

“Kingdom Come”

Sermon on the Mount Series: Seventh Lesson

“BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS, FOR THEY WILL BE CALLED CHILDREN OF GOD.” MATT 5:9

Introduction

- **QUESTION:** What is helping us so far?
- Before we look forward, let’s look backwards.
 - The previous beatitude is about being pure in heart.
 - Peacemaking can only be done by the pure in heart, for impartiality is necessary.
 - So this beatitude follows on from the former.
 - This might have been a shock to some of the Jews who were expecting and hoping for a militaristic Messiah.
- Blessed?
 - Tend to disturb people when trying to bring about reconciliation.
 - Often criticised when doing this. Tough!
 - Reason the beatitude re persecution comes next!

Part 1 - Peacemaker

- What peacemaking is not
 - ‘Peace’ and ‘Appeasement’ do not mean the same thing.
 - “You can postpone war by appeasement; but it generally means you are doing something that is unjust and unrighteous in order to avoid war.”
 - Peacemaking and peacekeeping are very different.
 - Not about being ‘peaceful’ or keeping the peace (**Jeremiah 6.14**).
 - The message of the kingdom does divide people (**Matt 10:34-36**)
- Conflict
 - The message causes conflict, but the messenger does not seek conflict.
 - In fact, the messenger should avoid causing conflict where possible, seeking to prevent it starting and helping to stop it where it has already started (**1 Cor 7:15, 1 Pet 3:11, Heb 12:14, Rom 12:18**).
- Cost
 - True peace is costly – there is no such thing as ‘cheap peace’.
 - The blood of Jesus was the price of peace between us and God, so we should not be surprised when peacemaking amongst people is difficult, painful and costly in time, energy, commitment and spiritual battle.
- Challenge
 - We are commanded to love our enemy (**Matt 5:43-48**) and to feed our enemies (**Romans 12:17-21**).
 - Peacemakers are active in doing whatever possible to promote peace. They take the initiative.
- Jesus
 - Greatest peacemaker is Jesus.
 - Bringing peace between God & man as well as man to man (**Eph 2.11-22, Col 1:20**).
 - He is our role model and our inspiration.
 - Jesus was prophesied to be the “Prince of Peace” (**Is 9:6**). He is our peace (**Eph 2:14, Col 1:20**).

QUESTION: What does being a peacemaker look like in everyday life?

Part 2 - Children of God

- Owned by God
 - The word 'called' can mean 'owned'.
 - The peacemakers are 'children' of God because they have taken on this characteristic of their Father.
 - We the peacemakers, are owned by God who is a God of peace (**Heb 13:20, Rom 15:33, 16:20, Phil 4:9, 1 Thess 5:23**).
 - Peacemakers are children of God because "What they do is to repeat what God has done."
 - We are reconciliation agents.
 - We share our faith and offer people the opportunity to make peace with God.
 - We also help people have peace with each other – especially within the Kingdom.
 - The concept of God's Kingdom not being at peace is an oxymoron, so two disciples not at peace with one another need a peacemaker to step in and help make peace.
- **QUESTION:** How will this promise affect the way you live this week?
- How to develop a peacemaking spirit and be an effective peacemaker
 1. Thank God that he sent Jesus to be the peacemaker that you needed. Reflect on **Matthew 18:21-35** and the forgiveness you have been given.
 2. Pray to be a peacemaker. Ask God for the courage and patience you need as well as the strength to keep your mouth shut as you listen to understand.
 3. Pray for people to be at peace with one another. Specifically bring to God any situations of conflict in the world, and especially within the kingdom (**1 Tim 2.8**).
 4. The problem is often **James 1:20** and the solution **Proverbs 15:1**.
 - A peacemaker will learn to keep their mouth shut and not repeat things they hear when it would cause harm.
 - They will consider the impact of the situation on the wider community and not just on themselves or the people involved.
 5. Pray to be approachable and have a peaceable spirit.
 6. Pray not to take things personally
 - We cannot be defensive or touchy but good at being neutral.
 - A peacemaker is not concerned about himself or herself or how they look to others.
 - They are not thinking about how certain decisions will affect them.
 - This is why having a pure heart is a crucial prerequisite for being a peacemaker.
- A framework for peacemaking (from "Peacemaking Women", Barthel & Dabler)
 1. Glorify God - How can I please and honour God in this the situation?
 2. Get the log out of your eye - How can I show Jesus's work in me by taking responsibility for my contribution to this conflict?
 3. Gently restore - How can I lovingly serve others by helping them take responsibility for their contribution to this conflict?
 4. Go and be reconciled - How can I demonstrate the forgiveness of God and encourage a reasonable solution to this conflict?

Conclusion

- This is to be a characteristic of every disciple.
- Without doubt some of us are better at starting fires and others better at putting them out, but all can become good at being a peacemaker.

Resources:

- Peacemaker Ministries: <https://peacemaker.training/>