



Sermon Text: Matthew 5:9

Sermon Date: June 16, 2019

The fact that the lack of peace is so pervasive is nothing new. We can trace it back to the book of Genesis. Humans have been at war with God ever since Adam and Eve sinned. Since the conflict between Cain and Abel, which led to one brother killing the other, humanity has been in battle with one another.

Sometimes peace is hard to find even at church. Somehow many believers have managed to take the words of Jesus—"Where two or three are gathered in my name, I will be their midst"—and turned that verse into, "Where two or three gather in Jesus' name, eventually there will be conflict." It's pitiful!

It's within this context that Jesus promised to bless the people who would become His agents for peace, saying that the peacemaker would be called "sons of God." This means that every Christian, according to this Beatitude, is responsible to be a peacemaker in their home, church, community, nation, and ultimately, the world.

WHAT DOES JESUS MEAN BY THE TERM PEACEMAKER?

It is very important to see that what Jesus mean is not the absence of activity, or the absence of hostility, or a truce or an escape from reality. The biblical concept is much deeper than an absence of conflict or a vacation to get away from it all. The Old Testament word for peace is *shalom*, referring to a state of wholeness and harmony intended to reverberate in and through all relationships. When used as a greeting, it was a wish for outward freedom from disturbance and an inward sense of well-being. Jesus uses a very strong word for 'maker,' meaning "to do" or "to create." In other words, peace must be actively pursued and made because it never happens by chance. It's vital to understand that Jesus isn't referring to being a peacekeeper, but rather a peacemaker. The difference is that a peacemaker actively overcomes evil with good. He finds satisfaction in removing hostilities and effecting resolution between enemies. But not everyone is a peacemaker—some are peace-breakers or peace-fakers.

HOW DO WE BECOME PEACEMAKERS?

1. **Make peace with God.** Once a person has found peace with God, it should translate to peace within. God not only provides for our eternal peace of mind, but also for our daily peace of heart.
2. **Reconcile (make peace) with others.** Reconciliation with God, and His peace within us, should naturally lead us to live in peace with others.

WHAT DO PEACEMAKERS DO AS AMBASSADORS FOR CHRIST?

Those who have made peace with God and know God's peace within must strive to live in peace with others by proclaiming and living the gospel of peace before the world.

- A peacemaker is called to do the work of evangelism (See Matthew 28:19-20).
- A peacemaker is called to do the work of reconciliation (see 2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

WHAT IS THE RESULT/PROMISE OF BEING A PEACEMAKER?

The benefit of being a peacemaker is that you will be called a son (child) of God. In declaring blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God, Jesus is expressing that those who bear His name must also bear His character. It is Jesus' character to be a peacemaker, and in ushering in peace we bear His name.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What stood out to you from the sermon and the biblical text from Sunday?
2. What is the difference between a peacemaker, a peace-breaker, and a peace-faker?
3. What are some ways I can answer Jesus' call to be an evangelist and a reconciler?
4. What does being "an ambassador of Christ's peace" look like in my daily walk with Jesus?