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SERMON OUTLINE 2

There are outlines for two sermons in this pack. They are designed to be used with the videos on the DVD, and illustrated with your personal and community stories.

PEACE AND RECONCILIATION

Romans 5: 1-11 (Code Bible – CEV)

By faith we have been made acceptable to God. And now, because of our Lord Jesus Christ, we live at peace with God. Christ has also introduced us to God's undeserved kindness on which we take our stand. So we are happy, as we look forward to sharing in the glory of God. But that's not all! We gladly suffer, because we know that suffering helps us to endure. And endurance builds character, which gives us a hope that will never disappoint us. All of this happens because God has given us the Holy Spirit, who fills our hearts with his love.

Christ died for us at a time when we were helpless and sinful. No one is really willing to die for an honest person, though someone might be willing to die for a truly good person. But God showed how much he loved us by having Christ die for us, even though we were sinful.

But there is more! Now that God has accepted us because Christ sacrificed his life's blood, we will also be kept safe from God's anger. Even when we were God's enemies, he made peace with us, because his Son died for us. Yet something even greater than friendship is ours. Now that we are at peace with God, we will be saved by his Son's life. And in addition to everything else, we are happy because God sent our Lord Jesus Christ to make peace with us.

INTRO

Our aim is to remember/commemorate those who have died or suffered in war, including those with life changing injuries (physical and mental), all who are bereaved, or those who have suffered from 'collateral damage'. Especially in this 100th anniversary of the start of WW1 we remember a whole generation, of young men, which was decimated by war.

We also come to commit ourselves to promoting peace and being peacemakers. Being a true peacemaker comes at cost and often means to put yourself in harm's way. Examples such as Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela may work well. (**'What If'** and **'Living Without Dad'** videos from the DVD work well here as does **'Woodbine Willie and The Menin Gate'**).



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THE DEPRAVITY OF HUMAN NATURE

The 19th and 20th Centuries saw huge developments in science and technology, which were often used for the good of humanity. However, the way that new technologies were used in WW1 highlights the ‘fallenness’ of human nature.

This passage from Romans calls us ‘sinful’ who are ‘helpless’ to do anything.

We are each responsible for our own mistakes.

‘Back’ by Wilfred Gibson:

*They ask me where I've been,
And what I've done and seen.
But what can I reply
Who know it wasn't I,
But someone just like me,
Who went across the sea
And with my head and hands
Killed men in foreign lands...
Though I must bear the blame,
Because he bore my name.*

A MEANINGFUL DEATH

In the First World War so many people seemed to have had their lives taken away from them completely pointlessly. This does not demean the value of what they did. But we have to ask, when thousands died to gain a few yards of territory, what did those lives achieve?

Wilfred Owen wrote:

*“My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
To children ardent for some desperate glory,
The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
Pro patria mori.”*

(which means “it is sweet and right to die for your country”)

Field Marshal Montgomery at El Alamein worked hard to win with the least possible loss of life. But even he, in the last years of his life, had a crisis of confidence over the necessity of so many losing their lives.

Jesus’ death on the cross achieved so much for us. We have messed up, individually as well as collectively.

But even though we are ‘sinners’, in other words, estranged from God, Jesus died for us. He did not wait for us to become good people – he knew we could never achieve that anyway.



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APPLICATION

Today we enjoy peace between the nations that fought each other twice with such ferocity that it involved every continent on the planet.

As we have enjoyed so many benefits of peace (bought with the lives of so many men and women) so we can enjoy the benefits of peace with God, a peace paid for by the death of Jesus Christ.

The only way the world can enjoy genuine peace is if people first find peace with God.

Paul talks about 'peace with God' (v1 and v11)

Show the *'Woodbine Willie and The Menin Gate'* video from the DVD.

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

Do you know peace with God?

Has peace and reconciliation brought you into a close relationship with Jesus Christ? Give an illustration of a row or conflict reconciled.

How can you be a peacemaker or a peace bringer in your home, workplace, school, college etc? Illustrate – it starts with the small things e.g. your neighbours. Examples of disputes resolved because you apologised first or went the extra mile. Practical application is important.

PRACTICAL TIPS

Use some of the poems written during World War One to illustrate your points. There are lots online and some in the 'Woodbine Willie' notes in this pack.