

Matthew  
 PANORAMA: A Study in the Sermon on the Mount  
*The Peacemaker*  
 Matthew 5:9  
 Pastor Kevin Scott  
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*Have you ever had an argument or conflict with someone, and while you were having it, and maybe even after you had it – you didn't feel right with that person? Maybe you didn't feel as connected or close. Maybe you wondered if the person was still upset with you? Maybe you wondered when you would be able to work it out.*

*Has this ever happened to you?*

If it has, or better yet, WHEN it has you were not at peace.

You were not at peace with that person. You probably didn't feel internal peace either, unless of course like we sometimes do, we think we are completely in the right and the other person is completely in the wrong (which can be true, but usually in relational conflicts, it's a bit more complicated than that right?)

As the imperfect people we are, in the imperfect world we live in, populated with other imperfect people – the practical reality is that people will not always be at peace.

In the world in which we live, many people are not at peace with God.

Many people, most people, have at least times when they are not at peace with one another

And

Many people, most people, have at least times when they are not at peace personally/internally with themselves.

This morning we are going to talk about peace

We have been working our way through the Gospel of Matthew, and lately in the last several weeks, we have been very gradually working our way through the famous section of Matthew's Gospel, called the Sermon on the Mount.

The Sermon on the Mount is one of the most powerful and profound sections of teaching we have from the ministry of Jesus. In this passage in Matthew chapters 5-7, he takes his disciples up on a mountain, and teaches them. Providing for them, not just a nice view like a panoramic picture you see from a mountain, but metaphorically speaking a panoramic view of what it means to know and live as a follower of Jesus.

The section we have been in at the very beginning of this sermon is known as the Beatitudes, which are statements of blessing that Jesus provides. The word "bless" or "blessed" can refer to as Tim and Kathy Keller so nicely put it, as "richness, fullness, satisfaction"; it is a "multidimensional thriving!"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Keller, Tim and Kathy, *The Songs of Jesus: A Year of Daily Devotions in the Psalms*, p. 297.

So, this morning we are going to look at another Beatitude that Jesus teaches us that can provide for us this kind of fullness, satisfaction, and multidimensional thriving in our lives.

And here's a hint, it relates to peace. More particularly, being someone who makes peace.

Let's look at what Jesus says and what it means for you and me.

*Before we do, would you please join me in prayer?*

### **Prayer**

Our text this morning is the 7<sup>th</sup> Beatitude, or statement of blessing, that Jesus pronounces here at the beginning of the Sermon on the Mount. I'm reading from the English Standard Version this morning and it says,

**Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. (Matthew 5:9, ESV)**

We are going to look at two points from this verse, but before we do this let's answer the question *"What is a peacemaker?"*

You might be interested to know that this is the only use of this word in the entire Bible, right here in Matthew 5:9. The word peace has hundreds of uses, but "peacemakers", is only found here.

A peacemaker is someone who "restores peace, especially by settling disputes." (Wiktionary) It can also be known as "an early type of American revolver, particularly the Colt 1873 single action army model," (Wiktionary) but Jesus is definitely not talking about guns here.

Now let's begin with the first point that we are to take from this 7th beatitude,

#### **1. Jesus is the primary peacemaker who provides people with peace with God.**

Something we have repeatedly emphasized as we have worked through these Beatitudes so far, is that these statements of blessing are not qualities or characteristics that we become on our own and then God blesses us. None of these qualities and blessings come about by our own merit, ultimately they must be put into the panoramic perspective, that God brings these qualities about in our lives by his grace and work in us through the power and work of Jesus Christ.

**Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. (Matthew 5:9, ESV)**

The same is true for us here in the 7<sup>th</sup> beatitude, Jesus is not saying that you become a peacemaker, and then he blesses you as a child of God. Rather he is saying that he brings about peace in our lives by his grace or free gift, and then if we have truly experienced that, if it is real in our lives, we will also live as peacemakers.

