

Lesson 7: The Sermon on the Mount A Kingdom of Peacemakers

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God. Matthew 5:9

Introduction

Most kingdoms invite soldiers who are willing to fight for the King. Jesus' kingdom invites soldiers willing to offer peace and reconciliation to those who want to fight against them. As the next Beatitude will suggest, peacemaking can be divisive and dangerous. Jesus' life will showcase this well. However, the promise for the peacemaker is an eternal identity as a child of God.

According to Webster's 1828 Dictionary, a peacemaker "makes peace by reconciling parties that are at variance." HELPS Word Study further declares that a peacemaker "bravely declares God's terms, which makes someone whole." Peace is defined by "all essential parts joined together; wholeness." In other words, a peacemaker reconciles a sinner to God wholly, leaving no loose ends, no unknowns, no questions or doubts between creator and Creation. And the promise of Sonship (or daughtership!) not only guarantees an eternal place in the family of God but also motivates the believer to ensure that others receive the same adoption.

The questions for this study will pinpoint what the listeners would have known of peacemaking from Old Testament Scripture, how New Testament writers applied Jesus' lesson of peacemaking, and how believers today can exemplify this truth in modern application. Peacemaking today can be just as divisive and dangerous as it was in first-century Israel, and yet, its intentional pursuit still identifies those who practice it as children of God. Identification with Christ requires purposeful reconciliation not only with fellow believers, but also with those who are openly hostile to God and His Word. While peacemaking involves evangelism, it is not solely evangelistic in nature. It will also include confrontation of a fellow believer who has turned from truth; earnest contention for the faith as it was delivered in the Scriptures, and a strong stand against false teaching. Let's unpack the role of peacemaking!

Study Questions:

1. Read Isaiah 52:7 and note how Scripture defines those who publish peace. What is involved in publishing peace?
2. Isaiah 52:7 ends with the statement "Thy God reigneth." How can this statement bring peace or division, depending on how the receiver views God's authority?
3. In Numbers 6:22-27, the priests were instructed to bless those who came to them. What does this blessing indicate about God and His desire for His people?
4. In Isaiah 26:3-4, Isaiah promises that God's people can have "shalom shalom," or perfect peace. How is this perfect peace obtained and maintained according to these verses?

5. Jesus expounded on the peacemaker looking like His Father in Matthew 5:43-48 and Luke 6:35. What will peacemaking require of the follower of Jesus?

6. In Peter's sermon in Acts 10:34-43, who has access to this peace, and where does this peace come from exclusively?

7. In Romans 5:1-11, Paul describes how Jesus secured peace with God for sinful mankind by dying for the ungodly. In your own words, summarize how those who place their faith in Jesus are justified (made just) in God's sight.

8. If every sinner got what they deserved, no one could have a relationship with God. Without Jesus, all would have been lost. How does telling others about the peace Jesus offers build on the beatitudes of the merciful receiving mercy and the pure in heart seeing God?

9. In Ephesians 6:15, Paul includes the shoes of the preparation of the gospel of peace as part of the whole armor of God. What does this important piece of apparel indicate about the daily life of a follower of Jesus? Is this an occasional accessory or a daily essential?

10. Peacemaking is not just about evangelism, but it is also about being gentle, patient, and meek with anyone in need of repentance, whether saved or unsaved. Read 2 Timothy 2:22-26, and record what the servant of the Lord does to reconcile people back to the Lord and His ways.

11. Consider what application the Lord would have you to place in your life regarding peacemaking? Would He have you daily look for people in need of God's peace in their lives? Is He calling you to set aside activities that invite strife rather than reconciliation with God? Is He calling you to confront sin in meekness so that a fellow believer can find repentance and wholeness? Is He inviting you to find His peace in trusting, rather than in attempting to control things outside of your control? List your takeaways in the space below.