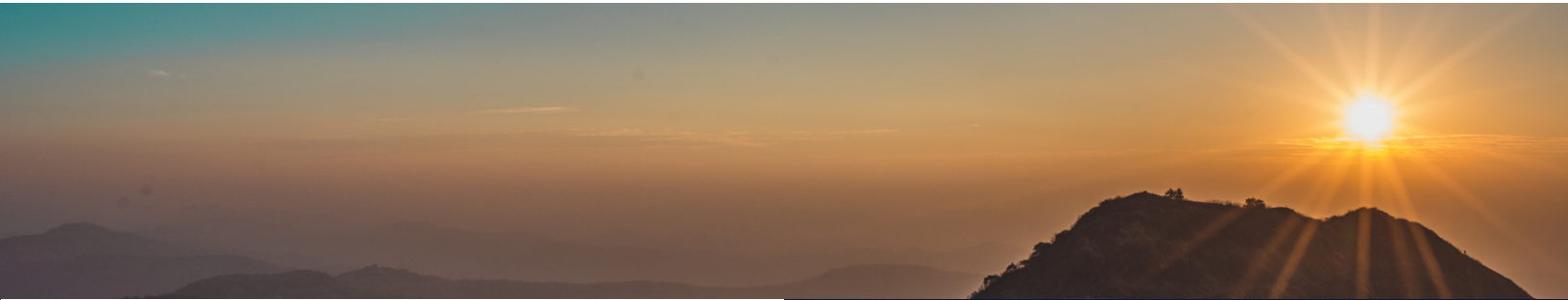




SERIES 2 EPISODE 10



PEACE

Healthy conflict is necessary on every team.

But so often, there's unhealthy conflict, too: gossip, contempt, office politics.

Work is often not a place of peace.

INWARD EMOTIONS AND OUTWARD CONFLICT

Is there any relationship between inward, psychological peace and outward, geopolitical peace?

This is an empirical question, and the answer is a resounding **yes**. We see this because the opposite is also true:

"Stories of fear, hatred, and anger are often intensified with reference to the collective memory that ancestors have of past tragedies. Such stories can put individuals in a fever pitch of rage that can promote calls for violence against the enemy. . . . a nation's collective anger, revenge, and fear can impact decisions regarding war and peace."

– Daniel Rothbart²¹

If emotions can drive conflict even at the geopolitical scale, they can also drive conflicts in our workplaces.

Emotions are Catching

- A coworker's despair draws out someone else's cynicism.
- An angry manager's blow-ups are repeated "down the line."

Emotions are Powerful

- Despair causes us to disengage from our work.
- Anger makes it hard to foster trust.

INWARD PEACE AND OUTWARD PEACE

The context of Paul's letter to the Galatians is the coming together of Jews and Gentiles in the church. Paul actively endorses a vision that says: Gentiles get to stay Gentiles and Jews get to stay Jews, but we're all going to learn to do community together under the lordship of Jesus the Messiah.

So in that context, "peace" has a social valence. Paul is not **just** talking about an inward experience; he's talking about peace among people in a community.

But Paul is not **not** talking about an inward experience, too. There's also the context for each of us of the conflict between the works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit. We experience a deep inward change when we come into the kingdom of God through faith in Jesus Christ.

So that inward change results in this outward social connection. Inward peace results in outward peace.

PRACTICING PEACE IN THE WORKPLACE

Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Galatians 6:2 ESV

We can ask ourselves:

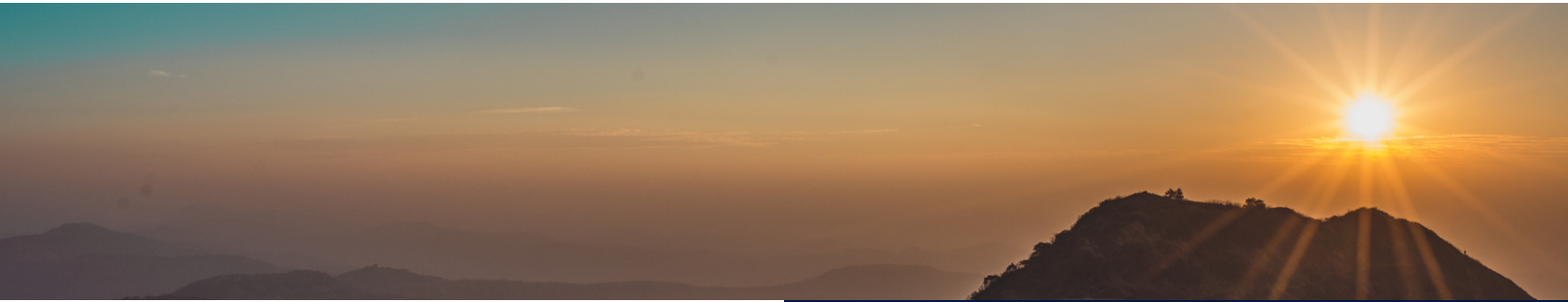
- Am I living at peace with my brothers and sisters in Christ?
- Am I living at peace with other people—everyone around me who's created in the image of God?

Emotions that drive conflict are both catching and powerful. But so is peace!

21. Daniel Rothbart, "Power, Emotions, and Violent Conflicts," Peace and Conflict Studies Journal Conference, October 2, 2021, https://nsuworks.nova.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?params=/context/pcs_conference/article/1096/&path_info=Power_Emotions_and_Violent_Conflicts_Author_info.pdf.



SERIES 2 EPISODE 10



If someone at your workplace has a deep experience of inward peace, joy, and confidence, how does that affect your team?

That's who you can be as a disciple of Jesus: an agent of peace to the people around you.

PRACTICE TO TRY: SETTING THE LORD ALWAYS BEFORE YOU

I have set the LORD always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.
Psalm 16:8 ESV

We grow in peace by letting God give us his peace in Jesus Christ. We keep him before our eyes.

Consider changing your desktop background to an icon that will remind you of God's presence, or find an icon you can use as a bookmark.

Use this image to cue a new habit. Pause for a moment. Put your hand on your heart and say, "I have set the Lord always before me. All is well."

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

- In your workplace, how do emotions drive conflict?
- Do you find Daniel Rothbart's analysis of emotions and political conflict persuasive?
- How does inward peace result in outward peace? Is this always true?
- What would it look like for you to become a "contagious" agent of peace in your workplace?
- How can you "set the Lord always before you" during the work day?