

BE God's People: peacemakers

Matthew 5:9

MPS: Jesus makes peace with God for all who believe that we might make the glory of His peace known among all people.

OBJ: Christ-followers should live to reflect the image of God as peacemakers in the world because of three exhortations.

INTRO This summer, LifePoint is raising our expectations for the summer. Jesus sets people free and transforms to "BE God's People", to live in God's blessing by His Kingdom values. Walking in godly wisdom begins by embracing Kingdom values. Set your Summer aim to live in God's blessing by His Kingdom values.

ILLUS I am often told how much I am becoming like my father. Why? The things I prefer and do naturally identify me as his son. It's in the "genes" or the "DNA" we say.

TRANS **What makes Christians most look like God to others?**

Many would likely say "holy living". Please understand, holy living is important and every Christian should strive to grow and mature in holiness as Christ works in us. How well we live out holiness in godly living will directly reflect God in the world and influence others for Him, but it is not the characteristic by which people will be convinced we are God's children.

TRANS Many claimed to be peacemakers in the first century.

The Roman government claimed to be peacemakers. The pride of Roman rule was its signature cultural mandate, "*pax Romana*", the peace of Rome. But the peace they claimed to "make" was not as it appeared. In Rome, you either lived in peace or you died by raw brutality. Peace was "kept" in Rome by threat of force and strength. That might create an outward appearance of peace, but internally it only fostered deep fear. Peace among people as we are speaking of today can be enhanced, guarded and strengthened but it will never be ultimately made by government.

Religion promised peace but was the very source that prevented it. Religious zealots claimed to fight for peace in God's name. They wanted to bring in God's Kingdom by any means necessary, violence was their specialty. Once they conquered, then God's peace could rule, but that never happened and proved to be an ineffective method. Religious leaders claimed peace, but what they really produced was the same as government, deep and abiding fear within people.

None of these peacemakers look anything like God. Even those that claim to. So, again I ask, "**What makes Christians most look like God to others?**" Jesus says Christians most reflect the nature of God in life when we live to make the peace with God we've received through Jesus Christ made known to all people.

READ Matthew 5:9 *Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.* **Matthew 5:9**

TRANS I begin today with two observations of the text.

First, "peacemakers" combines two terms. The first term, peace, denotes a state of being, the opposite of conflict or hostility. The Old Testament provides a much richer and all-encompassing meaning. Peace in the Old Testament, shalom, refers to one's state of well-being or blessedness that came from the favor (grace) of God upon one's life. **Peace from God in Jesus blesses all of life because we have peace with God.**

The last part of the word simply means one who makes or promotes. There is an intentionality in which this person does all that he or she does. Jesus elevates the role of one who labors to bring peace among people because peace has come from God. **God's greatest, all-encompassing blessing rests on those who live to bring among men the peace we have with God through Jesus Christ.**



Second, the uniqueness of this Beatitude amplifies the weight of its importance. This is the only time this word peacemaker is used in the Bible. Jesus uses a new word. (I DO appreciate this.) [A peacemaker is a mediator who labors to bring about harmonious relations between opposing parties.](#)

Peacemaker sets forth God's plan for the Christian's life as His children.

Jesus makes peace with God for all who believe that we might make the glory of His peace known among all people.

TRANS Let's consider the peace with God that Jesus gives and how it we serve to make it among people.

GOSPEL IS our MISSION

The Christian message defines our mission. *What do I mean by this?* Christ-followers live in this ONE, glorious truth, Jesus made peace with God for us by his own death. The Bible tells us that because of sin people are by nature God's enemies. But while we were still enemies of God, He sent Jesus to die for our reconciliation. ^{Rom5:6-10} We owed a debt of sin that we could not pay. ^{Rom6:23a} God sent Jesus ^{John3:16} to pay our debt ^{Col2:14} and ransom us by the sacrifice of His blood ^{Rev5} and give us peace with God ^{Rom5:1} by the free gift of eternal life. ^{Rom6:23b} Jesus the Prince of Peace who gives peace with God because he has made that peace by his own blood. ^{Isa9:6-7; Col1:20} [The gospel of peace with God through Jesus Christ defines the purpose of His Kingdom mission in the world.](#)

In this Beatitude Jesus teaches that the message of the Gospel IS the mission of God's Kingdom. The good news of Jesus Christ defines the purpose of the Christian's life. *What does that mean for us?* This is what we give our attention to today; *"How do Christians live as "makers of" the peace we have received?"* [Peacemakers is a value of God's Kingdom because the word demonstrates how the gospel serves as the defining purpose and mission of a Christ-follower's life.](#)

Jesus makes peace with God for all who believe that we might make the glory of His peace known among all people.

