

Seeking Shalom in Suffering Handout

Kylie Hayes, MS, PLPC

For there to be peace there has to be justice and for there to be justice we have to understand who God is and what He is doing through the scriptures. Shalom in suffering is I hear your cry, I hold your pain, and I see your humanity. God is in the midst of suffering – we lean into His comfort and we lean into one another. We belong to God. We belong to one another.

- *Psalm 82*

I hear your cry

- We have to hear the cry of one another, seeing the humanity, sacredness, and worth in each other's eyes. Every person has already been invited by Christ to be at the Table. Jesus has already given His body to accomplish this.
- Luke 14 – Parable of the Great Banquet

Exercise: *As I read each of these statements – notice any judgments, thoughts, or feelings that come up. Feel free to get a pen and paper and jot down what you are noticing. If there are negative feelings that come up, I just want you to become curious about these thoughts and become curious about the person behind each thought.*

- After George Floyd was brutally murdered and protestors took to the streets – did I hear the cry of my brother, hold his pain, and see his humanity?
- When that mother was considering abortion because she didn't know how to feed herself let alone her child – did I hear her cry, hold her pain, and see her humanity?
- When the gay son or daughter was rejected by his family after coming out – did I hear their cry, hold their pain, and see their humanity?
- When the person addicted to heroin overdosed, stole money from their family, and lost their kids – did I hear their cry, hold their pain, and see their humanity?
- When the unborn wasn't protected – did I hear their cry, hold their pain, and see their humanity?
- When the person on death row was executed – did I hear their cry, did I hold their pain, and see their humanity?
- When the immigrant was seeking asylum – did I hear their cry, hold their pain and see their humanity?
- When our Muslim brother feels unsafe, when Syrian children are bombed, when the woman who was raped, when a farmer loses everything, when an oil field worker has been laid off – did I hear their cry, did I hold their pain and see their humanity? Did I welcome them into my home, feed them, give them something to drink and clothe them? And if I didn't, why not?

I hold your pain

- How do we hold one another's pain?
- What did Jesus do with pain?

I see your humanity

- What prevents us from hearing each other's cries?
- How does God see us?
- How does God see the person we hate?
- "Communities which start by serving the poor must gradually discover the gifts that those poor people bring. The communities start in generosity; they must grow to listen. In the end, the most important thing is not to do things for people who are poor and in distress, but to help them to have confidence in themselves...some communities grow by listening to their members' needs for formation and well-being. This growth is usually material: the communities go for the best and most comfortable buildings, where everyone has their own room. These communities will die fairly quickly. Other communities will grow by listening to the cry of the poor. Most of the time, this leads them to become poorer themselves, so that they can closer to poor people." Living Gently in a Violent World by Stanley Hauerwas and Jean Vanier
 - Though I appreciate the work of L'Arche and this book, through investigation it was found Jean Vanier sexually abused 6 women. I mourn and grieve with the survivors of this trauma.
- Matthew 5:3-12