

## BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

Matthew 5:9

In thousands of years of human history there have been only a few decades of a world free from wars. Peace among nations, families and individuals has been elusive. **Peace** is mentioned over 400 times in the Bible and the common term in Hebrew is '**Shalom**'. In the Middle East a common greeting is the word 'Salaam'. Shalom does not mean the absence of war or strife, for even a cemetery would qualify with that definition. **Shalom** has the idea of **wholeness in life** which includes **total serenity, positive well-being, happiness, blessing, prosperity and contentment** Psalm 122:7-8. It also includes **right relationships**. It is not just a truce where conflict stops, but also when enemies embrace and harmony is restored. The Bible starts with perfect shalom in Eden and ends with the same peace in heaven coming down to earth when the Prince of Peace returns - Isaiah 9:6; 11:5-10, Haggai 2:6-9, Revelation 21:1-7. **God is the God of peace** - Romans 15:33; 16:20, 1 Corinthians 14:33, 2 Corinthians 13:11, Philippians 4:9, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, Hebrews 13:20.

Satan's rebellion and man's disobedience brought confusion and separation in man's relationship with God and with one another. God desires peace for the world - Luke 2:14. Jesus was sent to earth as the ultimate peacemaker. Peace will only come to the world when they say 'Glory to God in the highest' as the angels proclaimed at the birth of Jesus .....

**'Peace on earth , good will to men.'**

**Jesus would come to bring peace and restoration to three relationships:**

**1) Man with God 2) Man with self 3) Man with his fellow man**

As we proceed through the Beatitudes we see a progression of God's work in a person. They are first emptied and then filled with God's righteousness and their vision is changed.

**'But the vision of God and His glory is not the last Beatitude.** The last set of Beatitudes give us a vision of man and his need. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God. The Beatitudes do not leave us gazing at heaven, they end leaving us gazing at a scarred and warring earth. The purity becomes peacemaking. This purity, then is not a purity that builds walls of separation about itself by taboos and exclusions - it is not a protected purity; it is a purifying force. It is not like the water that would throw round itself banks of exclusion, and end in being a stagnant and festering pool; rather it is like the running brook that keeps pure by its very purifying. No purity is pure that is not purifying; and no virtue is virtuous that does not have the victorious in it. **The renounced in spirit and pure in heart are not called sons of God until they become lovingly aggressive and become peacemakers.'** E. Stanley Jones

**THREE AREAS OF PEACE** (summarized here, but explored deeply in other messages)

- Peace with God / Eternal peace
- Peace of God / Internal peace
- Peace with others / External peace

### PEACE WITH GOD .....Eternal peace

For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we saved through his life. - Romans 5:10 NIV

God is the ultimate peacemaker and has made peace with mankind through his Son Jesus Christ. **Natural man thinks in his mind that God is his enemy. Not so!** Genesis 3:10, Romans 5:1, Colossians 1:21-22.

## PEACE OF GOD / Internal Peace

Some Christians have made their peace **with** God but have not experienced the peace **of** God. Peacemakers need internal peace before they can bring peace to those around them.

**Peace with God prepares us for heaven.**

**The peace of God helps us to live on earth.**

- **Peaceful sleep** - Psalm 4:8, Daniel slept well while the king did not! - Daniel 6:16-23,
- **Jesus slept in a storm and then rebuked it** - Mark 4:37-41
- **The Lord is near, asking in prayer with thanksgiving = peace** - Philippians 4:4-7

## PEACE WITH OTHERS / EXTERNAL PEACE

Our vertical relationship with God is suspect if it does not influence our relationship with others. Christians are called to live in peace with others if at all possible. - Romans 12:18

**Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.**

**Sons of God there means.....mature sons of God.**

More on this topic in our next lesson.

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