

**Peacekeeper, or Peacemaker?**  
**Matthew 5:9**

1. **ILLUST.:** In 1873, Samuel Colt introduced a pistol that was named “The Peacekeeper.”
  - a. Because of its simple design, and the use of shell cartridges rather than older style loaders, anyone could learn to use this weapon.
  - b. It was easy to load and the graduated sight made it simple to aim and fire.
  - c. It was said that God made every man different but Sam Colt made them equal.
  - d. The concept being that a larger, stronger man could no longer overpower a smaller, weaker man with impunity.
  - e. What formerly depended on strength now depended on speed and accuracy.
2. In November of 1982, President Ronald Reagan dubbed the new mobile M-X missile “The Peacekeeper.”
  - a. This missile, because of its mobility and more modern guidance systems would be a great deterrent to foreign aggression.
  - b. The fact is that the greater the weapon the more powerful you are at keeping peace.
  - c. Thus, if a person is going to set about keeping the peace, it is evident that he or she is going to need some pretty good weapons. – And sometimes the more, the better.
3. But history has shown that most peacekeeping efforts have had only mixed results and by and large have failed.
  - a. It appears that “peacekeeping” at its best is just a stopgap measure that is fraught with danger.
  - b. In the over 3100 years of recorded world history, the world has only been at peace less than 8% of the time.
  - c. Over 8000 treaties have been made and broken during that time.
  - d. Thus, it appears that “peacekeeping” does not work very well.
  - e. Not only does “peacekeeping” not offer any solutions to the conflict, but quite often the “peacekeepers” themselves get shot.
4. What most people do not seem to understand is that peace is not something that can be imposed from the outside.
  - a. You cannot “keep” a peace that is not there.
  - b. John MacArthur says, “A truce just says you don’t shoot for awhile. Peace comes when the truth is known, the issue is settled, and the parties embrace each other.”
5. As we come to Matt. 5:9 we find that there is a reason why Jesus did not say, “Blessed are the peacekeeper,” but rather “*Blessed are the peacemaker.*”
  - a. There is a world of difference between these two words.
  - b. A peacekeeper is a person who enforces by whatever means a truce, either by force of personality or by superior weapons.
  - c. A peacemaker is one who actually discovers the origin of the conflict, finds a way to resolve it, and helps the parties to restore a proper, loving relationship.
    - 1) This applies to individuals or nations.
    - 2) The “*peacemaker*” actually “makes” or “constructs” peace.
6. This AM let us go back to this beatitude and notice what Jesus was teaching us about the type of people we must be if we want to be His disciples and if we want to be truly blessed by God.

**LESSON:**

- I. 1<sup>st</sup>: To be a peacemaker you have to understand the real definition of peace.
  - A. True peace is not:
    1. The absence of conflict.
      - a. True peace is not simply two enemies who have quit fighting.
      - b. True peace is not the destruction of weapons of mass destruction on both sides.
      - c. True please is not laying down your weapons.
      - d. John MacArthur said, “A truce just says you don’t shoot for awhile. Peace comes when the truth is known, the issue is settled, and the parties embrace each other.”

2. Contentment:
  - a. Many believe that real peace is having no financial burdens, a nice home in the country, and enjoying the good life.
  - b. This type of peace satisfies a man's selfish desires; but it is not a real lasting peace.
3. Compromising with the enemy.
  - a. Compromising is the giving up the fight either through victory, defeat, or a treaty.
  - b. It may simply be an agreement to disagree; thus ending open conflict.
  - c. ILLUST: A husband and wife may agree not to fight with fists and cruel words; but simply tolerate each other in silence or indifference – Calling this “Peace at home.”
  - d. But this also is not real peace, and it is not the type of peace Christ was referring to in Matt. 5:9.
4. Merely glossing over, or ignoring the real problem(s).
  - a. In Jere. 6:13-15 we have an excellent example of the type of peace that the world wants: (Read).
    - 1) Here we find some men (“*peacemakers*”), who came with a message of peace and wanted everything to be peaceful.
    - 2) They were saying, “Let’s all join hands, gather around the camp fire, and sing Kum-Bi-Ya.”
  - b. But their message angered God, because they tried to bring about peace by sweeping the real problem under the rug – Their sins.
  - c. When Christ calls us to be “*peacemakers*” he does not call for us to go around superficially saying, “*Peace, Peace.*”
    - 1) He calls for us to make peace that really lasts.
    - 2) He calls for us to make peace that gets down to the root of the problem and deals with it – sin.
    - 3) ASK: Why is it that a husband and wife do not get along; parent and child; child and child; etc.? -- SIN!!
    - 4) Thus, if we seek to be real peacemakers, we must deal with the sin in people’s lives.

