



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V21 N51 December 29, 2019

ALL IS WELL

“Blessed are the Peacemakers”

Matthew 5:9

THIS WEEK'S CORE COMPETENCY

Peace

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, others, and myself.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:6-7



What does God think of peacemakers?

Some people are peacemakers; some people are troublemakers. God's people are to be the former. Jesus himself said, “Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God” (Mt 5:9). And repeatedly in the epistles, believers are directed to promote peace. In Romans 14:19, Paul writes: “Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification,” and in Ephesians 4:3, he adds: “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.” The writer to the Hebrews echoes Paul, saying: “Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord” (12:14). All of these passages refer to peace in the context of personal relationships with others.

Peter adds a different twist. Writing about the coming Day of the Lord and the judgment that will precede the manifestation of a new heaven and new earth, he says: “So then, dear friends, since you are looking forward to this, make every effort to be found spotless, blameless and at peace with him” (2Pe 3:14). In a nutshell, the apostle is encouraging his readers to live godly lives so that they will be at peace with the Lord when he returns. One commentator explains: “This ‘peace’ may be the peace of a satisfied conscience, the tranquility that the true believer can enjoy at the time of judgment, knowing that Christ has taken care of the sin problem. But the ‘peace’ that Peter has in mind is probably the peace of reconciliation—the restored relationship that the believer enjoys with God through the mediated of Christ (see, e.g., Rom. 5:1-2)” (Douglas J. Moo, *The NIV Application Commentary: 2 Peter, Jude*, 209). While the writer's suggestions are certainly possible,

it's most likely the peace of sanctification to which Peter refers. The peace that results from walking closely with the Lord fits the context best. Of course, the three are all related.

One aspect of peace is peace *with others* (Ro 14:9); another is peace *with God*. Peter alludes to the second in his letter (2Pe 3:14). That being the case, evangelists are in fact peacemakers. They share the gospel of Jesus Christ so that others may have peace with God. As one author writes, “The good news of Jesus Christ is the greatest peacemaking message, and the Christian who shares his faith is, fundamentally, a harbinger of peace, a peacemaker” (D. A. Carson, *Sermon on the Mount*, 24). And while the term “peace” doesn't occur in the NIV translation of Romans 10:15, the idea is lurking in the shadows of Paul's words: “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one of whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them? And how can anyone preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’” (vv. 13-15; cf., Isa 52:7) (cf., “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the *gospel of peace*, who bring glad tidings of good things!” NKJV). The passage emphasizes the need for evangelists. On the one hand, no one is saved apart from hearing and believing the gospel. And on the other, no one finds “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ro 5:1) apart from hearing and believing the gospel, which means the same passage that emphasizes the need for evangelists, also emphasizes the need for peacemakers!

1

EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

9 "Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God."

READ in other translations

9 "God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God." (NLT)

9 "God makes happy those who make peace between people. They will be called God's sons." (WE)

9 "Happy are those who work for peace; God will call them his children!" (GNT)

9 "How blessed you are when you make peace! For then you will be recognized as a true child of God." (TPT)

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle "blessed."
- Underline "are."
- Circle "peacemakers."
- Box "for" indicating *reason*.
- Double underline "will be."
- Bracket "children of God."

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What is one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Identify the most familiar portion of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount apart from the Lord's Prayer.
2. To whom did Jesus deliver his sermon?
3. Identify the Greek word translated "blessed" in Mathew 5:9.
4. This Greek term is translated "happy" in some English translations. After consulting the note (i.e., v. 9 *blessed*), put what the term means in your own words.
5. *Describe* the two aspects of peacemaking – with respect *to God* and with respect *to others*.
6. Peacemakers are called "blessed." Why?
7. Peacemakers "will be called *children* of God" (NIV). By whom?
8. Some English translations have "will be called *sons* of God" instead of "*children* of God" (ESV, HCSB, NKJV). What difference does it make?
9. Relate the teaching of Jesus in Matthew 5:43-48 to peacemaking.
10. **Discussion:** Peacemakers don't just live and let live. Talk about it.

Commentary On The Text

Jesus' Sermon on the Mount gets its name from its geographical setting "on a mountainside" somewhere in Galilee (Mt 5:1). "Perhaps no other religious discourse in the history of humanity has attracted the attention which has been devoted to the Sermon on the Mount. Philosophers and activists from many non-Christian perspectives who have refused to worship Jesus nevertheless have admired his ethic. In the twentieth century, Mohandas Gandhi was the sermon's most famous non-Christian devotee. The literature on the sermon is vast. One recent survey has itemized thirty-six different interpretations" (Craig L. Blomberg, *Luke*, NAC, 93, 94).

