

10 - SERMON NOTES

PEACEMAKERS

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

Peace is of constant concern in both testaments (Proverbs 15:1; Isaiah 52:7; Luke 24:36; Rom 10:15; 12:18; 1 Cor 7:15; Eph 2:11–22; Heb 12:14; 1 Peter 3:11).

The Old Testament word for peace, shalom, means ‘completeness’, ‘soundness’, ‘well-being’. It is used when one:

- Asks of, or prays for, the welfare of another (Genesis 43:27; Exodus 4:18; Judges 19:20),
- When one is in harmony or concord with another (Josua 9:15; 1 Kings 5:12),
- When one seeks the good of a city or country (Psalm 122:6; Jeremiah 29:7).

Peace associated with righteousness and truth, but not of wickedness (Psalm 85:10; Isaiah 48:18, 22; 57:19–21).

Because of the world’s chaos through man’s sin, and because peace comes only as God’s gift, the Messianic hope was of an age of peace, or of the advent of the Prince of peace. The New Testament shows the fulfillment of this hope.

- In Christ peace has come (Luke 1:79; 2:14, 29f.).
- By him it is bestowed (Mark 5:34; Luke 7:50; John 20:19, 21, 26),
- His followers are its messengers (Luke 10:5f.; Acts 10:36).

Jesus’ concern in this beatitude is not with the peaceful, but with the peacemakers. Again, some of these, and other passages, show, the making of peace can itself have messianic overtones. The Promised Son is called the “Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6–7); Isaiah 52:7 *“How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”* These verses link peace, salvation, and God’s reign, all with the coming Messiah.

Jesus does not limit the peacemaking to only one kind, and neither will his disciples. In the light of the gospel, Jesus himself is the supreme peacemaker, making peace between God and man, and man and man. Our peacemaking will include the proclamation and furtherance of that gospel. It must also extend to seeking reconciliation. Instead of delighting in division, bitterness, strife, or some petty “divide-and-conquer” mentality, disciples of Jesus delight to make peace wherever possible.

Making peace is not appeasement: the true model is God’s costly peacemaking (Eph 2:15–17; Col 1:20). Those who undertake this work are acknowledged as God’s sons. In the Old Testament, Israel has the title sons (Deuteronomy 14:1; Hosea 1:10), now that title belongs to the heirs of the kingdom who are:

- meek
- poor in spirit
- love righteousness
- are merciful
- are peacemakers

Believers are especially equipped for peacemaking and so reflect something of their heavenly Father’s character.

First thing to understand: God is the first peace maker.

Luke 2:13-14 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”

For sinful man there must first be peace with God, the removal of sins through the sacrifice of Christ (Romans 5:1; Colossians 1:20). Then inward peace can follow (Philippians 4:7), unhindered by the world’s strife (John 14:27; 16:33).

Second thing to understand - God has already removed what stands between us and other people.

Peace between man and man is part of the purpose for which Christ died (Ephesians 2) and of the Spirit’s work (Gal. 5:22); but man must also be active to promote it (Eph. 4:3; Heb. 12:14), not merely as the elimination of discord, but as the harmony and true functioning of the body of Christ (Romans 14:19; 1 Corinthians 14:33).

Third thing to understand: Peacemaking relates to being sons of God.

Jesus connects peacemaking and restoring Shalom to being children of God. Instead of pushing people away and causing more division, we are to realize that God has already met us in our own murky waters. When we understand that God has sought us and blessed us while we were far off, we become children of God who see people just like God does.

TODAY:
ALL CHURCH MEETING: 2PM
eKids! Baptism Class: 12:45pm

GOOD FRIDAY 4/18: 8pm
EASTER SERVICES 4/19: 6pm
4/20: 8:15, 9:30 & 11am

EKIDS! SPRING MARKET
4/12:9am-3pm
Come support local vendors

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