

# Make Your Peace

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“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” (Matt. 5:9). As Jesus went about preaching the “gospel of the kingdom,” He made certain that His hearers understood the kind of character necessary to be a citizen of that kingdom: those who are poor in spirit, who mourn, who are gentle, who hunger and thirst for righteousness, who are merciful and pure in heart.

In addition to these is the call to be a peacemaker. This does not describe someone who is merely peaceful by nature. A peacemaker is someone who brings peace about where it did not exist before.

The word “peace” occurs in every New Testament book, with the exception of 1 John. The Hebrew word “Shalom” became their customary greeting, carried over in the epistles of Paul which usually begin, “grace and peace to you.” Peace is a fruit of the spirit (Gal. 5:22). It is part of the Christian’s armor: feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15). The people of God are to be a people of peace.

We know how to keep the peace and hold our peace. But how do you make peace?

Make peace by first being at peace with God. We have all been separated from God because of our sin. We were far off, alienated, estranged; we were dead in our trespasses. But Jesus Himself is our peace (Eph. 2:14-19). He makes possible that all men can be reconciled to the Father. “We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1). That’s why the peacemakers shall be called “sons of God.” We become like our Father when we bring about peace where it had not been. That’s what He did for us when we were dead in our sin.

When you are at peace with God, you will be at peace with yourself. Jesus told the apostles, “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world, do I give to you” (John 14:27). He was able to say these words in the midst of turmoil and troubling circumstances. But He had peace on the night of His betrayal because of His undying trust in His Father. Those who are not at peace with themselves are usually the ones who seek war and conflicts with other people. No Jesus, no peace. Know Jesus, know peace.

Make peace by being peaceable. How can we promote the “gospel of peace” when we are contentious and quarrelsome? “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men” (Rom. 12:18). Peace will not always be possible. There will be those who are not interested in it, who would rather keep the war going. “So far as it depends on you” means that you do what you can to make peace. If you’ve been wronged, go to the source. If you did wrong, be approachable. Be peaceable.

“Let us pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another” (Rom 14:19). “Pursue” is also translated “follow after” or “make every effort.” It is defined as “hunt” or “chase” or “strive for with an intense effort.” Doesn’t that indicate that peace is not always going to be the easy road? If it was, there wouldn’t be any conflicts. It may require some sacrifice on your part. It may require some humility on your part. But if peace could be accomplished in the Jew/Gentile relationship in the First Century, can you decide to do whatever is in your power to be peaceable with your brethren?

Make peace but not peace at any price. There will be circumstances where peace is not appropriate. The very next beatitude Jesus gave concerned those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake (Matt. 5:10-12). The Lord never avoided controversy for the sake of being popular nor did He pursue peace at all costs. This very Prince of Peace “did not come to grant peace but division” (Luke 12:51). He wanted inner peace in His disciples, but this would result in them being at war with the world. We must speak the truth in love with the understanding that truth sometimes divides people.

In the local church, we must be “diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:3). Unity comes from a mutual commitment to the Scriptures. It is not “my” will or “your” will, it is the divine will of God. And even when discipline must be administered, it is done so to encourage someone to be at peace with God again.

Make your peace. Then you can await a place of peace and rest, where we will forever be “the sons of God.”