OBJ [Three exhortations for Christ-followers to live as gospel peacemakers in the world.](#)

1. Peacemaking flows from peace-abiding.

This first exhortation shows the relationship between Christian identity in Jesus and our purpose and mission in the world. The peace that Christians make in the world flows from the peace Jesus has placed in our life. Our role in God's Kingdom is directly rooted in our identity as His children. We don't point people to something we are only vaguely familiar with. [Christians live to share God's peace through Jesus because we now live IN God's peace.](#)

READ Ephesians 2:13-14

¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility. Ephesians 2:13-14

Paul explains this same relationship of our identity and purpose in 2 Corinthians 5 and uses two other words.

READ 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 17, 20

For the love of Christ controls us, because we have concluded this: that one has died for all, therefore all have died; ¹⁵and he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised. ¹⁷Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation.



²⁰Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. 2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 17, 20

Christians are new creations in Jesus and made Ambassadors of His reconciliation with God.

The composition of a Christian's spiritual DNA is new, changed from before and because of Jesus. The all-consuming reality of our life is the prevailing Lordship of Jesus Christ. He is with us because He is present IN us. He is powerful through us because His power is working IN us. [The most natural way for Christians to demonstrate our spiritual genetics is because we have been made right with God, we live to make things right between people.](#)

Christians are Ambassadors of Christ in the world, making among people the peace Jesus made with God for us. But, you cannot make what you do not have. And, you will not make what you do not remain in. Jesus is not commanding something that you go do without Him. Rather, he is explaining how the Christian life works. [Christians live out the new life that lives within through Jesus. The only way to live as a peacemaker is to BE a peace-abider in Jesus.](#)

Colossians instructs, "*And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts*" (Col 3:15) Life flows out of the heart.^{Prov4:23} That which fills your heart flows out of your life. The best way to persuade others of the great glory of God's peace in Jesus is simply to LIVE IT OUT! Nothing is more powerful than the person who lives in the peace, joy and love of God amidst the turmoil of this world, who gives forgiveness and works for reconciliation amidst the brokenness, chaos and divisions of the world. [Living as a peacemaker in the world begins by peace-abiding in Jesus Christ.](#)

2. Peacemaking means we must learn to persevere in places with little or no peace.

Peacemaking often looks and feels more like war because of the enemy that we engage, Satan. Jesus prepares us for this. [Jesus, the One who IS our Peace, prepares us for the battle of peacemaking.](#)

READ Matthew 10:34-39

*Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. ³⁶And a person's enemies will be those of his own household. ³⁷Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. ³⁸And whoever does not take his cross and follow me is not worthy of me. ³⁹Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. **Matthew 10:34-39***

Jesus provides a clear understanding of what it means to live as a peacemaker. Jesus came to engage the war that is already present. Until the battle is engaged the war cannot be won. Jesus engaged the enemy and conquered Him. One scholar writes, "The true peacemaker, contrary to what most people think, is not afraid of making waves."¹ [False peace tempts at every turn to deceive us, to "cut corners" and offer what many call peace but what Jesus says is not real peace.](#)

WRONG concepts of false peace prevail in the world. Peacemakers does NOT mean Christians hold a *laissez-faire* attitude toward life, where we refuse to get involved and let whatever may come to be. Christians reject the familiar philosophy of *tolerance* toward whatever exists in the world, just to put up with it and not interfere. Christians refuse to simply be known as an *appeaser*, delivering what seems to satisfy in the moment but offers no lasting peace or hope.² [Prevailing world philosophies that offer false substitutes stand in direct opposition to Jesus' mandate to live as peacemakers.](#)

¹R. Kent Hughes, [The Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 62.

²D. A. Carson, "[Matthew](#)," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 135.



