

# Part VII

## BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

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# Introduction

Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall be called the Children of God. Matt. 5:9

This world is filled with violence and hatred. It is in it that Jesus sends us as peacemakers. We aren't given the choice of whether or not we would like to be peacemakers and we certainly aren't given the choice of what kind of world we would like to live in.

As bad as things may be, this is the only world we have and if we are going to be true to our Lord, we must be peacemakers. But, what did He mean by peacemakers?



# Misconception

“Peacemaking” is Not:

- Absence of conflict: Peace in the Bible is never to be confused with pacifism.
- Avoidance of strife: Never are we instructed to run from conflict. Putting our head in the sand, hoping that the conflict will end, only delays the inevitable.
- Appeasement of parties: The “peace at any price” mentality is far from biblical command. I have discovered that you can never make everyone happy all the time.
- Accommodation of issues: Sweeping things under the rug.



**Who then isn't a peace-maker?**

The person who glosses over the problems, acting as if everything is alright when it is not, is not a peacemaker.



# Three different types of People

There are three different types of people who deal with the subject of peace in different ways.

They are:

- ❖ peace-takers
- ❖ peace-fakers
- ❖ peace-makers

Each of these types of people live very different lives and leave very different effects on the world around them.



# A. The Peace-Takers

Peace-takers are bitter and resentful people who tear apart relationships and instigate trouble.

- Peace-takers are always causing problems wherever they go.
- Peace-takers suck the life out of people and relationships.
- Peace-taker's main motivation is self.
- Peace-takers always seem to believe that the universe should be centered around them and no one else.



## B. Peace-Fakers

Peace-fakers lose all ground and reliability because they aren't willing to take a stand on anything because they believe it's more important to "keep the peace."

- Peace-fakers are always in "avoidance" mode.
- Peace-fakers lack the ability to maintain core values and morals.
- Peace-fakers always prefer peace over truth.
- Peace-fakers leave others wondering whose side they are on or what they really believe.



## C. Peace-Makers

***Peacemaker is someone who is actively seeking to reconcile people to God and to one another.***

The word peace is the Hebrew word “***Shalom***.” Often used as a greeting word or a departing word in much the same way we would utter “hello” or “goodbye,” it is a broad term related to health, prosperity, harmony, and wholeness.

It means perfect welfare, serenity, fulfillment, freedom from trouble, and liberation from anything which hinders contentment.



## II. The Meaning of Peace-Making

When a Jew said “Shalom” they were wishing the full presence, peace, and prosperity of all the blessedness of God.

The famous Aaronic benediction of Numbers 6:24-26 brings out this idea very clearly:

“The LORD bless you and protect you; the LORD make His face shine on you, and be gracious to you; the LORD look with favor on you and give you peace” (Num. 6:24-25).



## II. The Meaning of Peace-Making

Peace in the Bible is always based on justice and righteousness. Without those two virtues, lasting peace is not possible.

The word “make” in the term “peacemakers” comes from the Greek verb that means “**to do**” or “**to make**.” It is a word bursting with energy. It mandates action and initiative.

Notice Jesus did not say “Blessed are the peace-wishers, peace-hopers, peace-dreamers, peace-lovers or peace-talkers.”

Peace must be made. It never happens by chance. Hence, a peacemaker is never passive. They are doers and take initiative.



## II. The Meaning of Peace-Making

When these two words are taken together, “peace” and “maker,” it describes **one who actively pursues peace**.

They pursue more than the absence of conflict; they don't avoid strife (in fact, sometimes, peacemaking will create strife); they aren't merely seeking to appease the warring parties; they aren't trying to accommodate everyone.

Peace-makers experience a deep satisfaction and joy that comes through reconciliation. They make it a point to stand in the gap, point out the truth, extend grace, and give love unconditionally to all people.



## II. The Meaning of Peace-Making

- “Peace-makers” always function out of unconditional love and concern for others.
- “Peace-makers” are always about the business of reconciliation.
- “Peace-makers” are always at risk of rejection, sometimes even to the point of death.



# III. The Model Peacemaker

God is the author of peace. Jesus is the supreme Peacemaker. Jesus came to establish peace.

- His message explained peace
- His death purchased peace
- His resurrected presence enables peace
- His second coming is to restore peace forever



# III. Jesus: The Model Peacemaker

- ❖ Isaiah calls Him the “Prince of Peace” (Isa. 9:6).
- ❖ The angels announced His birth by singing, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth...” (Luke 2:14).
- ❖ Jesus’ persistent word of absolution to sinners was, “Go in peace!” Just before He was crucified, Jesus’ last will and testament was, “Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Your heart must not be troubled or fearful” (John 14:27).
- ❖ When the Lord returned after the resurrection, His first word to the disciples was “Shalom.” “Peace to you!” (Luke 24:36).



## IV. The Method of Peacemaking

Those who seek peace are often misunderstood. Peacemaking is messy and wrenching work. It takes time and a lot of emotional energy. It is like crossing a fast-moving creek on slippery rocks.

The journey is needed. The work is risky. And, sometimes you fall. You get bruised. And, sometimes you don't make it across the stream.

And, let me be honest, sometimes, peacemaking doesn't work. In Paul's letter to the Romans, he exhorted, "If possible, on your part, live at peace with everyone" (Rom. 12:18).



## IV. The Method of Peacemaking

However, let's focus on the phrase "as far as it depends on you." The hallmark of a Christian is the ability to get along with other people.

The testimony of a church is its ability to get along with other people. We have a God-given, scripturally-directed responsibility to pursue peace.