Of the many different ways Jesus' sermon has been interpreted or read, only a few oversimplified examples can be cited as a context for our reading. Some deemed its "stricter" ethical demands to be for a "select few" who wanted to take being righteous to another level, e.g., monastics, ministers, and missionaries. Luther thought its impossible moral demands disclosed the depths of human sinfulness, much like the law, in order to bring us to Christ. Liberals of the past century made it the heart of their social gospel—preaching obedience to it in order to transform society and usher in the kingdom of God. Based on 5:20, many assumed it specifies the ethical and moral demands that must be met to enter the kingdom. Still others saw it as an ethic for a future age when the kingdom of heaven would be established on earth. All of these have their flaws. Perhaps, it's best to simply read the Sermon as Jesus' description of the righteous life he, himself, lived and called his disciples to live alongside him.

Apart from the Lord's Prayer, the Beatitudes are the most familiar portion of the Sermon. Their name is derived from the Latin *beatitudo/beatus* because the first word of each statement in the Vulgate is *beati*, the Latin translation of Matthew's Greek word *makarios*, referring to some tangible expression of God's favor. A couple of things need to be kept in mind when interpreting the Beatitudes. First, they were addressed to "his disciples" rather than "the crowds," implying the hearers had responded to Jesus' preaching regarding the kingdom of heaven (4:23) and suggesting that he was not telling them what to do to enter the kingdom. The kingdom was theirs; it belonged to them (vv. 3, 10-11). Second, Beatitudes in the present tense declare what is already true about Jesus' disciples. They are "the poor in spirit" who recognize that they're spiritually bankrupt, and like the tax collector in Jesus' story turn to God for mercy rather than trust in their own righteous-

ness (Lk 18:10-14). They are the marginalized of society who are persecuted by the establishment because of righteousness (v. 10) and because of Christ (v. 11).

Beatitudes in the future tense declare what *surely* lies in store for them. They *mourn* over their sin and society's sin around them; God will comfort them even as Isaiah, the prophet, had said (61:1-3). They are *mEEK* and run the risk of getting steamrolled by those who assert themselves at the expense of others, those who live by "Grab what you can; the strong man comes first, and the devil take the hindmost." In the end, God will give them the earth as their inheritance. They *hunger and thirst for righteousness*. Put differently, they desperately desire to live in conformity to God's will and find it easy to pray, "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (6:10). God will answer their prayer. "A shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse" according to Isaiah, "and with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth," and when he does, "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea" (Isa 11:1, 4, 9). They are *merciful*. Unlike the forgiven servant who refused to forgive (Mt 18:21-35), they show mercy. They forgive because they have been forgiven; they forgive because they repeatedly need forgiveness. Their God will continue to show them mercy. They are *pure in heart*, which means they have moral integrity. God will invite them into his presence.

According to verse 9, Jesus' disciples are *peacemakers*. They don't just live and let live; they intervene to make peace between quarrelling parties, and in so doing they imitate their Heavenly Father. Since "the good news of Jesus Christ is the greatest peacemaking message, the Christian who shares his faith is, fundamentally, a peacemaker. Yet there is nothing in the context to argue that in Matthew 5:9 Jesus is restricting himself to gospel peacemaking. Rather, the disciple of Jesus Christ must be a peacemaker in the broadest sense of the term. The Christian's role as peacemaker extends not only to spreading the gospel, but to lessening tensions, seeking solutions, ensuring that communication is understood" (D. A. Carson, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 24). Furthermore, peacemakers are "sons of God" rather than "children of God." The same commentator explains: "If someone calls you the 'son of a dog,' this is not an aspersion on your parents, but on you: you partake of the character of a dog. Thus, 'son of God' may have a different connotation than 'child of God.' Both expressions can refer to some sort of filial relationship; but the former has more emphasis on character than position" (Carson, 26, 27).

Word Studies/Notes

v. 9 *blessed*

Gk. *makarios*.

“Macarisms’ [i.e., beatitudes] are essentially commendations, congratulations, statements to the effect that a person is in a good situation, sometimes even expressions of envy. The Hebrew equivalent of *makarios* is *’ašrê* rather than the more theologically loaded *bārûk*, ‘blessed (by God).’ The traditional English rendering ‘blessed’ thus also has too theological a connotation in modern usage; the Greek term for ‘blessed (by God)’ is *eulogētos*, nor *makarios*. The sense of congratulation and commendation is perhaps better conveyed by ‘happy,’ but this term generally has too psychological a connotation: *makarios* does not state that a person *feels* happy (‘Happy are those who mourn’ is a particularly inappropriate translation if the word is understood in that way), but that they are in a ‘happy’ situation, one which other people ought also to wish to share. ‘Fortunate’ gets closer to the sense, but has inappropriate connotations of luck. ‘Congratulations to . . .’ would convey much of the impact of a ‘macarism,’ but perhaps sounds too colloquial . . . Beatitudes are descriptions, and commendations, of the good life” (R. T. France, *The Gospel of Matthew*, NICNT, 160-61). “The word ‘blessed’ refers to those who are and/or will be *happy, fortunate*, or as those who are ‘to be congratulated’ because of God’s response to their behavior or situation” (Craig L. Blomberg, *Matthew*, NAC, 97).

