

PP The King and His Kingdom

Part 9-Matthew 5:9 *Blessed are the Peacemakers*

3/25-26/2017

Lady Astor once said to Winston Churchill, *"If you were my husband, I'd put poison in your coffee."* Churchill responded with his cutting wit: *"If you were my wife, I'd drink it."*

It's been said that in all the years of recorded history, the world has been at peace 8% of the time. Over that period, 8,000 treaties have been made and broken, leading someone to say, *"Peace is that glorious moment in history when everyone stops to reload."*

Conflict is experienced by all of us, yet every Christian is being called to be a peacemaker

PP 1-The radical distinction of a 'peacemaker'?

In 27 BC, Caesar Augustus declared the *Pax Romana*, the Peace of Rome

It was a cease fire throughout the Roman Empire, but it was enforced by Rome's occupied military might, having no power to bring peace to the hearts of people

But the Pax Romana had no power to create good will toward other people

As we've seen in all the beatitudes, we must have a new, transformed heart to live them out

The beatitudes show us the perfect heart of Jesus, and they show us what He is doing in ours

***"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."* 5:9**

Jesus, the greatest Peacemaker, the **'Prince of peace' (Isaiah 9:6)**, calls us to be peacemakers

A **'peacemaker'** was an ambassador sent by his king to work for peace with another nation

Let's break the two words in **'peacemaker'** down to see their meanings

Except for anarchists-those wanting to overthrow a government-almost everyone wants peace

But what they are wanting is *the absence of conflict, or war, or hostility*, the dictionary definition

This is really the way the world thinks, because it cannot truly get to the heart, the control center

Peace in the world is the freedom from an external disturbance, like war, or violence, or mayhem

Their peace is hollow, dependent on certain external conditions being in place

But a Christian can have peace in the midst of a storm, during a work conflict or home crisis

Jesus, asleep in the stern of the boat as the Sea of Galilee raged, speaking to it, ***'Peace, be still'***

There is something much deeper, much more beautiful with **'peace'** than just the absence of conflict, and we see it when we turn to the Old Testament to find the word *shalom*

PP *Shalom* was the Jewish greeting, which was more than wishing a person to have no trouble, but a hope that the person have a complete, whole, and blessed life

Peace isn't just the absence of something bad, but the presence of something good

PP **'makers'** is not a passive word, but a dynamic word full of energy, a source of peace, one who creates it

Jesus isn't blessing peace-wishers, peace-hopers, not even peace-prayers, but *peacemakers*

PP A **'peacemaker'** then is one who does everything they can to bring about the absence of conflict, but hope and help a person experience God's full blessings of well-being

A peacemaker is not simply a mild, easy-going person who never ruffles anyone's feathers

It's not what some are...*peace-breakers*, who have a win at any cost mindset

These people thrive on conflict, causing it and oddly when successful, they seem at peace and oddly enough, alive

Peace-breakers are critical, nit-picking, easy to displease people and if you live with one, you know the air is charged all around you, waiting for something to set them off again
 Peace-breakers are demanding, often controlling people and if you have two of them married to each other, there is often a mad dance of conflict, sometimes leading to the *destruction of a relationship*

A peacemaker is also not a *peace-faker*, who has a peace at any cost mindset, avoiding conflict
 They want the fastest way through a conflict, even if it means swallowing hurt and sweeping it under the proverbial rug, but if you swallow hurt enough, you'll vomit bitterness
 Peace-fakers are appeasers, unable to understand why the other person can't just let the issue go
 They create a shallow, superficial tranquility while an underground river of hostility runs through, and almost always leads to the total *breakdown of the relationship*
 There are only 3 possibilities: *peace-breaking, peace-faking, or peace-making*
 Neither the peace-breaker or peace-faker give evidence of the radical change of a Christian
 We are to be peacemakers, who understand the source and quality of true, biblical peace

PP 2-The true source of peace

God created this world perfectly existing in His peace, His shalom
 There was peace between Adam and Eve and God; between Adam and Eve; between them and creation and there was peace among creation

The catastrophic impact of sin shattered peace, bringing with it disorder, death and destruction
 At the root of every conflict lies the destructive power of sinful demands and desires

PP *"What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?" James 4:1*

The entire bible is the story of God is one in which God once again brings peace to His people

PP The means of giving us His peace is the cross of Christ, where the Son of God took our sin upon Himself, receiving all the wrath that God had for our sin, absorbing it to the full, and in sin's place making us righteous

PP *"For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross."*
Colossians 1:19-20

And this is the precise means for receiving the peace of God

PP *"Then justice will dwell in the wilderness, and righteousness abide in the fruitful field. And the effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever."* **Isaiah 32:16-17**

God's justice, His holy demand that sin be punished, was satisfied by the righteous sacrifice of Jesus Christ the perfect sinless Son of God, and the affect is peace for all who will believe

PP *"Steadfast love and faithfulness meet; righteousness [justice] and peace kiss each other."*
Psalms 85:10

Christian, we have been given the most incredible gift, peace

PP *"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* **Romans 5:1**

The absence of conflict with God, but more, the full blessings of well-being with Him

PP 3-The blessing for the 'peacemaker'

PP “‘Blessed are the peacemakers’ is, I suppose, for another world. In this world they are frequently cursed.” A 1781 letter that Ben Franklin wrote to John Adams

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” Matthew 5:9

Why does Jesus call this a blessing, or in other words, what is so great about this title?

