

Lesson 7

Blessed are the Peacemakers

Matthew 5:9 is similar to the previous verse. As we hunger and thirst for righteousness, we will desire to grow and be more like Jesus. Jesus is merciful; therefore, we should be merciful. Jesus is pure in heart and we should be also. Jesus is the Prince of Peace, and we must carry out His message of peace to a world full of strife. We must come alongside others and encourage them to be at peace with God. In doing so, we uphold that we are His children.

1. Read Matthew 5:1-12 then record Matthew 5:9.

2. Read Luke 6:35. Make note any differences or similarities between these two verses.

As we have seen in our study, the Beatitudes were presented in a beautiful order. As we are saved and grow, we then exhibit the characteristics of God. The previous character trait is needed before the next one can be achieved.

We must first hunger and thirst for righteousness to be able to be merciful and then pure in heart. Only the pure in heart can be peacemakers.

Jesus is not speaking of one who would do anything to avoid trouble. A peacemaker, according to God's standard, is not a people pleaser or one who wants to make everything and everyone calm.

Dr. Martin Lloyd Jones describes it like this: "A Peacemaker is one who is finally and ultimately concerned about the fact that all men should be at peace with God."

The Greek word for *peacemakers* is pretty basic. It means pacific, loving peace.

Dictionary.com defines *pacific* as: "tending to make or preserve peace." The origin of peace is God.

3. Look up Judges 6:24 and record the name of God found in this verse. (Hint: it begins with The-Lord).

4. Look up Isaiah 26:3. What does God promise to those who trust in Him?

5. Read Psalm 4:8. Who gives us peace?

6. Read the following verses and record what they tell us about Jesus and peace.

John 16:33

Ephesians 2:14

Colossians 1:19-20

7. Read Galatians 5:22. What does this verse teach us about the relationship between peace and the Holy Spirit?

God keeps us in His peace; Jesus made peace with God possible. Also, we are given peace through the Holy Spirit, but it is important to understand that peace can be hindered in our life.

8. Read Isaiah 48:18. What is the hinderance mentioned in this verse?

9. The opposite of peace would be wars and/or fighting. Read James 4:1-4.

Lust, murder, coveting all lead to conflict; and they all stem from a person looking to meet their own needs. They have not because they look to themselves, versus the Lord, to fulfill their needs. This hinders peace in our lives.

10. What does being friends of the world make us? (v. 4)

11. Think about the gravity of being an enemy of God. Is living for yourself and your own desires a peaceful way of life?

Read James 4:7-10. God is so faithful. When He tells us what not to do; He will always give us the solution.

12. What is the solution to being an enemy of God?

13. In what way do these verses describe peace?

A peacemaker is utterly concerned with others and is the outgrowth of the Beatitudes becoming part of your character.

The work of righteousness will be peace, and the effect of
righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.

-Isaiah 32:17

Before we came to Christ, we viewed everything by how it would affect us. After we came to Christ, our view of ourselves should have changed completely. As our heart

seeks after the things of God, our view of others and the world change. The self should no longer be the priority.

He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

- John 12:25

14. Write about the old you: the you before salvation, the you without Jesus.

15. Now write about the new you: the you with Jesus, the you with the Holy Spirit dwelling within you.

16. Does the new you view others differently than the old you?

17. Read the following verses and record what they teach you about your responsibility to others in regard to peace.

Psalm 34:14 _____

Romans 12:18 _____

Philippians 2:4 _____

18. Now read the following verses and write down ways you can be peaceable with others.

Romans 12:19-21 _____

Matthew 5:38-48 _____

19. How are these teachings contrary to what the world would tell us to do?

20. How can living out these Scriptures bring about peace?

A Character Study – Abigail

Peacemakers bring glory to God through their efforts to actively pursue and make peace. This is most notably seen in the reconciliation between God and man, but it doesn't stop there. A true peacemaker looks for opportunities to make peace in all situations – for the glory of God. Abigail is one such peacemaker.

Let's set the background: David has been anointed by Samuel to be the next king of Israel. Saul, the current king, has been pursuing David since shortly after David's victory over the Philistine warrior, Goliath. At this point, David has been on the run for several years and has picked up 600 traveling companions. Most recently, they have been in the Wilderness of Paran, where they offered some unsolicited protection to a group of herdsmen, who worked for a wealthy man by the name of Nabal.