So, what we must see first and foremost, is that Jesus is the primary peacemaker who provides people with peace with God. Though the word "peacemaker" is only used here in Matthew 5:9 the Bible, the principle of God being a peacemaker, who brings peace to people through Jesus Christ is found in many

places. Let's look at a few examples, this first one is from Isaiah chapter 9, written approximately 700 years before Jesus was born in the flesh. This passage prophecies in advance about Jesus Christ,

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end... (Isaiah 9:6-7a, ESV)

Jesus is someone who is all of these attributes or qualities and more, so much so that he would even be called and known by names such as these. Prominent in these names he would be called is the name or title the "Prince of Peace."

This is because Jesus is the primary peacemaker, who would bring about peace for people.

*But, in what way would Jesus bring peace?*

*What kind of dispute needed to be settled that necessitated peace?*

Jesus made peace for people with God. The reality of sin that came about into man and into the world with the fall of Adam – the one man, created an enmity or a barrier between God and man. Sin separated people from God, and all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. So, Christ comes as the prince of peace, and breaks this barrier so that it is removed. Jesus who is fully God and also fully man, can be the one and only mediator between God and man. Let's look at a few texts that make this point.

For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. (Ephesians 2:14-18, ESV)

For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. (Colossians 1:19-20, ESV)

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 5:1, ESV)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. (2 Corinthians 5:17-19, ESV)

What each one of these passages is saying is that Jesus is the primary peacemaker who provides people with peace with God. Jesus does this by what he did in his life, death on a cross, and resurrection from

the dead. He paid for sin through the free gift of his love and forgiveness. So, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation, the old is gone, the new has come. That person who receives God's love and forgiveness through faith in Jesus Christ is at peace with God.

*So, how about you? Are you personally at peace with God?* The only way to be is by believing in, sincerely trusting in the primary peacemaker, the prince of peace, Jesus Christ.

Being someone who is blessed, in the way that Jesus is talking about here in these Beatitudes, only comes about by being at peace with God through Jesus. That brings us to the second point being made here in Matthew 5:9,

**2. People who possess peace with God, will show that they are sons of God by being peacemakers.**

Jesus says that the peacemakers are blessed. They shall be called sons of God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. (Matthew 5:9, ESV)

The people who have been given peace with God, by the grace of God through Jesus, will show forth the reality of that by living as peacemakers. Since they live that way, consistent with being a peacemaker, they will reflect the character and conduct of Christ. So, they will be called and known as the sons of God, the children of God.

*But in what way are people who are blessed as sons of God to be peacemakers?*

Let me emphasize at least 3 ways we are to be peacemakers.

One way to be a peacemaker is **by pursuing peace with people.**

This starts with us personally seeking to be at peace with all people. Let's look at some scripture here.

If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. (Romans 12:18, NASB)

Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. (Hebrews 12:14, NASB)

Essential to doing this means forgiving offenses, and asking forgiveness from the people we offend. This also means seeking to love people, regardless of who they are or what they do, with the same love, forgiveness, and mercy that Christ has shown us.

Now here's the thing about this though. Sometimes you can be someone who is pursuing peace, making every effort possible, and peace still does not exist. This is because both parties need to be willing to make peace for peace to truly be there.

For example, if I have sinned against someone in some way and then I go to that person seeking their forgiveness – I am pursuing peace. I am not only seeking forgiveness, but I am also interested in restoring the relationship if it has been harmed in some way. But let's say the other person refuses to

forgive or to reconcile the relationship. Well, I'm still being a peacemaker and I'm pursuing peace as much as it depends on me.

So, if you make every effort, but the other person or persons, refuse to make peace with you, it's out of your hands. You're being a peacemaker and trying to be at peace, but the other person or persons, refuse that peace. Either there is a refusal to forgive, to show mercy, or to reconcile – at this point all you can do is to pray, to give time, if possible and you feel led you can try again, or even several times. But the command to pursue peace here is for you to try, it doesn't mean that in your pursuit of peace that being at peace will actually happen.

Let me emphasize again that pursuing peace with people is particularly important because Christ has brought peace to us. So, Paul tells the church in his letter to the Colossians that because they are God's chosen holy and beloved that they are to...

