Romans 5:1-8

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

What is peace?

- *Have to answer first before we can be peacemakers*.....

Peace is absence of war. Without knowing what war is, we never know what peace is. The one exists because of the other, like cold exist because we also have heat.

That’s in a nutshell how philosophy answers the question of what peace means.

But, as the philosopher Wittgenstein once remarked: Philosophy asks the question and theology provides the answer. Has philosophy provided us here with an answer which is wrong and do we have to look for another answer in theology?

Yes and No.

First the yes. I presume that amongst the Christian circles the word peace is seen as directly related to the Hebrew ‘Shalom’. And in part it is true, but only in part. As you might know, Hebrew words originate from 3 consonants. Vowels were only later added. Because shalom comes from only the 3 consonants; s, l and m, it also attracted different meaning with different vowels in between. Indeed shalom means peace and wellbeing, but it can also mean; being paid for, or pay in advance, it’s good deal, or perfect. Besides, shalom was a normal words for greeting each other, being similar to saying here; hello, how are you?

To call shalom the basic word for peace in our reading is not complete, or might we better say. So NO is also the answer on the question; is peace the same as shalom.

In the Greek language, as Paul wrote the letter to the Romans, the word for peace; eiryny means indeed peace as the absence of war and quietness.

In the NT different translations of peace are possible depending in what order it stands in the sentence and what verb is connected to it.

Going back to Romans 5 and the construction/verb used of the first verse, the translation can only be; having peace with God because of Jesus Christ.

Basically to this understanding is that not we are the peacemakers, but God is.

At the Christmas Eve service, speaking about peace and wellbeing for the next year, I could not held myself from saying that as people we are not peacemakers by default.

Looking to history we’re more in for war than for peace. We only have to look to Ukraine and Russia, but even so to Kosovo, Serbia, Sudan, Syria, Uganda yesterday, and many places we never hear about, were fighting and war are normal.

Everyday on the news we hear about domestic violence, murder on the streets, gang-wars etc which is further prove that peace doesn’t come by naturally from humanity itself.

Given all the evidence, the conclusion is that real peace comes from God and not from humanity. God offers us His peace through faith and only be accepting God’s offer we make peace with God.

Being a peacemaker is the 2nd step. But once we step outside of the peace God made with us, we’re no longer peacemakers in how God understands peace.

Yesterday Deanery meeting....missed the discussion about the ‘living in love and faith’ proposals..... Afterwards I spoke with a few.....divided to the bone on the issue....... peacemaker is becoming difficult ........

As noted before; we’re not peacemakers by our own nature, so making peace between the groups is a very impossible task. Perhaps we begin with understanding that we ourselves can’t make peace. Peace is only possible in the Light of Christ.....

When Paul says that God is a God of peace (1 Cor. 14:33) Paul uses the same word again, but put it against disorder and confusion. God’s peace means also order; first as He established it between Him and us through Christ when we accept Him and secondly between ourselves and others if we let God work through us.