Read 1 Samuel 25:1-9.

Nabal was a very wealthy man. Shearing season was the most lucrative time of the year. David sends his men to ask for something reasonable. You might be thinking,

Nabal never asked for David's help, so Nabal had no obligation to give him anything; but David had provided a valuable service to Nabal. Philistine raids were a common threat to herdsman, and the practice of being compensated for these types of services was very common and appropriate.

21. Read 1 Samuel 25:10-11. How did Nabal respond to David's request?

David was known throughout all of Israel. His comments were likely very intentional and motivated by a desire to disparage David in front of his men.

22. Read 1 Samuel 25:12-13 and 21-22. How did David respond to Nabal's refusal to help David and his men? What did he plan to have?

Nabal's insult hit David right on target. David was ready to attack, defending himself and the efforts of his men. Without some sort of intervention, David intended to settle the matter with the help of his sword.

Aware of Nabal's unjust treatment of David, his servants rushed to tell Nabal's wife.

23. **THINK:** What does the servant's going to Abigail tell you about his opinion of Abigail?

Read 1 Samuel 25:18-31.

Abigail demonstrates her commitment to being a peacemaker in all the ways she handles herself. First, she was wise to stop and listen to what the servants had to report. Secondly, she knew what to do. She had used her past experiences to prepare herself for future situations. She is clear and decisive and self-controlled.

Note the provisions Abigail gathered for David and his men, while considering what it would take to transport these provisions. The fact that Abigail is able to compile these provisions from what she had on hand speaks to the wealth of Nabal and confirms his ability to have easily compensated David for his services.

Take a moment to picture the scene of Abigail and David meeting for the first time. Four-hundred angry men coming from one direction, while one woman bowing down (along with her servants) in front of carts filled with gifts coming from another. Being a peace-maker often requires a good understanding of God's Word, discernment, a desire to help mediate a conflict and a good helping of courage.

Notice Abigail's posture before David. A beautiful, wealthy women of privilege sought to make peace by humbling herself.

24. Who did Abigail charge with this offense? (v.24)

25. Note the specific actions she took to make peace between her people and David.

v.23 _____

v.24 _____

v.27 _____

v.28 _____

v.29-31c _____

v. 31d _____

26. Verses 30 and 31 detail the way in which Abigail's peacemaking efforts would ultimately bring glory to God. Record how God would be glorified if Abigail was successful in mediating peace between David and her husband.

27. Read 1 Samuel 25:32-35. Make a list of the things David is grateful for.

28. According to verse 35, what was the end result of Abigail's efforts?

29. Read I Samuel 25:36-39. In hindsight, what did David recognize about the Lord's hand in Abigail's efforts to make peace? (v. 39)

God used Abigail – the peacemaker in a powerful way in the life of David. If David had gone through with his plan to destroy Nabal and his men, it would have left a crimson stain on his future reign as king.

Blessed are the peacemakers, indeed!

30. Read Romans 5:1. What do we have as a result of our salvation?

We have peace with God! We have obtained first-hand knowledge and experience of His peace; now, we can share it with others! As a peacemaker, we must share our faith and tell others about God, so they, too, can know the peace that comes from Him alone.

The following verses talk about sharing our faith. Pray and ask the Lord to encourage you, as we take a closer look, in sharing your faith with those around you.

31. Read 1 Peter 3:15. What must we always be ready for?

32. What is the attitude we are to have in this preparation?

33. If someone were to ask you about the hope and peace you have, what would you say?

34. Read Mark 16:15. What is the basic command of this verse?

35. Read Romans 1:16. Paul states that he is not ashamed of the gospel. What reason does he give for not being ashamed?

We, too, must not be ashamed or embarrassed or shy about sharing our faith! The message of the gospel is **salvation** to **everyone** who believes!

36. Read 2 Corinthians 5:18-21. How does verse 20 refer to those in Christ?

An ambassador is one who represents another. We have been given the incredible responsibility to represent the ministry of reconciliation!

37. Could you be better at fulfilling this calling? If so, what is holding you back and what changes can you make?

A peacemaker is unconcerned with self and concerned with others.

Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

- Philippians 2:3-4

This can only happen when we hunger and thirst for righteousness and desire to be godly. As we become merciful and pure in heart, we then become peacemakers.

What is the result? We will be sons (daughters) of God. When we are like God, we will be recognized as His children.

38. Read the following verses. Record what they teach you about being a child of God.

John 1:12

Romans 8:17

2 Corinthians 6:18

39. Think about what it means to be God's child. Think about what you must do to be recognized as God's child. Do you think people look at you and see God? See Jesus? Why or why not?

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

When we surrender ourselves to God, He will mold us into the image of His Son and we will be more Christlike. Then, we will truly find happiness.

40. Spend some time reviewing this week's material and then summarize what you have learned about being a *peacemaker*.

41. Is there someone in your life who needs to know Jesus and His peace? Write down that person's name and commit to not only pray for them but to share the love of Christ with them.

Lesson 7 – For Further Study

Blessed are the Peacemakers

Glance at the opening lines of the following books and it will become clear that peace was valued by the early church.

1 Corinthians 1:3
2 Corinthians 1:2
Galatians 1:3
Ephesians 1:2
Philippians 1:2
Colossians 1:2
1 Thessalonians 1:1
2 Thessalonians 2:2
1 Timothy 1:2
2 Timothy 1:2
Titus 1:4
Philemon 3
1 Peter 1:2
2 Peter 2:2
2 John 1:3
Jude 2
Revelation 1:4

Read Luke 10:5. What instruction did Jesus give to the seventy He was sending out?

They were instructed to bring a blessing of peace to every home they entered. In a way, they were to carry peace with them wherever they went.

THINK: Do you carry peace with you, looking to dispense it everywhere you go; or, are you quick to stir up conflict by choosing a side?

Read Jeremiah 29:7. What instruction is given to the followers of God in this verse?

In this verse, Jeremiah is prophesying that the people should seek peace. Read the verse again and detail where and under what circumstances they were to seek peace.

How were they to find this peace?

THINK: Are you seeking peace, praying for and pursuing peace in the place where the Lord has caused you to be: in the midst of a bad job, dealing with a difficult family member or under an oppressive authority?

Being a peacemaker is not the same as keeping the peace. Being a peacemaker requires action. A willingness to work for it and to help others want it for themselves.

So, how do we carry peace with us and seek peace where God causes us to be? Let's look at Solomon in his role as peace maker in 1 Kings 3:16-28.

Briefly describe the conflict between the two women.

Verse 23 makes it clear that Solomon had done what?

Being a peacemaker requires listening to **both sides** of a situation. Why would having only one side of a story make peacemaking difficult?

Solomon's approach was certainly unorthodox, but he wasn't looking to simply appease these women. He was pushing further to figure out how to restore welfare and peace for each of the women. A mother and child reunited and a grieving mother on the road to dealing with her tragic loss.

Describe how Solomon's peacemaking efforts could bring glory to God.

Before Solomon ever met these two women, he was taking steps to prepare himself for situations where he would need to look past finding ways to avoid conflict, but, instead, knowing how to broker peace in the midst of a conflict.

Earlier the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream and said, "Ask! What shall I give you?" In other words, ask for anything you want, and I will give it to you. Read Solomon's response in 1 Samuel 3:6-9, for what did Solomon ask?

If we are to be effective peacemakers we must, first experience peace with God. Only then, can we carry peace with us.

"Come now, let's settle this," says the LORD. Though your sins are like scarlet, I will make them as white as snow. Though they are red like crimson, I will make them as white as wool.

-Isaiah 1:18 NLT

We must pray for peace and pursue it right where God has placed us.

Record Psalms 34:14.

We must pray for wisdom and discernment. So, how do we get wisdom? Read the verses below and record what you learn about wisdom.

Psalms 111:10

Matthew 7:24

Colossians 3:16a

James 1:5

Read the verses below and record what you learn about gaining discernment.

Hebrews 5:14

1 John 4:1

Romans 12:2

We have been called to make peace with God by accepting Jesus as our Savior. Next, we are called to show others how to make their own peace with God. Even further, we are called to make peace with others and help others broker peace with one another.

“Blessed are the peacemakers.”

Write a prayer of gratitude and application.