B. True peace is found when hearts and lives are changed, and not just external circumstances.

1. “*Peacemakers*” are those disciples who strive to prevent contention and strife.
  - a. However, they are not peacekeepers, but are active makers of peace.
  - b. They use their influence to reconcile opposing party strife among individuals, families, churches, and the community.
  - c. They change hostile attitudes to attitudes that seek the best interests of everyone.
  - d. They realize that real peace cannot be had until there is an absence of hatred, anger, rage, envy, etc., which are all attitudes that destroy peace.
2. Haden Robinson said, “No peace will exist between nations until peace reigns in each country. And no country will have peace until peace dwells with the people. And no people will have peace until they surrender to the prince of peace.”
  - a. Peace on earth is not just a Christmas wish, or song.
  - b. Real lasting peace begins with submitting your life to Jesus.

II. Seeing that the type of peace Christ calls for is not what the world really wants; let us notice what God’s peacemakers are like.

- A. God’s peacemaker is one who goes back to the beatitudes and realizes that the fundamental need in each individual’s life is to become poor in spirit.
  1. The peacemaker realizes that until one is confronted with his/her sins and brought to the realization that they cannot handle it on their own; no real peace will result.
  2. This fact hits at the heart of one of man’s greatest sins – Pride.
    - a. The reason men get cross with one another is pride.
    - b. The reason we have wars, conflicts, and cannot get along is pride.
    - c. And until one’s pride is broken, there will be no real peace.
  3. NOTE: This is where the world has problems in all their peace negotiations.
    - a. They seek to bring about peace by allowing a man to keep his pride or “save face.”
    - b. ILLUST.: Just look at the numerous efforts that have been made to bring about peace between Israel and the Palestinians.

4. But God's peacemaker is not this way.
  - a. He realizes that the very first thing that must be done if men are going to have peace is to get people to be poor in Spirit – admit their sins and give them up.
  - b. We cannot be like the prophet of Jeremiah's day who said, "Peace, peace" and then tried to gloss over it.
  - c. To have peace, people's lives must change.

- B. The second thing we notice about God's peacemaker is that he knows that there is no real peace until after one has peace with God.
  1. The message of the beatitudes, in fact, the message of the entire Bible, is the tremendous need we have to be at peace with God.
    - a. While a man is in his sins, he is counted as God's enemy: Rom. 5:10: "*For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.*"
    - b. He is separated from God (Isa. 59:1-2).
    - c. And by himself, there is nothing he can do to rectify the situation.
  2. It is only when we come to God and seek peace with Him on His terms that we can have real peace and His peace is found only through Christ.
    - a. Col. 1:20-22: (Read).
    - b. 2 Cor. 5:18-19: (Read).
    - c. Rom. 5:1: "*Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*"
    - d. Eph. 2:13-18: (Read).
  3. NOTE: The only way we can reach peace between men is first to bring them to peace with God.
  4. Our first responsibility as peacemakers then is to help people make peace with God.
  5. NOTE: The importance of this:
    - a. ILLUST.: Marriage counseling.
    - b. May help a couple work out their present problems.
    - c. But really we have not helped them unless we have first brought them to peace with God (Expand).
  6. Thus, in this beatitude, Christ calls for us to go out into the world that is saying "*Peace, peace*" and show them real peace – peace with God.
  7. If we are "*sons/daughters of God*" we will be actively calling people to find the true peace that is found only in Christ.

### III. The kind of peace that we are referring to does not win us any popularity contests.

- A. We know this because of the verses which follow: Matt. 5:10-12: (Read).
  1. Since the beatitudes follow one another, or are built on one another.
  2. It logically follows that those who strive to make peace God's way will be persecuted.
- B. When we become the type of peacemakers God wants; we will become very unpopular in the world.
  1. When we call for people to:
    - a. Admit their sin – Become poor in spirit.
    - b. Repent or turn away from their sinful lifestyle – Mourn.
    - c. Believe that Jesus died on the cross for their sins and rose from the grave – Hungering and thirsting.
    - d. Confess that Jesus is the One and only Son of God – Pure of heart.
    - e. And be baptized, sealing that relationship with Him.
    - f. We will not make many friends.
  2. No one will give us the Nobel Prize for Peace when we become God's kind of peacemakers.
  3. The reason for this is that people do not want to hear the real solution to their problems.
    - a. They do not want to be told that they are the problem.
    - b. They do not want to be told that their old sinful self must die; and that they must become humble in God's sight ("*Poor in spirit, Mourn*" – etc.).

