

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS GRACE & POWER: LIVING THE BEATITUDES SERIES

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

INTRO: As we have learned from the other Beatitudes, when Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers,” His words must have sounded very radical to those listening. The Jewish people were struggling under Roman domination. They wanted to see the Romans defeated and run out of their country, and they were convinced it wasn't going to happen without a major conflict. They were hoping their Messiah would come and, like the warrior King David, lead them to a great military conquest over these evildoers.

Their Messiah did in fact come, but He didn't come armed with a military strategy to vanquish the enemies of Israel. What was with Him? Was Jesus unaware that the iron hand of the Roman Empire had a stranglehold on this land without the people's consent? Was Jesus unaware that Pilate had massacred Jews on the Temple Mount and desecrated the Temple by mixing their blood with the blood of the animals they were sacrificing? Of course, He knew! But His message was, “Blessed are the peacemakers.”

Our Lord's words are timely, not only because we live in such a violent culture, but also because it seems the threat of conflict confronts us all of the time. People and situations try our patience every day, and if we're not careful, these situations can easily become volatile and explode into conflict. Especially with political volatility today, we have disagreements with our family members. We have disagreements with our co-workers. We have disagreements with our friends and neighbors. And though it pains us to admit it, sometimes we have disagreements with our brothers and sisters in Christ (e.g. a heated argument between my daughter Mary and a pastor in Hong Kong).

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A PEACEMAKER?

A. JESUS IS THE ULTIMATE PEACEMAKER, AND THROUGH HIS DEATH WE ARE RECONCILED TO GOD

1. There are two dimensions of peace. Jesus died on the cross so that we can have peace with God the Father; this is called being reconciled with God. But the other dimension of peace that He gives us is a supernatural peace that comes from the Holy Spirit.
2. **Colossians 1:20** “and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ’s blood on the cross.” (NLT)
3. **Romans 5:1** “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
4. **John 14:27** “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”
5. **Romans 14:17** “for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.”
6. **Galatians 5:22** “But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, and self-control.” (NLT)
7. My encounter with heavenly peace in 2004.

B. BEING A PEACEMAKER IS LEADING OTHERS TO HAVE PEACE WITH GOD

1. He simply states that the sons of God are peacemakers.
2. A peacemaker leads others to make peace with God. This means sharing the gospel and leading others to Christ.
3. **Ephesians 6:15** “and having shod Your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace”
4. **Romans 10:15** “How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!”
5. **2 Corinthians 5:20** “Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”
6. You are in the marketplace to bring people to be reconciled (have peace) with God (e.g. Monica Schuman).
7. Our church picnic outreach is coming up on July 7.

8. John 1:45 “Philip found Nathanael and said to him, ‘We have found him of whom Moses in the Law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.’⁴⁶ Nathanael said to him, ‘Can anything good come out of Nazareth?’ Philip said to him, ‘Come and see.’”

C. BEING A PEACEMAKER IS BEING RECONCILED WITH OTHERS

1. Matthew 6:12 “and forgive us our sins, as we have forgiven those who sin against us.” (NLT)

2. Matthew 5:23-24 “Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.”

3. Matthew 18:15 “If your fellow believer sins against you, and you must go to that one privately and attempt to resolve the matter. If he responds, your relationship is restored.¹⁶ But if his heart is closed to you, then go to him again, taking one or two others with you. You’ll be fulfilling what the Scripture teaches when it says, ‘Every word may be verified by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’¹⁷ And if he refuses to listen, then share the issue with the entire church in hopes of restoration. If he still refuses to respond, disregarding the fellowship of his church family, you must disregard him as though he were an outsider, on the same level as an unrepentant sinner.” (TPT)

4. Romans 12:16 “Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.¹⁷ Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone.¹⁸ If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord.²⁰ On the contrary: ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.’²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

5. Reconciliation with my dad.

D. LEADING OTHER BELIEVERS TO BE RECONCILED WITH ONE ANOTHER

1. A peacemaker builds bridges of peace and reconciliation with others. I believe it's this third aspect that Jesus is dealing with in this Beatitude.

2. Learning to build bridges of peace and reconciliation with people we're in conflict with is one of the more difficult things to do, but it distinguishes us as God's children.

3. Bringing reconciliation between the African American Churches and Korean Churches after the LA riots of 1992.

CONCLUSION: In the 13th century, St. Francis of Assisi wrote: **“Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy. O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console. To be understood, as to understand. To be loved, as to love. For it is in giving we receive. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned. It is in dying that we are born to eternal life.”**