



# **GIVE PEACE A VOICE**

**THREE WAYS TO OVERCOME US VS THEM NARRATIVES AND  
BECOME AMERICANS THE NEXT GENERATION WILL LOVE**

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**BY CALEB PAXTON | FOUNDER**

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**Us vs them narratives are everywhere, and they're destroying us.** When we follow elections, we hear noise about how the other side is wrong. We watch debates, but us vs them narratives talk over each other and we can't understand what's said. Like a global pandemic, the narratives strike where we least want them. They dance on signs at protests. They light up phones with headlines, sneak into social media posts, and invade text threads. They even show up at family gatherings.

Us vs them narratives make us want to disengage. We feel powerless to improve things, apathetic, and disillusioned. They make us want to quit the most basic civic activity: voting. If us vs them is the only way to be responsible citizens, wouldn't it be better to spend our time elsewhere?

The worst part about us vs them narratives isn't that they win elections, annoy us, or make us disengage. Us vs them narratives are writing the future of the country.

**But we're Americans, and we should never have to settle for that.** Every generation has a calling. Ours? Give peace a voice. Deep down we all know it: we can become active creators of a future built on unity and peace. But how do we get there?

Over the past six years, we've explored that question with a team of a dozen writers. Together we published more than 100 journal entries to find answers. Three themes emerged that can help anyone make the transformation from cynicism,

disillusionment, and apathy to unshakeable hope, internal peace, and renewed energy. We can give the next generation an ethos of peace they will love.

## 1. Advocate for inclusive communities.

To give peace a voice, the first step is simple: be inclusive. As Americans, we have to believe that we are all in on the job of self-governance together. Believe in a future where we can all flourish.

When we take part in policy debates, campaigns, or other forms of activism, the questions are basic: Would the other side be welcome here? Do we try to understand another person's viewpoint? Or do we write someone off because of a policy view that we don't really understand?

When we become advocates for inclusive communities, understanding each other replaces fear of each other and rebuilds trust. It means we can listen to each other again, and that humanizes all of us.

## 2. Stay grounded in wisdom.

In Washington and across the country, ideology—whether conservative, liberal, or something else—often controls debates. But one ideology can't contain the full depth of universal wisdom. A conservative viewpoint lacks nuance if a liberal view isn't taken into account, and vice versa.

Ideology also sets up false choices, making it appear that we have to choose between values like national security or welcoming



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immigrants, energy development or environmental care, life of the unborn or the well-being of the mother. Wisdom demands that we listen to all sides to find solutions we didn't know were possible. It means that we don't have to fret over terms like "systemic racism," "climate change," or "border security," because once we hear the perspectives behind them, we find points of agreement regardless of the terms used.

For followers of Christ, staying grounded in wisdom goes deeper. The advance of an ideology isn't our calling even if it's part of our job. Our calling is to see ourselves as beloved children of God and share that love with others. When we are grounded in the Divine Center, we want others to feel that too. Our calling transcends politics and helps us detach from the result. Our cause doesn't matter if we advance by demeaning others and we feel like we've lost our soul.

### 3. Create new solutions.

Once we've decided to be advocates for inclusive communities, and as we practice staying centered in wisdom every day, we can begin to create new solutions instead of defaulting to worn-out talking points. Instead of adhering to a defined way of thinking, we have the ability to explore all truth. Work feels adventurous; there's more to learn, more people to know.

Creating new solutions—with specific objectives on the path to get there—also

changes how we work. It gets us off the treadmill and onto the trail: we aren't here to grind out work to gain power or status, but rather to master our energy so we can achieve creative objectives. It means touching the natural world—on a trail or elsewhere—becomes part of our daily routines as a way to renew our minds and bodies. It means we work towards excellence and stop worrying about whether or not we are winning.

### Conclusion

We won't be proud to give today's divisive culture to the next generation. But whether you're a voter or a political professional, you can be involved in a way that's peaceful and life-giving. When you advocate for inclusive communities, stay grounded in wisdom, and create new solutions, the next generation will grow up expecting that in politics. And that's the greatest gift you can give them.

**Being a peacemaker isn't easy. For inspiration on your journey, back *Liberatus Volume One* on Kickstarter.**

It's written by professionals on the inside who are tired of us vs them narratives too, and will help you become the kind of American the next generation will love.

**Don't worry. By downloading this PDF, you're on the list to get early access to the project page and notified when the Kickstarter launches. Peace be with you!**