- c. They do not want to be told that they cannot continue in their endless pursuit of pleasures and have true lasting peace with God.
- d. Instead, they want to hear some type of a compromise so that they can get along, while still doing pretty much as they please.

C. In the O.T. when prophets like Jeremiah came to the people with this kind of a message of peace, they did not want to listen.

- 1. When Christ came He received the same response, until they finally crucified Him.
- 2. The people of that day were just like people today – they wanted their real problems to be glossed over.
- 3. But God’s peacemaker will not do this because they know that:
  - a. Sin has to be dealt with.
  - b. People have to acknowledge their need for God.
  - c. And a person’s pride must be utterly broken before any real peace will result.
- 4. And this is the type of message that most people in the world do not want to hear (even some in the church).
- 5. Thus many people will resist us and our message just as they resisted Christ.

D. ASK: Do you really want to be a peacemaker for God?

- 1. Do you really want to bring people into a right relationship with God?
- 2. Are you willing to help them deal with the real problem in their life – SIN?
- 3. If so, you will win some people to Christ, but you will also become very unpopular with the world.

E. In Jeremiah’s day there were 2 kinds of prophets:

- 1. First, there were the prophets who said, “*Peace, peace, when there was no peace.*” And they won the Nobel Peace Prize.
  - a. The Bible says that the people loved to have it so.
  - b. They thought these prophets were great.
  - c. Everyone flocked to hear them, buy their books, have them on their brotherhood lectureship programs, etc.
  - d. They were the rage of the day.
  - e. They were willing to do nearly anything to fill their church buildings.
- 2. Then there was lone Jeremiah.
  - a. He would not say, “*Peace, peace.*”
  - b. Rather he said: Jere. 5:23: “*But this people have a stubborn and rebellious heart; they have turned aside and departed.*”
  - c. And this was the very message that they did not want to hear.
  - d. Rather than causing people to flock into the building, his message probably drove many people away.
  - e. Thus even his friends beat him, put him in bonds, threw him in a well, and said that he was a burden to them.
- 3. Simply, when we seek to give men Christ’s message of peace, we will make enemies, even in the church.

IV. Finally, let us notice the reward for one who brings this type of a message of peace - “*Be called the sons of God.*”

A. In the Bible a person is often described figuratively by the one they resemble or act like.

- 1. Children of Abraham – Have the same faith as he did.
- 2. Children of the devil – Possess his qualities.
- 3. Sons of God – Possess His qualities.
- 4. Thus since God is a God of peace, we must be peacemakers to be like Him.

B. In looking at God's own Son – Christ – we can see what a peacemaker is really like.

--In Christ we see 3 things:

1. Christ came to deal with the root of all man's problems – sin.
  - a. When he healed people – He also mentioned their sins.
    - 1) While Jesus was very benevolent, His benevolence always had a purpose.
    - 2) Jesus always used it as a stepping stone to helping people deal with their real problem, the problem of sin.
  - b. In all of His conversations, He sought to point out people's sins.
2. Christ's primary concern was to bring all men to peace with God.
  - a. He knew that when my relationship with God is not right; then my relationship with my wife, bro./sis., etc. is not going to be right either.
  - b. Thus He sought to get people in a right relationship with God.
3. Christ's message was not one that the world wanted to hear.
  - a. We can see how the world responded to this message of peace from the Prince of Peace.
  - b. They did not dress Him up in a tuxedo, take Him to Stockholm, and give Him the Nobel Prize of Peace.
  - c. Rather they stripped Him, spat upon Him, beat Him, took Him to Golgotha, put Him on a cross, and then said, "We can do without your kind."
  - d. And this is what they will do to us if we are God's sons and daughters and seek peace the way that Christ did.

#### CONC.:

1. God wants peace, but He is unwilling to settle for cheap peace, or peace at any price, because He knows this kind of peace will not last.
  - a. To obtain real peace Christ came and died on the cross (Eph. 2).
  - b. It is only through His death that we can have real peace.
2. ASK:
  - a. Do you have peace with God?
  - b. Have you been justified by faith in Christ?
  - c. Are you living daily so as to be a peacemaker among people in the world?
  - d. If not, would you like to begin such a life today by becoming a son of God (Gal. 3:26-27).
3. NOTE:
  - a. There are far too many troublemakers in the world; and far too few peacemakers.
  - b. In which category are you?