

Purveyors Of Peace
Sermon on the Mount, Vol. 8

HBC 8/30/20

Matthew 5:9

Many of the Pharisees were present to hear the Sermon on the Mount, and as you'll see a little further down in chapter 5 of Matthew, this sermon was a **frontal assault** on the Pharisees' theology and their legalistic view of righteousness. The exposing of the flaws of the Pharisees' system begins with the **beatitudes**. To get up to speed, consider a couple New Testament descriptions of a Christian:

2 Corinthians 5:17: *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.*

To be **in Christ** is not a gradual process of improving yourself until you achieve forgiveness and salvation. It is a miraculous transformation so that you are a **new creature**. Jesus called it being **born again**, as did Peter. Nothing less than a work of God can accomplish the transformation.

Ephesians 1:3: *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,*

Every spiritual blessing in Christ is an amazing statement! Review the beatitudes we've seen so far, to enumerate some of them, because each one of them is a spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

Matthew 5:3–8: *Blessed are the poor in spirit, for **theirs is the kingdom of heaven**.
Blessed are those who mourn, for **they shall be comforted**.*

*Blessed are the gentle, for **they shall inherit the earth**.*

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for **they shall be satisfied**.*

*Blessed are the merciful, for **they shall receive mercy**.*

*Blessed are the pure in heart, for **they shall see God**.*

And for today,

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

Those are spectacular blessings, guaranteed to all who are **in Christ**. Jesus is setting up what He is going to say, a little further down the page.

Matthew 5:20: *For I say to you that unless your righteousness **surpasses** that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.*

We continue with the same outline for each beatitude.

I. Who Is Blessed?

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

The peacemakers has a specific meaning. It describes people who **have peace with God** and who therefore **live in peace with men** if at all possible, and they **help others to make peace** wherever they go. As with every other beatitude, it is rooted first and foremost in what we have by way of our relationship with Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:1–2: *Therefore, having been justified by faith, **we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.*

That's worded precisely, to make sure we see that **justified by faith** comes BEFORE **we have peace with God**.

Romans 12:17–18: *Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. If possible, so far as it depends on you, **be at peace with all men**.*

Romans 14:17–19: . . . *for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness **and peace** and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who in this way serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. So then **we pursue the things which make for peace** and the building up of one another.*

What are the things which make for peace? What did God do to make peace with us? He sent His Son to die for our sins! He addressed the issues of righteousness and truth, and He initiated the process **while we were enemies!**

Peace is more than stopping war. Peace is creating righteousness that brings enemies together in love. This peace doesn't evade issues. It is not "peace at any price." It is peace that conquers problems. It's not just cooling down from anger. It is the only genuine peace which satisfies and lasts.

James 3:17: *But the wisdom from above is **first pure, then peaceable**, . . .*

You cannot make peace between two parties until they have seen the sin, the error and the wrongness of the bitterness and hatred. Only in bringing it to God can it be made right. Peace comes through purity. Consider this alongside something else Jesus said:

Matthew 10:34–37: *Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I came to SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW; and A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD. He who loves father or mother more than*

Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

This is the other side of the same coin. What He means is that His peace is peace rooted in **righteousness** and **purity**. When you deal with truth, you cause division because some people don't want truth. If you deal with truth, you disturb some people and you disrupt their sense of balance.

Understand the difference between a **peacemaker** and a **peacekeeper**. Some peacekeepers avoid conflict or end it as soon as possible by all means available. Other peacekeepers use unilateral **authority and strength** to prevent or squelch conflict. Still other peacekeepers work through **compromise**.

But the peace God gives does not compromise the truth. That's what Jesus had in mind when He said **I came to bring a sword** and to make enemies of people. If so-called "making peace" requires you not to tell the truth and deal with its consequences, you are not being a peacemaker.

So what **is** a true peacemaker? Peacemakers **pursues the truth**. They seek genuine understanding of all the facts and feelings involved in the conflict. They talk and provoke others to **talk about the real issues** until the issues are resolved.

If you are a peacemaker you deal with **facts, regardless of your feelings**. If you are a peacemaker you will not make other people hang by your emotional rope, twisting in the wind until you think someone has paid enough for you to cut them loose.

It **is** possible to bury your feelings and achieve a semblance of peace. But every time you bury your feelings it's **like burying your garbage** in your back yard instead of disposing of it properly. It works for awhile, but when it re-surfaces, it's in a form much uglier than when you first buried it.

Be a peacemaker. Jesus blesses that kind of personal character. And look at this promise:

II. What Does The Blessing Include?

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

They is emphatic, as in all beatitudes. **"They and they alone—no one else."** **Sons** is the word for sonship that implies **legal status** as sons. There's another word that means **born of** and it's also used in the sense of the new birth. But this one means that we have all the privileges of sonship, including the **rights to inherit** what our Father has for us.

Romans 8:16–17: *The Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him so that we may also be glorified with Him.*

There is a common denominator to the application of every one of the beatitudes. It has to do with focusing your attention on God and what He desires for you instead of seeking to fulfil your own immediate desires.

Do you want to be a peacemaker? Look at situations as God looks at them. Ask things like "What is true?" "What would be righteous?" "What would be honest?" "What does purity demand of me here?" Then humbly pursue those things with all the grace and kindness you can muster, and watch God use you to make peace.

Philippians 4:8–9: *Finally, brethren, whatever is true,
whatever is honorable, whatever is right,
whatever is pure, whatever is lovely,
whatever is of good repute,
if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise,
 dwell on these things.*

*The things you have learned and received
and heard and seen in me,
 practice these things,
and **the God of peace will be with you.***

Dwell on what is true, honorable, right, pure,
lovely, of good repute, and worthy of praise.

Practice those things, following the example
of people who practice things like that.

And what is the promise?

The God of peace will be with you
in all those thoughts and all those pursuits.