

Solid Rock Christian Church Manassas, Virginia

Bible Study - March 23, 2023

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Title: The Sermon on The Mount - Part VIII

The Beatitudes - Part VII

Scripture Reference: Matthew 5:9

"Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God."

I. Introduction

A. The Holy Scriptures contain at least four hundred direct references to peace, and many more indirect ones.

B. The Bible opens with peace in the Garden of Eden and closes with peace in eternity. The spiritual history of mankind can be charted based on the theme of peace.

C. Although the peace on earth in the garden was interrupted when man sinned, at the cross Jesus Christ made peace a reality again. Not only that, but Jesus becomes the peace of all who place their faith and trust in Him.

D. Peace can now reign in the hearts of those who are His. Someday the Lord Jesus Christ will return as the Prince of Peace and establish a worldwide kingdom of peace, which will culminate in ultimate peace, the eternal age of peace.

E. One of the most obvious facts of history and of human experience is that peace does not characterize man's earthly existence.

Point: There is no peace now for two reasons:

1. The opposition of Satan, and
2. The disobedience of man.

F. The fall of the angels and the fall of man established a world without peace.

G. Consider the following - In 1968 a major newspaper reported that there had been to that date, 14,553 known wars going back thirty-six years before Christ.

H. Since 1945, there have been more than seventy wars and more than two hundred internationally significant outbreaks of violence by one nation against another, taking place even as we go through this Bible Study lesson in 2023.

I. Some historians have claimed that the United States has had two generations of peace - one from 1815 to 1846 and the other from 1865 to 1898. I would submit to you that these statements are questionable.

J. From a local and global perspective, we do not have economic peace, religious peace, racial peace, family peace, or personal peace. Disagreements and conflicts are the order of the day.

K. In almost every age of history the greatest heroes have been the greatest warriors. Many in the world praise the powerful. The model man is not meek but macho. The model hero is not self-giving but self-seeking, not generous but selfish, not gentle but cruel, not meek but proud.

L. The way of the world is to put self, first. But when self is first, peace is last and when that is the case, division, hatred, resentment, and war are the outcome.

M. The seventh beatitude calls God's people to be peacemakers. The peace of which Christ speaks in this beatitude, and about which the rest of Scripture speaks, is unlike that which the world knows and strives for.

//Please listen carefully!//

N. God's peace has nothing to do with politics, armies, navies, forums of nations, or even councils of churches.

O. God's peace has nothing to do with statesmanship, no matter how great, or with arbitration, compromise, negotiated truces, or treaties.

P. God's peace, the peace of which the Bible speaks, never evades issues. It does not gloss over or hide, rationalize, or excuse. It confronts problems and seeks to solve them, and after the problems are solved, God's peace builds a bridge between those who are separated by the problems.

Q. God's peace often brings its own struggles, pain, hardship, and anguish, because such are often the price of healing. It is not a peace that will be brought by kings, presidents, prime ministers, diplomats, or international humanitarians. **It is the inner personal peace that only God can give to the soul of man and that only His children can exemplify.**

R. Four important realities about God's peace are revealed: its meaning, its Maker, its messengers, and its merit.

II. Exposition [Part I] – The Meaning of Peace: Righteousness and Truth

A. The essential fact to understand is that the peace about

which Jesus speaks is more than the absence of conflict and strife; it is the presence of righteousness.

Points:

- 1) Only righteousness can produce the relationship that brings two parties together.
- 2) Men can stop fighting without righteousness, but they cannot live peaceably without righteousness.
- 3) Righteousness not only puts an end to harm, but it administers the healing of love!

B. God's peace not only stops war but replaces it with righteousness that brings harmony and true well-being.

// Here is a thought question for your consideration.//

If the three points just mentioned above were applicable in the lives of the aggressive forces at war today, could you see the reality of letter "B" above coming to fruition?

C. The Jewish greeting **Shalom** wishes "peace" and expresses the desire that the one who is greeted will have all the righteousness and goodness God can give. The deepest meaning of the term is "God's highest good to you."