...let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. (Colossians 3:15, ESV)

This verse in Colossians 3 falls in a context that talks about compassion, kindness, humility, love, and forgiving one another as the Lord forgave you. The peace of Christ is to rule in your hearts. It is to be at the center and core of your life, ruling and reigning, like a king in control. Christ himself and his peace are to rule in your hearts. If this peace rules in you, you'll pursue it with people.

The second way to be a peacemaker is **by pursuing peace between other people.**

This is very similar to us trying to personally be at peace, but what I mean by this is by promoting and pursuing peace between other people, especially between other believers. We want other people to be at peace with one another, so we encourage that and work to build it up, rather than break it down.

We can promote love and forgiveness, and reconciliation. We can act to help settle disputes. We can counsel others to forgive, to show mercy, and to be at peace with one another.

We are particularly to promote this peace within the body of Christ and within the church, for we are one in the body of Christ.

The third way to be a peacemaker is **by proclaiming the primary peacemaker, Jesus, and the peacemaking message that he brings.**

Straight to some scripture here...

Isaiah 52:7 How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, "Your God reigns!" (Isaiah 52:7, NIV)

By proclaiming Jesus, we are proclaiming the prince of peace and his good news, the message of what he has done to provide peace with God for people in their sin. It is a message that God can use to bring peace – the ultimate peace that people need with God.

The same point is made in 2 Corinthians 5,

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:17-20, ESV)

If you are in Christ you are an ambassador for Christ, given this reconciling peacemaking message that is in the power of the gospel. This message is God's appeal through us, and we are to proclaim it, with a sense of its necessity, importance, and even with a sense of urgency because people need to be reconciled to God.

What a wonderful privilege that God could use you and me as peacemakers, who being given this peacemaking /reconciling message of the gospel, could proclaim how God brings peace to people through Jesus Christ.

I've seen this happen several times, but one example I'll share with you occurred many years ago when I was a college student at Purdue University.

A group of us from our campus ministry decided we were going to go out with trash bags and knock on apartment doors to offer to take people's trash out to the dumpster for them. Usually people would be a bit shocked and surprised, but appreciative and would bring a bag from their kitchen to the door for us, and give us a nice thank you. But one of the guys that day opened his door and let our team of 4-5 guys and gals go throughout his 3-4 room apt. taking trash from every room. It was cool because as we did this we started talking with him and getting to know him.

Later we found out that one of this guys' roommates was actually a guy who had just started coming to our campus ministry meetings, and had been talking to him some about his faith in Christ. So, after finding out that the people who took out his trash were from the group his roommate was getting involved with, he ends up coming about a month or so later to one of our retreats.

At the retreat we saw each other, he remembered me "the garbage guy" and some of the others from our ministry, and we got to talking. Eventually I got around to either sharing with him and giving him a booklet with the gospel in it. He also was listening intently at the retreat to the speaker. But what ended up happening was he took that booklet that explained the peacemaking message of Jesus out into a field one morning early during a devotional quiet time. He realized he was not at peace with God, and he realized he needed to be and wanted to be, so he responded by receiving God's love and forgiveness and believing in Jesus.

The prince of peace, Jesus, was proclaimed and this guy was brought into peace with God.

It was so fun to see – he's been blessed with following the peacemaker ever since.

When God brings peace to us, we become blessed peacemakers who shall be called sons of God.

Let me close with some final applications and then we will pray about each of these:

**Final Applications / Prayer / Response:**

1. **Peace with God personally:** If you feel like God is showing you that you need to be at peace with him, and that he is giving you a desire to be at peace with him.
2. **Peace with another person(s) personally for you:** There's someone or a few people you need to personally make peace with...
3. **Peace between people:** There's someone or some people you know who are not at peace with each other, but you feel a burden and concern for them to be at peace. Pray for them, and if there are practical ways you might be able to help them come to peace, prayerfully pursue that.
4. **Proclaiming the Prince of Peace to People:** Lastly, you want God's empowerment and provision of opportunities to tell others about the peacemaker, Jesus. Maybe people are coming to mind even now. Pray for them and believe God to work through your words, your story, and the simple but very profound message of the gospel that you can share.

**PRAY about each of the above****Benediction:**

Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* glory forever and ever. Amen. (Hebrews 13:20-21, NKJV)