

## 1.10.21

### Peacemakers Understand the Process of Peace

As we continue our look at the teachings of Jesus as found in Matthew, we come to a very timely and important teaching found in **Matthew 5:9**, **“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons (and daughters) of God.”**

I would ask that you take this scripture and ponder on it over the next couple of weeks, asking God not only what it means, but what it means for you and your life.

We are going to spend a little time here, I’m not sure how long but as we do, please spend time in prayer with this verse.

This morning, I wanted to begin by telling you the story of Saul who was the 1<sup>st</sup> King of the nation of Israel.

Saul was a bit of a mess. Insecure, fickle, murderous and really a mess. He was the one God choose to be the King of Israel. I’m not sure why as from the get go it seemed like he rarely got any thing right. He was always running ahead of God, running on his emotions and when he did, it got him and the nation of Israel in trouble every time.

When Saul was getting ready to go in battle, he faced 36,000 plus soldiers who were equipped with chariots and war horses. God had told Saul to wait upon the man of God to come and offer up a sacrifice to ensure victory but Saul couldn’t wait. He took it upon himself to do the specific work of the Lord that he was not supposed to do himself.

Another time, when the Philistines came up against Saul, we read the following.

**1 Samuel 28:5, “When Saul saw the camp of the Philistines, he was afraid and his heart trembled greatly.”**

Saul was in for a great and difficult battle for sure so what did he do? Well, his go-to guy, the prophet Samuel, who spoke to God for him had died. So Saul went to a medium, someone who was able to summon the dead. He had her bring up the spirit of Samuel but it was not a good move. Again, instead of waiting upon the Lord Saul made moves of his own .

You can read about all of this in the book of 1 Samuel.

On the other hand there was the young man David. Not once, not twice but multiple times throughout his life David did the following. Look at the following passages.

**1 Samuel 23:1-3 “Then they told David, ‘Look, the Philistines are fighting against Keilah, and they are robbing the threshing floors. Therefore David inquired of the Lord, saying, ‘Shall I go and attack these Philistines?’”**

At another time, when David was out engaged in battle, another group, the Amalekites, stormed his home town, took all the wives and daughters including his own. Look with me at David’s response.

**1 Samuel 30:6, 8a, “Moreover David was greatly distressed because the people spoke of stoning him, for all the people were embittered, each one because of his sons and his daughters. But David strengthened himself in the Lord his God. David (then) enquired of the Lord, saying, ‘Shall I pursue this bunch? Shall I overtake them.’”**

When Saul was killed, David was outside of the borders of the country of Israel. When David learned Saul was killed the following occurred. Now remember, David had already been anointed as the next king of Israel.

**2 Samuel 2:1a, “Then it came about afterwards (after King Saul had been killed) that David inquired of the Lord, saying, “Shall I go up to one of the cities of Judah?”**

This is just three of the many times David inquired of the Lord what he should do.

Who do you think had the better success, Saul or David?

When Saul made moves on his own in the first battle, he lost the opportunity to eliminate his enemy and they continued to be a thorn in his side. The second time Saul took it upon himself to make some moves, the following day it cost him his life, the life of his son and probably a lot of other soldiers and people.

But David, what do you think occurred when David moved forward.

After seeking the Lord, the Lord said this. **1 Samuel 23:4, “The David inquired of the Lord once more. And the Lord answered him and said, “Arise, go down to Keilah, for I will give the Philistines into your hand.”**

When David sought the Lord’s when his wife and daughters and the wife and daughters of his home town were taken, God said this.

**1 Samuel 30, “8b, “And the Lord said to David, “Pursue them, for you will surely overtake them, and you will surely rescue them all.”**

As David sought to go back to the land of Judah, this is God’s response.

**2 Samuel 2:1b, “And the Lord said to Him, ‘Go up.’ So David asked, ‘Where shall I go up to?’ And the Lord said, ‘To Hebron.’”**

It is amazing, when you look at what was occurring with David, how he handled himself.

In the first instance, the Philistines were attacking some of David's people and stealing an abundance of food from them. I can just hear Saul's cry in this case. Rally the troupes, fix yourself for battle and let's go! Our people are being hurt and they are stealing our food. No shout out to God about what to do, how to do it and when.

In the second case, where David's wife, children and the wives and children of the village were taken, it pretty much is a no brainer. Again I can hear what Saul would say. What the Amalekites did was way wrong and we need to go get our wives and children. Again, rally the troupes, gird yourself for battle and let's go. No calling upon the Lord.

And lastly, David, knowing he was the anointed king of Israel when Saul was killed, David didn't just charge in and take control even though he could have. He sought the Lord as to when to go and even more specifically where to go.

A lot of difference between Saul and David wouldn't you say? My question is...