D. The most that man's peace can offer is a truce, the temporary cessation of hostilities. A truce is seldom more than a cold war. As a result, until disagreements and hatreds are resolved, the conflicts merely go underground - where they tend to fester, grow, and break out again.

E. God's peace, however, not only stops hostilities, but settles the issues and brings the parties together in mutual love and harmony.

F. James confirms the nature of God's peace when he writes, "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated (i.e., compliant, open to reason), full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." (James 3:17).

G. God's way to peace is through purity. Peace cannot be attained at the expense of righteousness. Consider this - Two people cannot be at peace until they recognize and resolve the wrong attitudes and actions that caused the conflict between them, and then bring themselves to God for cleansing.

Point: Peace that ignores the cleansing that brings purity is **not** God's peace.

H. The writer of Hebrews links peace with purity when he instructs believers to - "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: ..." (Heb. 12:14).

Point: Peace cannot be divorced from holiness.

"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." (Psalm 85:10).

I. Jesus made this statement recorded in Matthew 10:34 - "**Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.**" This seems to be the antithesis (or the opposite) of the seventh beatitude. However, our Lord's meaning is that the peace He came to bring is not peace at any price.

J. There will be opposition before there is harmony; there will be strife before there is peace.

Point: To be peacemakers on God's terms requires being peacemakers on the terms of truth and righteousness - to which the world is in fierce opposition.

K. The great enemy of peace is sin. Sin separates men from God and causes disharmony and enmity with God, and men's lack of harmony with God causes their lack of harmony with each other.

L. To talk of peace without talking of repentance of sin is to talk foolishly and vainly. The corrupt religious leaders of ancient Israel proclaimed - "For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush:" (Jer. 8:11-12).

M. "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man." (Mark 7:21-23).

Points:

- 1) Sinful men cannot create peace, either within themselves or among themselves.
- 2) Sin can produce nothing but strife and conflict.
- 3) Regardless of what the circumstances might be, where there is conflict it is because of sin.

III. Exposition [Part II] - The Maker of Peace: God

A. Men are without peace because they are without God, who is the source of peace. Both the Old and New Testaments are filled with statements of God being the God of peace (Lev. 26:6; 1 Kings

2:33; Ps. 29:11; Isa. 9:6; Ezk. 34:25; Rom. 15:33; 1 Cor. 14:33; 2 Thess. 3:16).

B. Since the Fall, the only peace that men have known is the peace they have received as the gift of God.

C. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ coming to earth was the peace of God coming to earth, because only Jesus Christ could remove sin, the great barrier to peace. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;" (Eph. 2:13-14).

D. Our Heavenly Father, Almighty God is the source of peace. His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ is the manifestation of that peace, and the Holy Spirit is the agent of that peace.

E. One of the most beautiful elements of the Fruit of the Spirit is given to those in whom the Holy Spirit resides, and this is the fruit of peace (Gal. 5:22).

F. The God of peace sent the Prince of Peace who sends the Spirit of peace to give the fruit of peace. It is no wonder that the Trinity is called **Jehova-shalom**, "The Lord is Peace" (Judges 6:24).

G. The God of peace intends that there be peace for His world, and the world that He created in peace, He will one day restore to peace.

H. The Prince of Peace will establish His kingdom of peace for one thousand years on earth and for all eternity in heaven. "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." (Jer. 29:11).

I. Jesus said - "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (John 16:33).

J. Anyone who does not belong to God through Jesus Christ can neither have peace nor be a peacemaker.

Point: God can work peace through us only if He has worked peace in us!

IV. Exposition [Part III] - The Messengers of Peace: Believers

A. The messengers of peace are believers in Jesus Christ. Only they can be peacemakers.

B. Paul tells us that "God hath called us to peace" (1 Cor. 7:15c); "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation;" (2 Cor. 5:18).

C. The ministry of reconciliation is the ministry of peacemaking. Those whom God has called to peace, He also calls to make peace. "To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: ..." (2 Cor. 5:19-20a-b).

