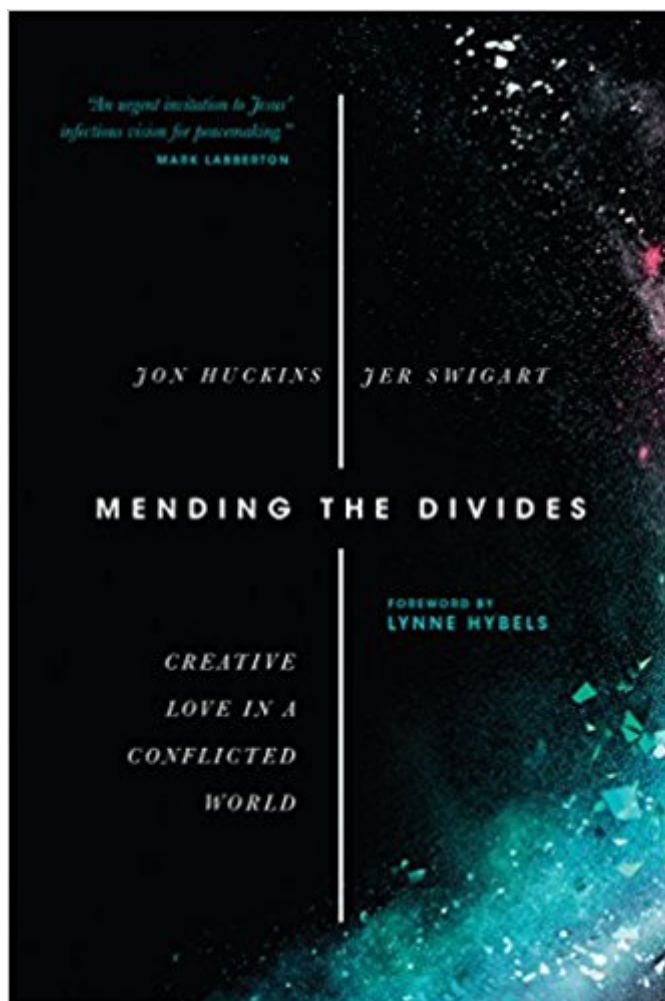


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# Mending The Divides: Creative Love In A Conflicted World



## Synopsis

Conflict, hatred, and injustice seem to be the norm rather than the exception in our world, our nation, our communities, our homes. The fractures and fissures run so deep that we're paralyzed by our hopelessness, writing off peace as a far-fetched option for the afterlife. Even if there was the possibility of peace, where would we begin? Instead of disengaging, Jon Huckins and Jer Swigart invite us to move toward conflict and brokenness, but not simply for the sake of resolving tensions and ending wars. These modern-day peacemakers help us understand that because peacemaking is the mission of God, it should also be the vocation of his people. So peace is no longer understood as merely the absence of conflict—peace is when relationships once severed have been repaired and restored. Using biblical and current-day illustrations of everyday peacemakers, *Mending the Divides* equips disciples of Jesus to move toward conflict and seek the restoration of our relationships, our communities, and our world, offering practical steps to engage in the kingdom-building work of waging peace.

## Book Information

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[View larger](#) We've been told that the enemy is to be destroyed. Jesus tells us to love our enemies. We've been told that the other is a threat. Jesus tells us that it's in the eyes of the other that we see God.

Four-practice framework for Everyday Peacemaking

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"Peace is imperative in a world where ethnic, religious, and political divisions between people are intensifying. But it's only us, as Christ-followers, who can demonstrate the radical love of our Savior and facilitate true and lasting peace--a state of shalom. Jon Huckins and Jer Swigart have provided a timely manual for engaging in the gritty, risky work we're called to when we sign on to build God's kingdom 'on earth as it is in heaven.'" (Rich Stearns, president, World Vision)"Jesus' infectious peacemaking has taken hold of Jer Swigart and Jon Huckins. This book explains how and why—but even more, how and why they passionately want it to happen in the lives of any who are followers of Jesus. In a world of broken trust, hostile prejudice, religious violence, and pervasive fear, our world desperately needs God's people to be humble, courageous, and just peacemakers. The need for this fruit of the Spirit could hardly be more urgent." (Mark Labberton, president, Fuller Theological Seminary)"Jon and Jer are called not only to be peacemakers individually but to holistically change the church's understanding and practice of this task. They have put their rich wisdom and experience into this practical, relevant, and timely book that weaves theological insights, personal stories, and practical applications into a comprehensive manual for everyday peacemaking. They remind us that everyday peacemaking is not a side activity of our Christian lives, but core to our walk as disciples of Christ. Through this book, they teach us to lean into conflict with humility and grace, and to move toward the difficult task of building relationships with those on the margins of society who are often our best teachers. At a time when conflict is so easy to instigate and arguments are so easily had, they point to the better way of peace that reflects the power of a broken and resurrected Christ. What would it look like for the church to take seriously its call to bring about peace in a broken and hurting world? This book provides the way!" (Jenny Yang, vice president of advocacy and policy, World Relief, coauthor of *Welcoming the Stranger*)"This book is a call to remember that our faith is not in a warlord but in a slaughtered lamb. It is a call to embody the very nature of God, whose essence is shalom. Far from being an escapist flight into the heavenly hereafter, Jon and Jer direct our attention to the practice of what they call 'everyday peacemaking.' God has launched a 'scandalous and costly' restoration campaign. And he has asked us to join in the ranks—not just in the hereafter, but in the here and now, in conflicted families and fractured communities. Carefully, humbly, and compellingly, Mending the