v. 9 *are, will be*

In the pairing of the *present* tense with the *future* tense, the future tense likely connotes the *certainty* of the action rather than the futurity of it; cf., “will *certainly* be called children of God” or “*shall* be called sons of God” (ESV).

v. 9 *peacemakers*

“It is clear that ‘peacemakers’ designates not those who live in peace, enjoying its fruits, but those who devote themselves to the hard work of reconciling hostile individuals, families, groups, and nations” (Douglas R. A. Hare, *Matthew*, Interpretation, 42). “As with the ‘merciful’ of v. 7, ‘peacemakers’ focus on interpersonal relationships. Those who work for *shālôm* (wholeness and harmony rather than strife and discord in all aspects of life) and who reconcile others to God and each other will ‘be called sons of God’” (Blomberg, 100). “The good news of Jesus Christ is the greatest peacemaking message, and the Christian who shares his faith is, fundamentally, a harbinger of peace, a peacemaker . . . Yet there is

nothing in the context to argue that in Matthew 5:9 Jesus is restricting himself to gospel peacemaking. Rather, the disciple of Jesus Christ must be a peacemaker in the broadest sense of the term. The Christian’s role as peacemaker extends not only to spreading the gospel, but to lessening tensions, seeking solutions, ensuring that communication is understood” (D. A. Carson, *The Sermon on the Mount*, 24).

v. 9 *children of God*

Lit., “sons of

God” (cf., ESV, HCSB, NKJV). “Peacemakers are blessed because they will be called ‘sons of God’ – not ‘children of God,’ as in the King James Version [and many modern translations]. The difference is slight, but significant. In Jewish thought, ‘son’ often bears the meaning ‘partaker of the character of,’ or the like. If someone calls you the ‘son of a dog,’ this is not an aspersion on your parents, but on you: you partake of the character of a dog. Thus ‘son of God’ may have a different connotation than ‘child of God’. Both expressions can refer to some sort of filial relationship; but the former has more emphasis on character than position” (Carson, 25). “Peacemakers ‘will be called God’s children’ (the passive probably implies that God himself will recognize them as his true children) on the basis that God’s children reflect God’s character (5:44-45), and God is the ultimate peacemaker. The Semitic idiom ‘sons of . . .’ often indicates those who share a certain character or status; for varied examples in Matthew see 8:12, ‘sons of the kingdom’; 9:15, ‘sons of the wedding hall’; 13:38, ‘sons of the evil one’; 23:31, ‘sons of those who killed the prophets’” (France, 169)

Other Texts to Consider

James 3:18

“Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.”



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Congratulations, peacemakers – God will recognize you as his children,
the bearers of his character.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

If there's one thing I can promise you, having four children means having conflict. Take the road trip, for example. I can guarantee the music is only appealing to one of the four kids, we absolutely will not agree on where to eat, and, for the love of it all, someone is touching someone else. God created the third-row seat for this reason alone. There are countless times I've turned into my mother with, "If you can't say anything nice, don't say anything at all," or "The least said is the easiest mended," or "I will pull this car over..." Some of you might actually be experiencing this right now. I constantly tell my kids to give up their right to be right, to say nice things, get along, or be kind because life is hard enough without adding family conflict to the mix. Home (and the minivan) should be a happy and peaceful place to land, a place without strife or anger. Not only should kids feel harmony with parents but they should grow up knowing their siblings are cheering them on as well. I want my kids to choose each other to be in their weddings, not look back and remember conflict. This week let's encourage our children to love each other well; to be so amazed with the gospel that they can't help but be instruments of peace themselves. We are praying for all of you during this last week of the break to experience the true peace of Christ.

What Does The Bible Say?

What does the Bible say? Read Matthew 5:9

1. Who is blessed and why?
2. What does it mean to be a peacemaker?
3. How is Jesus our Peacemaker?

What Do You Think?

Why do you think peacemakers are called sons of God?

What Do You Do?

Do you live at peace with your family? This week make a point to be agreeable even when you don't want to be. Allow someone else to pick the movie or family activity. When someone begins to argue, rather than arguing back, make peace with them.

CORE COMPETENCY: Peace

I live without worry because things are good between God, myself and others.

MEMORY VERSE: Matthew 5:9

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

KidPIXCOUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- _____ I completed my Bible Study
- _____ I memorized this week's verse
- _____ I brought my Bible to church
- _____ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME _____

GRADE _____

PARENT SIGNATURE _____

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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