



MATTHEW

The Savior-King and His Kingdom

Kingdom Character - Peacemakers

Matthew 5:9

Message #13 of 80 – S1042

Sermon given on April 23, 2023



Sunday Morning Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

Kingdom Character - Peacemakers

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Opening Comments

- Open your Bibles to **Matthew 5**
- Today, we continue a series through the gospel of Matthew – **The Savior-King and His Kingdom**
- In my late teens I connected to a group of guys who were a couple of years older than I was.
- They were in the early years of college, and I was in high school.
- We would regularly get together to play low-stakes poker.
- It wasn't about the gambling or the money, it was about being together.
- Even though it was almost fifty years ago, I still remember how we used to discuss whatever topic might come up.
- There was almost always disagreement – we were all different and we had different viewpoints on the world.
- And occasionally the discussion got passionate.
- But then we would deal the next hand and continue being friends.
- To this day I can have a conversation with someone I strongly disagree with and maintain a good relationship with them.
- Sadly, that is not how much of the world is today.
- We are living in a world where disagreement equals animosity or hostility.
- For example, if you disagree with someone who claims to be transgender – you might be accused of hate-speech or trying to erase them.
- To them it doesn't matter how you feel, what you believe, or why you disagree, your disagreement is an act of violence toward them.
- We see this in the sometimes-violent response to conservative speakers.
- They justify violence to silence those who have a viewpoint different than theirs.

- The world is far from peace today, but the seventh beatitude tells us we should be a part of God's work to do something about that.
- Let's pray and ask the Holy Spirit to help us hear. - **Pray**

Teaching

- **Kingdom Character - Peacemakers**

- As I have said all through this slow journey through the beatitudes, none of them can be isolated from the rest.
- They represent the character traits of a believer – of a true Christian.
- That doesn't mean these traits are manifesting perfectly, but they should be present.
- As we grow in our faith, these traits become more prominent.
- Today's beatitude is one that the world needs to see in Christians.
- **Matthew 5:9**
- The sixth beatitude was, 'blessed are the pure in heart.'
- Purity of heart can lead to peace within us.
- We know that we are not warring with God in our sin.
- We cannot be peacemakers and be at peace with sin.
- We must wage a constant and ruthless war with our own sin, trusting God through faith to fight for us before we can strive for peace with others.
- It is hard to be at peace when the world is such a mess.
- Jesus said this was how the world was going to be, especially as it relates to the end times **Matthew 24:6**.

And you will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not troubled; for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet.

- While the primary application of that verse is to nations, we can also see that it is true in all areas of life and culture, like conservatives and liberals.
- The peacemaker loves peace, first with God, and then with others.
- It becomes a primary focus of their heart **Hebrews 12:14**.

Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord ...

- At the announcement of the birth of Christ, the angel declared God's desire for peace in the world **Luke 2:14**.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!

- The world is not at peace. Anger and division are widespread.
 - The unbelieving world cannot know peace because peace is only possible through faith in Christ **Isaiah 57:20-21**.
- But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. ²¹ “There is no peace,” says my God, “for the wicked.”**
- The primary definition of the word ‘peace’ is, ‘the absence of conflict.’
 - We are living in a time when conflict is commonplace.
 - Some might even suggest that it is normal.
 - In a fallen world, conflict is inevitable, but it is not normal or right.
 - Regardless of the circumstances the peacemaker seeks to make peace.
 - The peacemaker is not focused on who is to blame but seeks peace and reconciliation.
 - The peacemaker’s primary objective is reconciliation, and their primary tool is forgiveness.
 - The peacemaker is quick to seek forgiveness if they have offended someone and they are quick to offer forgiveness if someone has offended them.
 - Jesus came into the world to reconcile us back to God by sacrificing His life to pay the penalty for our sin **Romans 5:10-11**.
- For if when 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. ¹¹ And not only that, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.**
- By faith we are forgiven of our sin and brought into the family of God.
 - Once reconciled to God, we are invited to participate in the ministry of reconciliation.
 - A peacemaker has their eyes open for the conflicts around them and seeks to play the role God has given them to reconcile those in conflict.
 - That can be those in conflict with God, the lost.
 - Or in could be those in conflict with us individually.
 - Or those in conflict with others.
 - A peacemaker seeks peace and works toward it.
 - This verse also says, ‘they shall be called sons of God.’

