

## Day 36 Ambassadors of Peace!

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

Jesus' audience must have been reeling by the time He shared the seventh beatitude. His listeners did not have time to digest these words like we have. They are hearing Jesus speak in rapid succession. ***"Blessed are the poor in spirit, blessed are those who mourn, blessed are the meek, blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, blessed are the merciful, blessed are the pure in heart and then blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."*** I can only imagine that their ears were burning, their minds were racing, their hearts were pounding, and they were wondering what's next?

A profound new way of living. A brand new way of looking at life. You could say for them, just like for us, it was an upside down, not what you are used to, approach to the culture of the day. Human beings struggle with change because change creates uncertainty and uncertainty produces insecurity. We have an innate desire to know the future. We like the predictable; it gives us a sense of comfort and control. Yet, Jesus comes and He thoroughly shakes up the fig tree. He presents life, and especially life as they were used to, in a completely different way. Jesus would say, "You have heard it said...but I say unto you..." every time presenting a brand new way of looking at things and acting on things. Jesus is teaching the very foundation of Kingdom living. He is showing the way of the cross to all who are willing to listen.

Jesus is showing us how to build a life that reflects Kingdom values and Kingdom purposes; a life that God calls blessed, a life that can only be lived through the grace of God and the power of His Spirit. Everything Jesus has said, in the first six beatitudes, brings us to the seventh. You cannot skip all the previous six and suddenly find yourself being a peacemaker who is called a son of God. You have to realize that you are desperately poor and need God. You mourn over your lost condition and humble yourself before the Lord and others. Then you hunger and thirst for His righteousness and become a dispenser of God's mercy to others. Your willingness to give mercy brings mercy to you, and all the while, God is creating a pure heart in you! **Now what?**

***"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God."*** Our willingness to build the way Jesus instructs us in the first six beatitudes enables us to walk in the seventh. When we obey the first six, it empowers us to become peacemakers. **We do not simply keep the peace; we work towards peace.** What kind of person works towards peace? A mature one; hence, we are called sons of God. The Greek word for "son" is "Hyois," a legitimate son, in character, privilege and resemblance. It implies maturity. This word implies: fully grown, of age; unlike the word for child, "nepios." Jesus says when we are fully grown sons, we do not simply have the DNA of our Father with the potential to be like Him, we actually reflect in our lives the nature and character of our Father.

Jesus is very clear about this principle. He says that if you want to be called a son of God, you have to be a peacemaker. Because God is a God of peace. We are his children and bear His image and likeness. That means if we say we are like Him, we have to act like Him. Becoming a peacemaker is much easier said than done. We live in a world that is filled with animosity, hatred, anger, rivalry, that affects every level of society! We find Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, giving us the following qualifying verse: ***"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone."*** (Romans 12:18 NIV)

Let me paraphrase: *"If there is any possibility for peace, with anyone and everyone, regardless of who they are, then take the responsibility on your shoulders, be the mature person and become a peacemaker."* A mature person, especially one who claims spiritual maturity, will always work and strive for peace. When we are mature we can be trusted with responsibility. Why is this important to note? Because when we become peacemakers, we actually step into the conflict of others, and the Father entrusts to us the job of reconciling others to one another, thus making peace. Listen to our verse again from the Message Paraphrase: ***"You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family."*** (Matthew 5:9 Message)

The term "peacemaker" includes all who make peace between people, whether they do it individually or as a community. Even if their efforts do not produce the desired result, the fact that they worked towards peace, identifies them as mature sons of God. God is the God of peace who sent Jesus as our Prince of Peace. Jesus, the Prince of peace, came to show us peace, but we still have the choice to embrace it or reject it. As Jesus approached Jerusalem and saw the city before Him, He began to weep, and then He prophesied: ***"But as he came closer to Jerusalem and saw the city ahead, he began to weep. 42 'How I wish today that you of all people would understand the way to peace. But now it is too late, and peace is hidden from your eyes. 43 Before long your enemies will build ramparts against your walls and encircle you and close in on you from every side.'" (Luke 19:41-43 NLT)***

The City of Peace could not recognize the Prince of Peace (Jesus). He was hidden from their eyes, so they rejected Him, and by rejecting Jesus, they literally rejected peace. Jesus weeps because He saw the destruction and the pain that they and their children would suffer. If we are the mature sons of God, we recognize the Peace giver, we receive Him as our peace, and we become peacemakers wherever we go.