WRONG priorities justify false peace by avoiding engagement. Jesus not only commands Christians to make peace that He gives with God, but to avoid anything that sidetracks or distracts us from serving His mission. Nothing stirs passivity in a person like conflict, especially interpersonal conflict that pervades to the spiritual level. People offer every “good” reason, and often using God to justify themselves, to excuse obedience to Him and His mission in the world. [Christians live by a radical priority to Jesus’ Lordship that places Him as first above all others!](#)

Christians live NOT “peace-keepers but...peace-makers, people who end hostilities and bring the quarrelsome together.”³ Peter says we, “*turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it.*”^{1Peter3:11} Christians do not run from situations where peace is absent but run into them. We live as “the true peacemakers are those who wait and work for God, who makes whole the division created by humans.”⁴ [Christians willingly persevere in places where peace is absent to engage with the gospel and make peace.](#)

APPL No matter the place, and no matter the situation, where Jesus leads is where we make peace through the gospel. [Christian, wherever in your world or city, whether in your neighborhood, workplace, or in your home, your relationships or friendships, Jesus will prove sufficient to strengthen you to endure as a faithful witness where He leads you to make peace.](#)

3. [Peacemaking multiplies the whole blessing of God.](#)

In this final exhortation, I want you to see how living as a peacemaker brings God’s blessing to the whole of life.

Peacemaking multiplies God’s blessing [in any and every area for all of life.](#) God’s peace is shalom, a comprehensive well-being and prosperity over all of life. The more people walk in God’s ways the more His blessing covers and saturates every part of their life with the goodness and glory of His nature.

Peacemaking multiplies God’s blessing in [giving generously and sacrificially as a way of living.](#) When God so loved, he gave sacrificially and generously.^{John3:16} When we live out of God’s blessing on us we live as a blessing to others. We “pursue more than the absence of conflict” but “wholeness and well-being.”⁵ [Christians live as peacemakers by giving and sacrificing for the mission, in the likeness of God.](#)

Peacemaking multiplies God’s blessing [by displaying God’s glory through beauty.](#) Isaiah 52:7 reminds that peacemaking paints a landscape of beauty in life that is enjoyed by all who gaze upon it. God’s peace is displayed for the continuing appreciation by those who witness and experience it, as well as though who hear of it.

Peacemaking multiplies God’s blessing in [growth and maturity of personal holiness.](#) Paul writes, “*So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.*”^{Rom14:19} Peace multiplies God’s blessing by growing others in personal holiness. [Peacemaking matures us and others in holiness and godly living.](#)

Peacemaking multiplies God’s blessing [in a harvest of salvations.](#) James says, *And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*^{James3:18} [Peacemaking compounds God’s blessing, shalom, over life because God multiplies our labors with a harvest of salvations.](#)

ILLUS My last week involved seven personal professions of faith in less than seven days. I was only the harvester. The people of LifePoint had served in the harvest labors. All blessed by the testimony of peace multiplied among the world.

³Leon Morris, [The Gospel according to Matthew](#), The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press, 1992), 101.

⁴Michael J. Wilkins, [Matthew](#), The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2004), 210.

⁵R. Kent Hughes, [The Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 62.



TRANS There are many ways to quell or resolve conflict and strife between people but only Jesus calms the angst and chaos of the human heart. When God's people live in His peace through Jesus Christ to glorify Him, they will serve to make peace among all people with all their lives.

CLOSE R. Kent Hughes, long-time pastor of College Church on the campus of Wheaton College in Wheaton, IL, provides a most helpful summary of this Beatitude that I use to conclude our thoughts for application.

Thus the grand relevance of the seventh Beatitude: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God." This divine pronouncement, understood, taken to heart, and applied by the Holy Spirit, can not only bring inner peace to our troubled hearts but also make us instruments of peace—peacemakers. It has the potential to give us peace within and to make us mediators of peace in the lives of those around us and in society at large.⁶

Jesus makes peace with God for all who believe
that we might make the glory of His peace known among all people.

Do you look like your Heavenly Father, so filled with peace through Jesus that you live to make peace among people?

⁶R. Kent Hughes, [The Sermon on the Mount: The Message of the Kingdom](#), Preaching the Word (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2001), 62.

