

Happy Are the Peacemakers!

Series: The Beatitudes

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In the seventh beatitude, Jesus indicates that we are most like God when we are peacemakers.

Matthew 5:9 (NLT) *God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God.*

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

Most of us are aware that a lack of peace in our heart can manifest itself in a lot of problematic ways.

James 4:1 (NLT) *What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don't they come from the evil desires at war within you?*

In the beatitudes, Jesus is not making optional suggestions; rather, he is describing the pathway to heaven.

In the seventh beatitude, Jesus tells us what the children of God do, not how to become a child of God. Other Scripture tells us that, and we need to know the how before we can accomplish the do.

John 1:12 (NIV) *Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God...*

Galatians 3:26 (NLT) *For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.*

Jesus is proclaiming that the children of God are to have the character of their Father.

The Bible tells us that our heavenly Father is a God of peace.

1 Thessalonians 5:23 (NLT) *Now may the God of peace make you holy in every way, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless until our Lord Jesus Christ comes again.*

Just as importantly, He is also a peacemaker.

2 Corinthians 5:19 (NLT) *For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation.*

Colossians 1:20 (NLT) *...and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross.*

It is by the Spirit of God that we are made children of God, and the Spirit of God is the Spirit of peace.

What does it mean to be a peacemaker?

Matthew 5:43-45 (NLT) ⁴³ *You have heard the law that says, "Love your neighbor" and hate your enemy. ⁴⁴ But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! ⁴⁵ In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven. For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the*

good, and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike.

Jesus thinks of peacemaking as all the acts of love by which we try to overcome the enmity between us and others.

The first thing Jesus mentions in verse 44 is praying.

Next, He mentions trying to build a bridge to our enemies.

Matthew 5:47 (NIV) *And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that?*

Peacemaking is not the same as achieving peace. We do not always succeed in peacemaking.

Romans 12:18 (NIV) *If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.*

If we claim to be a child of God, we must commit to being a peacemaker.

Conclusion

To be considered a child of God, we must love peace and work for peace. We must pray for those we have conflict with, do good to them, and long for the barriers between us to be overcome.