- ‘sons’ can also be translated as ‘children.’
- Who will call them ‘sons of God?’
- Instinctively, we might say, ‘God!’ Right?
- Remember, these are characteristics of someone who is already a child of God.
- As we live as peacemakers, the world will recognize that it is God working in us to make us like Jesus.
- When a doctor begins to practice medicine, they will be called doctors.
- When someone passes the bar and begins to practice law, they will be called a lawyer.
- When a Christian becomes a peacemaker, they will be called sons of God.
- The world will see the truth by your works, and they will acknowledge it.
- The next beatitude proves that they don’t always respond in our favor, but they will notice.
- As Peter and John were being told not to preach about Jesus, their bold response amazed the religious leaders and revealed something to them **Acts 4:13**.

Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled. And they realized that they had been with Jesus.

- When someone sees me with one of my sons, they often remark that they look like me.
- It is hard to deny the familial connection because of the similarity of our appearance.
- Peacemakers bear the likeness of their father - God. **Charles**

Spurgeon

“God is peaceful, long-suffering, and tender, full of loving-kindness, pity and compassion. So, too, is this peacemaker. Being like God, he bears his Father’s image.”

- Being a peacemaker is one of the ways we testify about our faith to the world.
- Our religion is unlikely to bring anyone into the church. **Charles Spurgeon**

“Our religion is an unsavory thing to men. We must put salt with it, and this salt must be our quietness and peacemaking disposition.”

- As peacemakers, we bring our religion to them in the likeness of their Savior Jesus.
 - A peacemaker’s primary work is the work of Jesus Christ.
 - He came to make peace between sinful man and Holy God.
 - One of the activities of a peacemaker is prayer.
 - Praying for the lost to be at peace with God through Christ will bring peace to their soul and to the world around them.
 - All Christian ministry is peacemaking work.
 - Anything that is done in the church is to facilitate peace between people and their God or between people and other people.
 - As we prepare to end this service, I would like to leave you with three thoughts about **Being a Peacemaker**.
 - First – **Be at peace with God!**
 - To be a peacemaker, we must be at peace with God.
 - The Bible teaches that everyone has sinned and that makes us enemies of God.
 - When we put our faith in Christ, we stop being enemies and become children of God and are at peace with God. **Romans 5:1-2**
- Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ²through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.**
- If someone is here or watching online, and you haven’t put your trust in Christ, we will be praying about that at the end of the service.
 - Second – **Walk in the peace of God!**
 - To be peacemakers, not only do we need to be at peace with God, but we must also have the peace of God.
 - Paul talked about that. **Ephesians 4:6-7**
- Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; ⁷and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.**
- It is going to be very difficult for you to be a peacemaker if your own heart is not at peace.
 - Peace is a result of intimacy with God – knowledge of Him through His Word – and trusting Him with more and more of your life.

- We will be praying for that at the end of the service if you need more peace.
- Third – **Determine to be a Peacemaker!**
- Pray and ask God to show you those who need to be reconciled to Him.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to give you the faith and courage to show them God’s love and if possible, to share the gospel of peace.
- Be willing to reconcile with those who have harmed you.
- Seek to be reconciled to those in conflict with you.
- The world needs peace, but it will not find it unless God’s children are doing the work of a peacemaker.
- David is now going to come up and lead us in a song.
- I would also like to invite the Prayer Team to come forward now.
- If anything you have heard here this morning has found root in your heart, come up and let us pray with you.
- If you are not sure if you are at peace with God, come, right now, and let someone pray for you.
- If you are not sensing the peace of God in your heart, if you are fearful or restless or angry in heart – let us pray.
- If you would like more faith to be a peacemaker, come, let us pray for you.
- Or if there is anything we can pray about for you – come right now.
- I am going to pray – don’t wait – come right now. Let’s pray!