The apostle Paul declared, "God has called you to peace" (1 Cor. 7:15). Does that mean we agree with everything others say or do? No.

Sometimes we agree to disagree, agreeably. God wants his children to be bridge builders. What steps, what methods, can we employ to actively reconcile people to God and to one another?



# IV. The Method of Peacemaking

## A. Talk to God

I find it crucial to talk to the Lord about what I've done or what people have done to me before I talk to them. It gives me perspective and tenderness. The Lord helps me see the deeper needs in the relationship and what has caused the problem. He, also, shows me my part, and often, my wrong words, behavior, or attitude that is hindering the reconciliation.

Even if the other person is 95 percent in the wrong and I am only 5 percent in the wrong, I still have to confess my error. Then, I surrender the conflict to the Lord.



# IV. The Method of Peacemaking

## B. Take the first step

Jesus is real clear on this action. Jesus said, "So if you are offering your gift on the altar, and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled with your brother, and then come and offer your gift" (Matt. 5:23-24). This, I believe, is the most ignored verse in the Bible. Later, Jesus said, "'If your brother sins against you, go and rebuke him in private. If he listens to you, you have won your brother'" (Matt. 18:15). You are to make the first move. Peacemakers take the initiative. "But," you say, "Why should I go to the person when they are the one that hurt me." Do you want the biblical answer?



## IV. The Method of Peacemaking

### **C. Tell the other person how you feel and why**

When you take the first step and speak to the other person, before you speak, remember the words of Solomon and Paul. Solomon wrote, “A gentle answer turns away anger, but a harsh word stirs up wrath” (Prov. 15:1). Paul wrote, “No rotten talk should come from your mouth, but only what is good for the building up of someone in need, in order to give grace to those who hear” (Eph. 4:29).

Empathize with their feelings. Consider their situation. Attack the problem not the person. Clarify don't confront. Cooperate as much as possible. Emphasize reconciliation not resolution. Reconciliation is more crucial than being right.



## V. The Mantel of Peacemaking

The word “called” means to be officially designated as holding a particular rank or office, as when you name a chair or choose a captain or designate a spokesman.

Peacemakers will be known and recognized as- the sons of God. Note: A “child of God” is one who is a part of the family. **It is a statement of position.**

A “son of God” is one who is like the family. **It is a statement of character.** A son of God is one who not only carries on the family name but bears the family **resemblance and reputation**. Jesus is saying that as his followers become known as peacemakers, they will be recognized as the sons of God who share His **name, vision, mission and character.**



## V. The Mantel of Peacemaking

The opposite must be pointed out as well. The opposite of peacemakers is **troublemakers**. People who are mean-spirited, stirring up strife, creating conflict.

"If we are not peacemakers, but instead are troublemakers, there is every likelihood that we are not true children of God."

Notice His word choice. **Troublemakers definitely are not bearing the character of Jesus.**



## V. The Mantel of Peacemaking

If our character is such that we are trouble-makers; spread rumors and gossip about others; constantly fomenting discontent; omni critical, always faultfinding; unwilling to be involved in peacemaking; if we are mean - if these negative qualities characterize our lives, there is a good chance we are not Christians.

Those are sobering words. **The good news of the gospel is that a troublemaker can become a peacemaker.** Troublemakers create conflict because they have internal strife. They can change. They “must” change to experience the reward and benefit of this beatitude.



## VI. The Must of peacemaking

The radicalness of Christ's call to peacemaking demands a radical remaking of human personality. One must first have a profound experience of the shalom of God.

No one can become a peacemaker until he/she has found peace. We cannot give what is not real to us. Peacemaking begins with an experience of peace in our own hearts.

Key Point: ***"Peace is made, not merely kept, it's a product of a life lived in the Spirit of God."***



## **VI. The Must of peacemaking**

*“All this newness of life is from God, who brought us back to Himself through what Christ did. And God has given us the task of reconciling people to Him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. This is the wonderful message he has given us to tell others.” (2 Cor. 5:18-19)*

It took the death of Jesus to reconcile us to God. We now have a responsibility to be active participants in making peace wherever we go because of the ministry of reconciliation we have been given as followers of Christ.



# And So What?

## Three areas of peacemaking:

- **We are to Experience Peace with God**

Rom. 5:1 “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

- **We are to Seek Peace with Others**

Rom. 14:19 “Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.”

*1 Samuel 25:32-35 “David said to Abigail, “the LORD, the God of Israel, who has sent you today to meet me. May you be blessed... Then David accepted from her hand what she had brought him and said, “Go home in peace. I have heard your words and granted your request.”*

- **We are to Help Others find Peace With God**



# And So What?

- **Peace is a blessing to be Enjoyed**

Romans 10:14-15 “How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent?”

As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!’”



# And So What?

Some 700 years ago a remarkable man was born. Although he was the son of an Italian cloth merchant and destined to be a knight, he forsook the path of wealth and fame, choosing instead to wear a ragged cloak tied with a rope borrowed from a scarecrow. He spent his days preaching and giving to others. He chose to live in utter poverty.

History records that he was a noble, kind, humble, Christlike man - one of the greatest Christians who ever lived. We know him today as St. Francis of Assisi. Centuries after his death, someone translated one of his prayers into English. It was later set to music. Many of you know these words by heart.



# And So What?

*“Lord, make me an instrument of Thy peace Where there is hatred, let me sow love Where there is injury, pardon, Where there is doubt, faith Where there is despair, hope Where there is darkness, light Where there is sadness, joy.*

*“O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek To be consoled as to console To be understood as to understand To be loved as to love*

*“For it is in giving that we receive It is in pardoning that we are pardoned It is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.”*