

Last week we discussed **“Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.”**

Irenaeus (ca. 120 – 200) said man cannot see God and live but those who love him can. Have you thought of this?

Kierkegaard (1813-1855) says that a man that continually seeks wealth is never satisfied and he becomes double-minded. What does being double-minded mean to you? How does this keep us from having a pure heart?

Merton (1915-1968) says that a man can have right intentions and say he is working for the Father but in reality, he is seeking to gain favor in the eyes of others and God by his works. Can you see this in others around you or perhaps yourself?

Manning (1934-2013) says we can fall into the trap of self-idolatry by focusing on ourselves and our shortfalls. He says to shift our focus away from ourselves and onto the greatness of Jesus Christ. Have you thought of this?

Matthew 5:9 – **“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”**

The Greek word for "peacemakers" in the Bible is *eirēnopoioi* (εἰρηνοποιοί), which appears in the New Testament, most notably in Matthew 5:9. It is a compound word made from *eirēnē* (peace) and *poieō* (to do or make), literally meaning "peace-doers" or "peace-makers". This term describes people who actively work to create and restore peace and harmony.

John Dear (1959 -) is a Catholic peace activist, author, and retreat leader.

“Jesus calls us all to be peacemakers. That means, of course, we can no longer be warmakers. We cannot support war, participate in war, pay for war, promote war, or wage war.” What does this mean to you?

“A peacemaker works to end war and create peace. From now on, every Christian is banned from warfare and sets to work making peace and creating a more peaceful world...”. Do you agree with this? What does working to make peace mean to you?

Isaiah 2:2 – Isaiah wrote: “In the last days...”

This can refer to the future generally, but usually it seems to have in view the Messianic era. In a real sense the last days began with the first coming of Christ and will be fulfilled at his second coming.”

Isaiah 2:4 – Isaiah continues: “He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks.”

The reverse process occurs in **Joel 3:9-11** (ca. 9 BC) when God declares He will restore Judah and Jerusalem – “Proclaim this among the nations: Prepare for war! Rouse the warriors! Let all the fighting men draw near and attack. Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears. Let the weakling say, “I am strong!” Come quickly, all you nations from every side, and assemble there. Bring down your warriors, O Lord!”

What does this scripture tell us about the nature of God?

Dear goes on to say: “Peacemakers do not kill or hurt or threaten anyone, individually, nationally, or globally. We do not risk the taking of a single human life, much less millions.” How does this conflict with God? How does this affirm God’s nature?

1 Samuel 17:45 – Regarding David and Goliath: “David said to the Philistine, “You come against me with sword and spear and javelin, but I come against you in the name of the Lord Almighty, The God of the armies of Israel, whom you have defied.”

God sends David to war. How is David approaching his challenge against evil? How should we approach the challenges in our life?

Thomas Merton (1915-1968) Trappist monk, bestselling author, and contemplative. Thomas Merton was a monk in the Trappist Abbey of Our Lady of Gethsemani, near Bardstown, Kentucky, living there from 1941 to his death.

Merton says: “If you love peace, then hate injustice, hate tyranny, hate greed – but hate these things in yourself first, not in another.” What is Merton telling us?

Peter Kreeft (1937-) is an American Catholic philosopher, apologist, and lecturer. Peter John Kreeft is an American professor of philosophy at Boston College and The King’s College. A convert to Catholicism, he is the author of over eighty books on Christian philosophy, theology, and apologetics.

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus commanded Peter to put up his sword and reminded him that those who live by the sword perish by the sword. Thus the most just war ever fought, in defense of the most just, most worthy, most innocent man and cause, was also the shortest. Jesus stopped it almost before it started, apparently allowing it to start only to give his disciples and us an object lesson about his methods for ending it.”

What does this tell us about Jesus and his nature?

How are we to reflect that in our lives?

“There too he did not use force but made peace in the most surprising way, by dying. He drained away war down himself, like a sinkhole, or a blotter. He made peace by making himself the universal victim, by suffering all the violence, war, aggression, hate, and harm that the father of lies and of violence could fling at him, by doing nothing in return, by being meek as the slaughtered sheep.” Why did Jesus have to not declare war but give his life as a sacrifice?

“Jesus made peace between man and God. From that ultimate peace comes another peace, peace between man and man.”

Children of God - The main Greek words for "children of God" in the Bible are τέκνον (*teknon*) and υἱός (*huios*), though *teknon* is more common. *Teknon* emphasizes a spiritual and intimate family bond, while *huios* highlights a recognized status and dignity, often translated as "sons".

As “children of God”, we are to be peacemakers in our daily life. Go and seek peace in all circumstances.