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# Being The Hands of Jesus As Peacemakers

## MATTHEW 5:9

### INTRODUCTION

1. Peace is something sorely lacking in our world today.
  - a. Nations and their leaders are at odds with each other.
  - b. Animosity exists among leaders within nations.
  - c. Even in local communities we see a definite need for peace.
2. God's Word has much to say about peace:
  - a. If you pick up the O.T. and begin to read it through, you will find the Hebrew word for "peace" — *shalom* — utilized 236 times.
  - b. In the N.T., the Greek word for "peace" — *eirene* — is found 97 times.
3. Five times in the N.T., God is called "the God of peace" (Romans 15:33; 16:20; Philippians 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:20).
4. The prophet Isaiah called the coming Messiah (Jesus) the "Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6) and said "there will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace" (v. 7).
5. In our text this morning Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (Matthew 5:9).
6. But, what is the peace of which Jesus wants you and I to be makers of?
  - a. The Hebrew word *shalom* implies . . .
    - 1) The absence of combat and conflict.
    - 2) But it also includes qualities such as wholeness, stability, spiritual soundness and good health.
  - b. The Greek word *eirene* . . .

- 1) Also indicates tranquility and the absence of trouble.
  - 2) But it describes a harmonious relationship between God and men, as well as, between men and their fellow men.
6. Ultimately, *peace* means *everything which makes for a man's highest good*.

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## I. Peacemaking Verses Peace-loving

### A. PEACE-LOVERS

1. Notice that Jesus did not say, "Blessed are the peace-lovers."
2. Everyone loves the concept of peace, as a matter of fact, our God is a peace-loving God, but not everyone is willing to be active in creating it.
3. There are those who think they are peace-lovers when in reality they are storing up trouble for the future because they refuse to face the situation and take the action which the situation demands.
4. The peace which the Bible calls blessed does not come from avoiding the issues, but from facing them, dealing with them, and conquering them.
5. It involves the *making* of peace, even when that peace leads through struggle.

**2a**

### B. PEACEMAKERS

1. Peacemakers are those who mourn over the sin which they see is tearing others apart.
2. They hunger and thirst for the righteousness which God desires among His people, because they know without it, there can be no true peace.
3. They are people who have worked to confront the sin in their own lives so that they might truly be "pure in heart" (*Matthew 5:8*).
4. Peacemakers come between two warring parties and take the blows from each side in order to create peace.
5. Because of this, they will very likely find themselves "persecuted for the sake of righteousness" (v. 10).

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## II. Peacemaking Is Costly

### A. IT COST OUR FATHER HIS ONLY SON

1. Not only is God a peace-loving God, He is a peacemaking God.
2. God's work to make peace between each of us and Himself started before He ever created the earth and continued through the first sin in the Garden of Eden by Adam and Eve all the way through the death, burial and resurrection of His only Son almost 2,000 years ago.
3. In Colossians 1:20, Paul said that through Jesus God reconciled "all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross."
4. In 2 Corinthians 5:19, Paul wrote that "God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself . . ."
5. In Romans 5:8, Paul tells us that all of this was a demonstration of God's love toward us, and two verses later, he adds that God reconciled us to Himself "while we were enemies."
6. In the first stanza of the hymn, "How Deep The Father's Love For Us," Stuart Townend penned these words

**How deep the Father's love for us,  
How vast beyond all measure,  
That He should give His only Son  
To make a wretch His treasure.**

**3a**

### B. IT WILL COST US

1. Just as it cost our heavenly Father, peacemaking will cost us.
2. We have no right to expect that 'peacemaking' will cost us nothing.
  - a. You and I will either find ourselves involved in the dispute as the one who is guilty of offending someone or as the one who has been offended.

"Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there

remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering.” (Matthew 5:23–24, NASB95)

- b. We will involve ourselves as the third party, in an effort to help enemies become friends again (cf. Philippians 4:2,3a).