1. What did David **recognize** that Saul did not?
  - a. He didn't have the power to defeat their enemy
  - b. He knew who his enemy was

Let's take the second first. David knew who his enemy was.

As we look at the events occurring in this nation and across the world, who is our true enemy?

2. **Know** your enemy!

**Ephesians 6:12, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly (spiritual) places.”**

Some of the things we are seeing today and I am afraid we will be seeing in the next several years are not the makings and doing of human beings. There is a deeper, darker, more sinister being and government at work.

Look again at what is listed in this verse. Rulers, powers, world forces of darkness, spiritual forces of wickedness. This is pretty major stuff. Pretty powerful stuff.

**1 Peter 5:10, “Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”**

I know you have heard and read these verses before but I think in light of everything going on in politics, demonstrations, news media on both sides, Facebook, possibly your friends and some of your family, we need to remember who our fight is really against.

Jesus said in **John 10:10a, “The thief comes only to steal, kill and destroy.”** We easily understand this as we watch him at work in our countries leaders. But what about your life? How is he working through media, politics, society and your own flesh to kill, steal and destroy your peace. Your ability to be a peacemaker? Your ability to share the good news of Jesus Christ with a lost and dying world.

When Jesus said that Satan comes to steal it is your joy, your peace and even your trust in Jesus that Satan is trying to steal.

Satan and his dark forces have the ability, if we are not careful, to manipulate our emotions. To cause things to happen around us that will take us to places we never intended to go.

I heard of two different circumstances of this during the rush on the White House.

One guy was so caught up in the heightened emotions of the moment that he threw several punches at the security guards heads. Afterward he apologized profusely saying he never meant to do something like that.

Another person who was photographed in White House had a hand full of zip ties, things used to tie someone up. What his motive was is unclear but he said he wish he never would have taken those zip ties with him into the White House.

If we allow him, Satan will take you farther, deeper than you ever expected to go. Your Christian witness can be destroyed which means your ability to share the good news of Jesus Christ and the forgiveness of sins and salvation He is offering is not happening.

King Saul got caught up in his emotions and almost killed off the nation of Israel. But God knew what was happening. Right on the heels of Saul there was David, the man after God's own heart. David led the nation back to worshipping God and the nation prospered for quite a few years.

How did David do it?

### 3. David knew he didn't have the **power** to defeat the enemy

**Psalm 121:1-2, "I will lift up my eyes to the mountains; From where shall my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, who made the heaven and the earth."**

The disciple John said this... **1 John 4:4, "You are from God, little children, and have overcome them (spirits that are evil); because greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world."**

Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world. All you have to do is put your faith in Jesus Christ, seek Him, listen to what He says and the victory is yours.

This nation maybe turning some tough corners. Some of the freedoms and blessings of being a Christian nation may possibly be coming to an end. But guess what? God is allowing it to happen.

If we believe God is sovereign, if He is the Almighty God of the heavens and the earth, and nothing, nothing happens that He does not allow, then we must believe that He has allowed reason for it. He has given Satan a leash for a season and Satan has people under his influence.

Why? Why is God allowing these things to occur?

Why did God allow it to happen in the nation of Israel? Because as a nation they had turned their backs on the Lord. They began serving other things than their Creator. The leaders of the nation and the people turned inward and began serving themselves, their own emotions, sensuality and thoughts about what is right or wrong.

Certainly we know this to be true in this nation. We see it all around us. But as followers of Jesus Christ our great opportunity and challenge is to be so full of Jesus and so in tune with Him that we are used by God to create a spiritual stronghold for God's kingdom in this city and county.

The children, teens and adults are our responsibility. We might not be able to do everything we would like to do right now as the church of Jesus Christ because of COVID but we can position ourselves to be free of the world, free of Satan, even free of our own emotions

In a moment we are going to be singing Amazing Grace, my chains are gone, I've been set free. Is this true in your life? Can you say that you have been set free and that you are staying free?

Paul said in **Galatians 5:1**, “**It was for freedom that Christ set us free. Therefore keep standing firm and do not be subject again to a yoke of slavery.**”

Let us keep standing firm in our relationship with Christ no matter what is happening around us.

I love one of the verses my brother shared with us last week.

**Jeremiah 17:5, 7-8**, “**Thus says the Lord, ‘Cursed is the one who trusts in mankind and makes flesh their strength and whose hearts turns away from the Lord. (But) blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord and whose trust is the Lord. For they will be like a tree planted by water, that extends its root by a stream and will not fear when the heat comes; but its leaves will be green and it will not be anxious in a year of drought nor cease to yield fruit.’**”

No anxiety, no fear, green leaves, looking good and still producing good, everlasting fruit for the kingdom of God.

Sounds good to me, how about you? Amen?

Trust in the Lord is the call for us today. Whatever Satan means for evil God uses for what? Good.

Jesus is still Savior. He is still the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords.

Let's pray