Divides gives us the tools we need for such a time as this—gently and insistently taking our gaze and our affection back to Jesus, who revealed that peace isn't a destination but a way of life." (Laura Truax, author of *Love Let Go and Undone*) "I've learned so much about peacemaking and about what it means to be a neighbor from Jon and Jer, and I'm thrilled that so many people will get to learn from them through this timely and essential book. I'll be handing it out left and right because I can't think of very many things more necessary for our communities and our world right now." (Shauna Niequist, author of *Present Over Perfect*) "There is a host of Christian books emerging about God's call to justice. *Mending the Divides* is the only book I have seen that outlines the relationship between justice and peacemaking on multiple levels, from the spiritual foundation to the practical steps we all need to take. If you take nothing else from this book, the stories from the frontlines of shalom could change your life. I am thankful for and encouraged by Jon and Jer's gift to us all." (Alexia Salvatierra, coauthor of *Faith-Rooted Organizing*) "One of the most compelling ways followers of Jesus can put the unique beauty of God's kingdom on display is by serving as peacemakers in the midst of conflict. Unfortunately, few Christians have been taught how to do this in their everyday lives. Nor have they ever been shown why doing so is a matter of urgency. This is why this deeply personal, theologically insightful, and immensely practical book is such an important gift to the church. I wish every believer would read this book, for I can guarantee them that they won't finish this book unchanged!" (Greg Boyd, pastor, Woodland Hills Church, author of *Is God to Blame?* and *Letters from a Skeptic*) "At a time when our world is dominated by stories of indifference and injustice, I'm excited to recommend Jon and Jer's new book, *Mending the Divides*, which is full of hope-filled stories that will inspire you to not give up dreaming and to work for the world God desires for us all." (Noel Castellanos, president, CCDA, author of *Where the Cross Meets the Street*) "This is evangelical Christianity at its best: two young Christian friends, devoted to Christ, rooted in Scripture, following Jesus in new directions, utterly unafraid to go where faithful discipleship requires. This road map to the contemporary practice of Christian peacemaking is an extraordinarily practical and inspiring guide for all of us." (David Gushee, professor of Christian ethics, Mercer University, author of *Kingdom Ethics and Changing Our Mind*) "What if Christians believed they were the reconciled beloved? If we believed we were worthy of God's own Son who came to reconcile himself to us, we might believe that peacemaking and reconciliation were not just important to God but the heart of God. I was convicted that I can and must do more. Huckins and Swigart make peacemaking real and doable in a world filled with conflict—from families to continents. The theological basis draws the reader deeply into Scripture. The stories woven throughout the book put faces on why peacemaking is an imperative. This book will be invaluable to

an adult Sunday school class or as an additional text in a college classroom." (Shirley Hoogstra, president, Council for Christian Colleges and Universities)"In a world ravaged by violence and in a country that is the epicenter of global violence and the arms trade, the work that Jon and Jer are doing to disarm hearts, heal our streets, and reimagine the world is some of the most important stuff happening on the planet. The Global Immersion Project and this book capture the heart of Jesus and cast a vision for a world we can be proud to leave our children." (Shane Claiborne, author, activist, peacemaker)"Yes and amen! Mending the Divides is the gospel of peace made practical by brothers seeking to live it. It makes clear that Christian peacemaking requires a cross and trusts in resurrection. May the church learn to live this book!" (Jarrod McKenna, national advisor on faith and activism, World Vision Australia, pastor of Westcity Church)

Jon Huckins is a pastor and the cofounding director of The Global Immersion Project, a peacemaking training organization helping individuals and communities move toward conflict equipped to heal rather than to win. After much international travel and study in the Middle East, Jon focuses his writing and speaking on peacemaking, local/global engagement, and activating the Church as an instrument of peace in our world. Jon has written for numerous publications including USAToday, Red Letter Christians, Sojourners, and RELEVANT. His books include Thin Places: Six Postures for Creating and Practicing Missional Community and Teaching Through the Art of Storytelling, and he is a contributing author to multiple books. Jon regularly speaks at churches, universities, and conferences and has a master's degree from Fuller Theological Seminary in theology and ethics. He lives in San Diego with his wife, Jan, three daughters, and one son, where they colead an intentional Christian community seeking to live as a reconciling presence in their neighborhood of Golden Hill.

Jer Swigart is a church planter, a social innovator, an organizer, a professor, and the cofounding director of The Global Immersion Project, a peacemaking training organization that forms, equips, and mobilizes individuals and communities to enter any kind of conflict to heal rather than to win. He was the founder and lead pastor of The Open Door Community, a courageous collective of people pursuing God's dream for the San Francisco Bay area, and he is a contributing author to a number of books that focus on theology, leadership, justice, and reconciliation. A modern-day peacemaker, Jer has found himself contending for restoration in beautifully bizarre corners of our global village. Whether in the tribes of northern Pakistan, the slums of India, the red-light districts of Southeast Asia, the violence of Israel and Palestine, or the racial injustice of his own neighborhood, Jer loves people in a way that disarms violence and dismantles divides. His engagement within national and international conflicts has

formed him into a guide for the church as she seeks to leverage her influence as an instrument of peace in our world. A sought-after speaker, Jer frequently teaches in the areas of peacemaking and conflict transformation, faith and culture, neighbor and enemy love, spiritual formation, culture creating, and innovative leadership. He completed his undergrad at The University of Northwestern-St. Paul and has an MDiv from Fuller Theological Seminary, where he received the prestigious David Allen Hubbard Award. He currently resides with his family in Bend, Oregon.

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