“I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord. Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.” (Philippians 4:2–3, NASB95)

3. If we are trying to help others to reconcile, we will find ourselves . . .
  - a. Patiently listening to both sides.
  - b. Witnessing much bitterness and accusations.
  - c. Struggling to sympathize with each position.
  - d. Trying our best to understand the misunderstandings which caused the communication breakdown.
4. If we find ourselves to blame, we will face . . .
  - a. The humiliation of apologizing.
  - b. The deeper humiliation of making restitution where possible.
  - c. The greatest humiliation of all — confessing that the deep wounds we have caused will take time to heal and cannot be passed off or forgotten.
5. If we are the one who has been wronged, we may have to bear the embarrassment of reproof or rebuking the other person and risking the forfeiting his or her friendship.
6. In any of these situations, I believe each of us will find peacemaking emotionally and physically difficult and costly.

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### **III. In Order To Make Peace We Must Grow As Peacemakers**

**A. WE MUST ADDRESS OUR OWN PERSONAL SIN**

1. Whether that be in the form of wrong thoughts or actions (Psalm 139:23-24).

“Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me and know my anxious thoughts; and see if there be any hurtful way in me, and lead me in the everlasting way.” (Psalm 139:23–24, NASB95)

2. Jesus said that we must first remove the “log” in our own eye, before we point out the “speck” in someone else’s eye (Matthew 7:3-5).

**4a****B. WE MUST BE PAINFULLY HONEST (JEREMIAH 6:14; PROVERBS 27:6)**

- a. Jeremiah condemned the prophets and priests of his day who failed either to ignore the problem or recognize the seriousness of it.

“They have healed the brokenness of My people superficially, Saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ But there is no peace.” (Jeremiah 6:14, NASB95)

- b. Solomon said that true friends are willing to hurt each other in order to heal one another.

“Faithful are the wounds of a friend, But deceitful are the kisses of an enemy.” (Proverbs 27:6, NASB95)

**4b****C. WE MUST BE “QUICK TO HEAR [LISTEN], SLOW TO SPEAK AND SLOW TO ANGER” (JAMES 1:19).**

1. Take the time to listen.
  - a. Not only to what the person is saying, but what they are not saying.
  - b. This may require that we ask some clarifying questions.
2. Choose your words and your tone carefully:

“He who restrains his words has knowledge, and he who has a cool spirit is a man of understanding.” (Proverbs 17:27, NASB95)

- a. "Could this offend or hurt someone?"
- b. "Is this the best way to say this?"

### 3. Control your temper

"A fool always loses his temper, But a wise man holds it back." (Proverbs 29:11, NASB95)

"A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger." (Proverbs 15:1, NASB95)

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### D. WE MUST RETURN GOOD FOR EVIL

1. As I said earlier, peacemakers can be often misunderstood, criticized and even persecuted.
2. In spite of this, we must keep sowing the seeds of peace.
3. In Romans 12:18-20, the apostle Paul wrote these words:

"If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. "But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." (Romans 12:18-20, NASB95)

4. When you and I seek to make peace, if we will keep sowing our seed in peace, there is a specific fruit which will eventually grow.
  - a. James called it the "fruit of righteousness" (James 3:18).
  - b. Paul said that it brings "glory and praise" to God (Philippians 1:11).

## 5a

### E. WE MUST NOT QUIT, BUT KEEP TRUSTING GOD FOR THE RESULTS

1. The work of a peacemaker can be frustrating and wearing, but we must not give up (Galatians 6:9).

"Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary." (Galatians 6:9, NASB95)

2. Remember, you and I are fellow workers with God:
  - a. We may plant and water (1 Corinthians 3:6).
  - b. It is “God who causes the growth” (1 Corinthians 3:7).

## **Conclusion**

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1. “There is no more godlike work to be done in this world than peacemaking” (John Broadus).
2. If we work to become peacemakers, Jesus said we will be called “sons of God.”
3. To be called a “son of God” means you and I demonstrate God’s character.
4. Just as Jesus came to this earth to reconcile people with God and with one another, so we participate in the same ministry.
5. One of the best privileges you or I can know is for God to call us His son or daughter.
6. Each of us know the pride we feel as parents to say to someone “this is my son or my daughter.”
7. There is also the pride we felt as children to have our parents introduce us to someone else as their son or daughter.
8. Are you a son or daughter of God today?
  - a. If so, you are blessed beyond measure.
  - b. If not, why not take that step today, let Christ wash away your sins so that God may welcome you into His family.