



SHALOM

YOUTH AND CHILDREN'S
LEADERS CONFERENCE

WHOLENESS - JUSTICE - SALVATION
SALVATION - WHOLENESS - JUSTICE



SHALOM

PART ONE

We hear **Shalom** and hear perhaps a simple greeting. Peace in another language. Maybe a picture of quiet, stillness starts to form. The melody of 'peace like a river' starts to swirl around your mind.

What if all of this is right, but it's not it? What if **Shalom** is more? What if offering **Shalom** to others is actually a commitment to radical prayer and action on their behalf? What if **Shalom** is used without translation because no word in English actually does it justice? What if the 'peace like a river' you're imagining isn't a babbling brook but a roaring river that carves rock and transforms landscapes?

Shalom appears in the Bible 250 times and refers to wholeness, justice and community. It means **connectedness** with others. With creation. With God.

When we read that Jesus healed a bleeding woman – a woman that had been on the margins of society and potentially alone and untouched for 12 years – and wishes her **Shalom**, 'he is placing the blessing of God on all of her. Not just her physical body. He is blessing her with God's presence on her entire being. And this is because, for Jesus, salvation is holistic in nature. For Jesus, being saved or reconciled to God involves far more than just the saving of your physical body or your soul, it involves all of you.'

(Rob Bell, Velvet Elvis)



Love God
Love Others





SHALOM

PART TWO

Over the last two years, a further two million children and young people's lives have been disrupted enough that they're now considered vulnerable, making three million in total. Over a million young people have self-reported mental health issues. There is a spike in calls to help lines, with 84% reporting worse mental health following school closures or being no longer able to access mental health support. Young people are anxious about the damage we are doing to the environment with three-quarters in one survey saying they thought the future was frightening. Over half (56%) say they think humanity is doomed. One 16 year old says, 'It's different for young people. For us, the destruction of the planet is personal.'

And the statistics would suggest many of you are struggling too. With anxiety and grief. With rising household costs and under-employment. Overwhelmed after years of loss, change and uncertainty whilst trying to remain optimistic and positive for those in our care.

In a landscape of brokenness, grief, loneliness and fear, we, as followers of Jesus are called to receive and offer **Shalom**. Not just a babbling brook and place of quiet rest but a roaring river that shapes and transforms that landscape. A salvation that is not just concerned with our souls but all of us. **Shalom** offers personal and structural transformation. It is wholeness and completeness that includes health, security, friendship, connectedness, prosperity, justice, righteousness and salvation.



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SHALOM

PART THREE

Isaiah 61 says, 'The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me, because the Lord has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour and the day of vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion, to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair. They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated; they will renew the ruined cities that have been devastated for generations.'

This is the offer and calling of **Shalom**. It's a promise of wholeness. Of connectedness. Of well-being. Of justice and salvation. Of a rolling river that will transform devastated hearts and places and bring beauty, joy and restoration. At our 2023 youth and children's leaders conference, we're inviting you to consider what it would look like to be an army of '**Shalom-makers**'. It's an invitation to high challenge and a lifetime's work. It's an invitation to commitment and radical love. We'll offer teaching, stories and resources rooted in the reality of the current landscape, as well as in the hope we glimpse through present ministry and the promise of God's kingdom, on Earth as it is in Heaven.



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