The first reason it’s such a blessing is, only Christians are called children of God, **‘sons of God’**

Nowhere in the bible are unbelievers referred to as a son, daughter, or child of God

PP **‘called’** means to be officially designated by rank or office, as when a CEO is chosen, or a captain is selected by the team’s coach

PP But it also means *‘to be owned’*

In biblical days, as well as today, to be called the son of someone, it is to recognize not only who you belong to, but whose character you share

Someone may say that a boy is just like his father, or a girl just like her mother

A peacemaker shall be called **‘sons of God’** is the highest praise...that when we make peace we will belong to, and share the character of our peace-making heavenly Father

But even more: **‘peacemakers... shall be called sons of God’** is a designation of high honor that proves we enjoy all the benefits of being a son or daughter of the King of kings

PP The Greek word for **‘sons’** is a legal term used in the adoption and inheritance laws of Rome, guaranteeing the privileges, obligations and rights of belonging to his father

As we live a peacemaker’s life, we will be recognized as sons and daughters of God who share His name and are heirs to the fortune of His blessings

PP 4-The ‘peacemaker’s’ heart

Illus In October, 1983, Psychology Today posed this intriguing question, *“If you could push a button and thereby eliminate any person with no repercussions to yourself, would you do it?”* Sixty percent of those responding answered yes.

Have you ever wished for the power of God to deliver judgment on those who hurt you?

That coworker who acts so much better than you...maybe just a little spilled coffee on her shirt

That driver who yells as he nearly runs you off the road, maybe give him a flat tire or four

If you had the power to bring your justice instantly, would you use it?

Peace between people is not always possible, but we are to strive for it, pursuing it...how?

Wisdom is the power of God to become a peacemaker

It works to make our hearts pure from sin, and single-minded in our devotion to God, and when that happens, and only until that happens, we can make peace

“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” James 3:17-18

PP i. Peacemakers are *‘first pure’*

We see why Jesus first taught that our hearts must be pure before we can be peacemakers

A pure heart is one being morally cleansed and brought to sincere, unmixed devotion to God

James says this is first, meaning it is the foundation of all the rest

PP ii. Peacemakers are ‘then peaceable’

God’s wisdom produces within His disciples an overarching desire to see people at peace
The Greek word here has a basic meaning of right relationship between each other and God
The wise Christian goes to the throne to cry out for the God of peace to move and reconcile

PP “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.” Romans 12:18

PP iii. Peacemakers are ‘gentle’

Gentle describes a person who, though wronged and possessing the ‘right’ not to bend,
nevertheless foregoes his rights and gives them up
This is not peace at the loss of integrity or sacrificing truth but having peace as the higher goal
than being right
The fear is that in doing this you will be a doormat and taken advantage of, but the truth is,
Blessed are the meek for God will come around His peacemakers with power

PP iv. Peacemakers are ‘open to reason’

We are not to be closed to reason, dug into our positions, but able to be persuaded by truth

PP “The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, but a wise man listens to advice.” Prov 12:15

Do you refuse to bend even when godly people around you view something differently?
Wisdom makes us open to reason, not double-minded, not go where the wind blows, not
fair weather believers, but open to reason

PP v. Peacemakers are ‘full of mercy and good fruits’

PP God extends **grace** to those who are guilty of sin, and He extends **mercy** to those who
are miserable because of that sin

Peacemakers are merciful, and their hearts ache to repair breaches in relationships that sin brings
They do what needs to be done, which are the ‘**good fruit**’ that James mentions

PP vi. Peacemakers are ‘impartial’

This word means not to be parted or divided, to be without uncertainty, indecision
A peacemaker lives steadily, not taking one position in one circumstance and another in a
different situation...aimed at truth and not siding with your favorite

PP vii. Peacemakers are ‘sincere’

The word means to live without hypocrisy, or deceit or hiding sin, we are who we say we are
It is living out what we say, it is having no distinction between our attitudes and actions

God’s wisdom is essential if we are to be peacemakers, so pray for wisdom

And that wisdom will purify your heart from sin and mixed devotion to God; it will give you a
passion to be peaceful with others; the humility to stop defending yourself; a heart that is
open to godly reason; one full of mercy toward the misery of others; living with single-
minded purpose and living without masks with full sincerity

PP *“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”* Matthew 5:9

PP *“The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.”*

Numbers 6:24-26

Amen

Pray