This is not simply possessing peace, but working towards peace. The difference between the seventh beatitude and the first six, is that, through the first six, God is working on me and in me. That working in me is reflected by my mourning, my humility before God and others, my appetite for righteousness, my growth in giving mercy and developing pure motivation. Others benefit from God working in me because it is reflected in the way I treat and respond to them. But when we become peacemakers, the Father is not just working in us, but now working through us. We become mediators and reconcilers for Him to others. We cannot become peacemakers until we have allowed the Prince of Peace to rule our hearts because true peace can only come through Christ! ***"For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us."*** (Ephesians 2:14 NLT)

Jesus brings us peace and unites Jews and Gentiles into one? How? ***"He did this by ending the system of law with its commandments and regulations. He made peace between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself one new people from the two groups."*** (Ephesians 2:15 NLT) In Him we are now united into one new people, the people of God. Christ reconciled us to God the Father and to one another. Both Jews and Gentiles are brought together through His death on the cross, and so Jesus is the First Peacemaker. He ends the hostility, the fighting and feuding, in and through the cross. ***"Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to God by means of his death on the cross, and our hostility toward each other was put to death. 17 He brought this Good News of peace to you Gentiles who were far away from him, and peace to the Jews who were near."*** (Ephesians 2:16-17 NLT)

So Jesus, as always, leads by example and demonstrates that the Son of God, reconciled us to the Father and to one another, and then tells us, if we are truly sons of the Father, we will carry on the mission of

making peace. We are Christ's Ambassadors. We are an envoy of peace pleading with man to be reconciled to God and to be reconciled to one another. *"If anyone belongs to Christ, there is a new creation. The old things have gone; everything is made new! 18 All this is from God. Through Christ, God made peace between us and himself, and God gave us the work of telling everyone about the peace we can have with him. 19 God was in Christ, making peace between the world and himself. In Christ, God did not hold the world guilty of its sins. And he gave us this message of peace. 20 So we have been sent to speak for Christ. It is as if God is calling to you through us. We speak for Christ when we beg you to be at peace with God."* (2 Corinthians 5:17-20 NCV)

Will you accept your assignment? You are Christ's Ambassador of peace, you speak peace and bring peace. You now represent a different Kingdom and the only true King. He is the King of peace and righteousness. He has placed you in this culture, not to assimilate, but to demonstrate a brand new way of living and relating. When others see you and the way you live, do they see your King and His kingdom, or do you send conflicting messages?

#### **Reflection and Prayer:**

- **As we start this week to learn what it means to be a peacemaker, take a moment and reflect on what we have learned thus far. Are you reflecting what you say you are learning? Bring your heart before the Lord and pray this prayer:**
- **"Father, thank You for showing me the way of the cross. Thank You for revealing what a true blessed life really is. I don't want to be divided or divisive. I don't want to build a life to find that, at the end, I built on the wrong foundation. Jesus, You are my Cornerstone and my foundation. Jesus, You are my example and my measure. It is by Your life that I will be evaluated one day, and I want to be found faithful and fruitful. Holy Spirit, empower me to walk in truth and grace. Give me wisdom where I need it and courage where I am afraid. Let my heart be set on following Your way of building a blessed life. I want to please You. Help me to represent You well. I take my mission and assignment as a peacemaker to heart. Wherever I go, let me bring peace. If there is any possibility for peace, with anyone and everyone, regardless of who they are, then I take the responsibility on my shoulders. Help me to be the mature person and become a peacemaker. Remind me daily that I am on assignment and may others see Jesus and be drawn to the beauty of Who He is. I am Your ambassador of peace. In Jesus' Name I pray. Amen and Amen!**