

Known as Peacemakers

Series on Prayer & Holiness

- Practical Holiness – Matthew 5-9
- Beatitudes – blessed are.....
 - * radical in teaching vs religion of the day
 - * transformational in living vs rules that are imposed
 - * powerful in impact vs petty opinions & arguments
 - * revolutionary in concept vs behave & be seen to ...
- transformation of the heart – from spiritually destitute to belonging to kingdom, mourning - comforted, seeking – finding, merciful, pure, meek – for those willing to be changed.....

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Matthew 5:1-9

“Now when he saw the crowds, he went up on a mountainside and sat down. His disciples came to him, and he began to teach them saying:

*“Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.*

*Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.*

*Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.*

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.*

*Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.*

*Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.*

***Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.”***

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1. Called Sons of God

- see character traits in a friend's son – expressions
- saying – peacemakers reflect God's character.
- easily recognized as sons of God – known as such
- not saying how to become sons of God.....

- John 1:12 *“Yet to all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God—children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision or a husband's will, but born of God.”*

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- Gal. 3:26 *“You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

a) God is called a ‘God of Peace’

- Rom. 16:20, 1 Thess. 5:23, Heb. 13:20

b) heaven is referred to as a ‘place of peace

- Luke 19:38

c) God is active in His role as peacemaker

- God is working to bring peace between rebel mankind and himself.

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- 2 Cor. 5:19 *“All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.”*

- Col 1:20 *“For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.”*

- Eph 2:14 *“For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.”*

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- Fruit of the Spirit – peace – Gal 5:22 *“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.”*
- Promise of Jesus – peace – John 14:27 *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”*
- evidence is clear – God’s character and desire for us involves peace. It is one way we will be recognized and known to be sons of God

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2. Pictures of a Peacemaker

- more than simply a peacekeeper
- bigger than living a peaceful life
- active in making peace – bigger than avoiding conflict
- Corresponding words found in Matt. 5:43-45 *“You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous”*
- peacemaking begins with transformed hearts

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a) Love your enemies

- mindset, active, taking first step
- love is.....

b) Pray for those...

- pray what – hope you get yours?
- pattern found in 6:9-10 *“This, then, is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.’”*
- they would discover God, know His will, walk in it
- starts with a new perspective & heart

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- Active in Seeking Peace

a) Eph 4:1-3 *“As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope when you were called”*

- make every effort....

- humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another, keeping unity

- examine my efforts with other believers

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b) Eph 4:25-30 *“Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body. “In your anger do not sin“ Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.”*

- relationships, speech, how we live and talk

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c) Col 3:12-17 *“Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. **Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace.** And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him”*

- create the conditions for peace to rule
- active in living out what we are called to as adopted children of God!

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3. Peacemakers & Achieving Peace

- peacemakers long for peace – work on the conditions of transformed hearts and actions – sacrifice – yet peace may not always be the result!

a) Romans 12:18 *“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. 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.”*

- note the wording – so far as it depends on you
- what about when taking a stand – causes division?

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- 1 Cor 11:18-19 *“In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church, there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. No doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you have God's approval. “*

- 1 Cor 7:15 *“But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to live in peace.”*

- always necessary to stand against false teaching, to not allow peace at the cost of truth

- absence of conflict must never allow us to sacrifice the truth and what is right for the sake of getting along!

- next week – persecuted for righteousness – what then?

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b) Rule of Thumb for Knowing When

- wisdom is what is required, pure hearts & right choices

- James 3:17 *“But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.”*

- progression of Jesus words – pure of heart enables peacemakers to know when to stand, and when not to cause division and quarrels!

- purity cannot lose place to peacemaking

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- c) Sometimes peace only achieved through battle
 - fights and arguments worth having
 - how they are handled will reflect God in the outcome
 - left hand right hand discussion
 - stands worth taking:
 - midwives refusing to kill babies in Gen
 - surgeons saying no to abortion
 - churches defending moral standing on biblical truth

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So What

1. God is a Peacemaker

- removes the cause of conflict
- reconciles us to himself
- promises peace now and in heaven
- fruit of living with His Spirit Alive in you

2. Living as a Peacemaker means:

- transformed hearts and perspectives - enemies
- transformed actions and attitudes – prayer & speech
- observed change in how we do relationships

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3. Know the Difference between Peacemaking & Achieving Peace!

- so far as it depends on you
- purity comes first – seek wisdom
- never compromise truth for absence of conflict

* Health long term is more important than temporary peace or the happiness of those involved!