

God's Call to God's People During a Time of Crisis

Be A Peacemaker

Matthew 5:9

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / July 26, 2020

[Read Matthew 5:1-16; 43-48]

These beatitudes are not describing 8 different kinds of people like some kind of personality inventory. They are all describing one peculiar and particular group of people – the people of God!

What would it look like to be a peacemaker?

I. Peacemakers Aim at Humility Instead of Humiliation

Peacemaking requires a posture of humility that refuses to vilify the opponent and glorify itself, but instead wants to glorify God by practicing and doing what He did for us.

James 4:10-11 “Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will exalt you. ¹¹ Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge.”

God has not called us to live for a moment, but to live for something momentous: His kingdom, His glory, and His calling on our lives to be peacemakers.

II. Peacemakers Are Careful with Their Words Because They Know the Power They Have

Proverbs 18:21 “Death and life are in the power of the tongue...”

Proverbs 12:18 “Reckless words pierce like a sword, but the tongue of the wise brings healing.”

James 1:19 “...let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.”

The people of God are called to be careful with words and to value them because they know—more than most—the power of the spoken word.

We live in a day where people abuse words and use words fast and loose. Peacemakers do not fall into that trap because they know words can destroy families, marriages, friendships, churches, and societies!

You will never accomplish the purposes of God, for the glory of God, with the ways of the world. We're not called to do what works; we're called to live as radically different kingdom people who are focused on pleasing God more than getting results.

What's coming out of your mouth reveals what your heart is filled with most.

III. Peacemakers Are Focused on Loving Specific Individuals Instead of Condemning Entire Groups

Our culture has shifted to wholesale condemnation and blame as the solution to all the brokenness and sin that actually happens one individual person at a time.

The answer to finding peace and reconciliation is not disparaging and condemning an entire group of people. Jesus shows us the answer in Matthew 5:

Matthew 5:43-45 “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you,⁴⁵ that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.”

Matthew 5:47 “And if you greet your brethren only, what do you do more than others? Do not even the tax collectors do so?”

Focusing on loving, blessing, praying, and doing kind deeds may look small, slow, or weak...but this is the culture-changing work God has been doing all along.

Revolutionary, wide-spread cultural change is the result of a heart change that happens one person at a time—often as a result of the radical, upside-down love, prayer, and blessing they receive from a Christian who they are in the midst of hating and persecuting.

IV. Peacemakers Are Not in a Hurry but Have the Long View on Mind

Whenever a movement is characterized by a frantic and frenzied sense of “make it happen now at any cost!” you can be assured that God, and the glory of God, is not behind that or at the heart of that because God is not in a hurry like we are.

“I think the besetting sin of [Christians]...is impatience...This impatience to leave the methods of Jesus in order to get the work of Jesus done is what destroys spirituality, because we’re using a non-biblical, non-Jesus way to do what Jesus did.”

~ Eugene Peterson

1 Peter 3:11 “...Seek peace and pursue it.”

Peacemaking is a process, not an event.

Passion is part of the problem today because we’ve got passion in all the wrong places. People – including God’s people—are passionate about earthly causes, political parties, systems and conspiracy theories...but are passive about being peacemakers.

Your “tribe” or your “camp” might be cheering you on, but what would your Savior say about how you’ve been acting, what you’ve been saying, and what you’ve been most passionate about?

Jesus is not asking us to do anything that He’s not already done for us! When Jesus bore our sins on the cross, He absorbed the pain of what we did to Him without passing it on to us. That’s what peacemakers do!

[Read Romans 5:1-5]