D. At least four things characterize a peacemaker:

1. **First**, those who have made peace with God when they received Jesus Christ as Savior and He imputed His

righteousness to us, our battle with God ended, and our peace with God began. //Thank You Lord!!//

- a. Because we have made peace with God, we can enjoy the peace of God (Phil. 4:7; Col. 3:15).
- b. We are to have our feet shod with "the gospel of peace" (Eph. 6:15).

Comments:

- 1) Because peace is always corrupted by sin, the peacemaking believer must be a holy believer, a believer whose life is continually cleansed by the Holy Spirit.
 - 2) Sin breaks our fellowship with God, and when fellowship with Him is broken, peace is broken.
 - 3) The disobedient, self-indulgent Christian is not suited to be an ambassador of peace.
2. The **Second** characteristic of a peacemaker is, they lead others to make peace with God.
 - a. Christians are not an elite group of those who have spiritually arrived and who look down on the rest of the world. We are a body of sinners cleansed by Jesus Christ and commissioned to carry His gospel of cleansing to the rest of the world.
 3. **Third**, a peacemaker helps others make peace with others. The moment a person comes to Christ, he becomes at peace with God and with the Church, and becomes a

peacemaker in the world.

- a. A peacemaker build bridges between men and God and also, between men and other men.
- b. By definition a bridge cannot be one-sided. It must extend between two sides or it can never function.
- c. The first step in the bridge-building process is often to rebuke others about their sin, keeping in mind that God's peacemakers must first be righteous themselves.
- d. When your life is right before God, then apply Matthew 18:15-17 to your brother or sister in Christ. Doing this is a difficult thing to do, but obeying that command is not optional.

"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou has gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." (Matt. 18:15-17).

Comment: If we do this in the way and in the spirit the Lord teaches, the consequences are His responsibility.

Point: Sin that is not dealt with is sin that will disrupt and destroy peace!

4. Fourth, a peacemaker endeavors to find a point of

agreement. God's truth and righteousness must never be compromised or weakened.

- a. Wrong theology, wrong standards, wrong beliefs, and wrong attitudes must be faced and dealt with, but they are not usually the best places to start the process of witnessing or peacemaking.

Point: God's people are to contend without being contentious, to disagree without being disagreeable, and to confront without being abusive.

- b. The peacemaker speaks the truth in love (Eph. 4:15). To start with love is to start toward peace. We begin peacemaking by starting with whatever peaceful point of agreement we can find. PEACE HELPS BEGET PEACE!

V. **Exposition [Part IV] - The Merit of Peace: Eternal Sonship In The Kingdom**

A. The merit, or result of peacemaking is eternal blessings as God's children in God's kingdom. Peacemakers shall be called the children of God.

B. Most of us are thankful for our heritage, our ancestors, our parents, and our family name. It is especially gratifying to have been influenced by godly grandparents and to have been raised by godly parents. But the greatest human heritage cannot match the believer's heritage in Jesus Christ, because we are "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8:17).

"Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God." (Matt. 5:9)

It is once again interactive time. Please complete the biblical passages which follow by filling in the blank spaces. Each passage has been taken from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible.

"The Lord _____ thee, and _____ thee: The Lord make his face _____ upon thee, and be _____ unto thee: The Lord lift up his _____ upon thee, and give thee _____."

[Numbers 6:24-26]

"I will both lay me down in _____, and _____: for thou Lord, only makest me _____ in _____."

[Psalm 4:8]

"The Lord will give _____ unto his people; the Lord will _____ his people with _____."

[Psalm 29:11]

"Thou wilt keep him in _____, whose mind is _____ on thee: because he _____ in thee."

[Isaiah 26:3]

"The glory of this latter _____ shall be _____ than of the _____, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this _____ will I give _____, saith the Lord of hosts."

[Haggai 2:9]

"_____ I leave with you, my _____ I give unto you: not as the
_____ giveth, give I unto you. Let not your _____ be
_____, neither let it be _____."

[John 14:27]

Do you have God's peace in your life? If so, are you being a peacemaker?

I trust and pray that this lesson has been a blessing to you, and then, you will be a blessing to others.

In the Master's Service

Pastor Austin