

Meet My Savior: Jesus (Slide 1)

*The Beatitudes:
Blessed are the Peacemakers*

Reading: Proverbs 17:1-14

Matthew 5:19 (Slide 2)

***Blessed are the peacemakers,
For they shall be called sons of God.***

I am so intrigued by our reading in **Proverbs 17** and frankly, I'm convinced from it that living in peace with all men is very challenging. Particularly, in:

Proverbs 17:12 (Slide 3)

***Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs,
Rather than a fool in his folly.***

The natural bond between a mother bear and her babies is fierce, to say the least. You never want to find yourself between a mother bear and her cubs. It would be a very dangerous circumstance.

Yet, the fury of the mother bear would be magnified if something were to happen to her babies. That would be an even greater danger.

But the Wise Proverb writer states that one would be in more danger mixed up in the folly of a fool. From the foolishness we witness everyday, I can see that very clearly. We can understand the mother bear's fury but the fool's purpose and direction is unpredictable and even more dangerous to the soul of man.

When we consider the word *peace*, we likely all can easily derive a common definition. One of the most beautiful examples of *peace* for the

mind and body is that of perhaps standing just on the bank of a flowing creek or stream. Its sounds, smells and feel are naturally peaceful.

One who stands firm in the will of God knows peace. Those who disregard His word forfeit His peace:

Isaiah 48:18 (Slide 4)

Oh, that you had heeded My commandments!

Then your peace would have been like a river,

And your righteousness like the waves of the sea.

In general terms we may define peace as the “*absence of conflict.*” We deem the absence of conflict from a world view as “*peace time.*” Yet, we recognize the potential for conflict is ever present.

We anticipate and expect that within our own families that we should have peace. Most often that is the case, however, for a variety of reasons, family members can be at odds. Some are underlying reasons of jealousy or resentment which can manifest themselves as all out feuds.

Feuds can be between current members of a family or they may be handed down from generation to generation and the reasons for the feud are often not understood or even known.

Such is the case in some congregations that split. What should have been a strong family of God for whatever reason is shattered.

As time passes no one really knows the reason for the split, yet the two congregations keep their differences alive because their parents or grandparents did.

A house divided cannot stand! Often, one or both congregations shutter their doors.

Probably the most famous feud was that of the “*Hatfields and McCoys*.” We see this feud depicted in movies or on television and even in cartoons but the fact is this was a real feud.

This wasn’t an internal family conflict, rather a feud between two different families that began during the civil war where the two families engaged in major violence against one another that occurred for several years.

Though most of the violence halted, the feud continued over a course of several more years with many individuals attempting to resolve the conflict peacefully.

Peace is sometimes absent in the workplace, where jealousy or envy interferes with peace. Though often conflict is avoided and peace seems to prevail, bitterness thrives in the underbelly of individual attitudes and peace is constantly threatened.

Peace is sometimes disrupted and feuds begin because of differing religious beliefs. It can be the result of one’s take of the scriptures, where one group views the scripture as having exception and acceptance of certain behaviors or practices. One side reasons that God is loving while the other agrees God is love but recognizes He is also Just, Holy, Jealous and expects obedience to His truth.

So, even though the Bible calls for peace, we must see that true peace, given into the hands of men to care for and cultivate, is a fragile spiritual commodity.

Peace needs a loving and earnest caretaker, that is; a “*peacemaker*.”

My mother was one of the best *peacemakers* I ever knew. It was her strong desire to have peace that guided most of her methods in dealing with her unruly sons. When conflict arose her diplomacy was simple; “*I will call your Dad if you two don’t stop!*” Peace was immediately restored!

I honestly miss those days and my parents very much.

So, a *peacemaker* is one who works to settle a dispute and restore peace between people.

Peace and one's conscience are important in true worship. An internal or even a known dispute must be resolved before one can please God in worship.

Matthew 5:21-24 (Slide 5)

21 "You have heard that it was said to those of old, 'You shall not murder, and whoever murders will be in danger of the judgment.' 22 But I say to you that whoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. (Slide 6) And whoever says to his brother, 'Raca!' (empty headed, modern terms "stupid or brainless") shall be in danger of the council. But whoever says, 'You fool!' (one deemed, without cause, devoid of spiritual discernment or morality-inappropriate judgement of another person) shall be in danger of hell fire. (Slide 7) 23 Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.

From the Greek word and its definition we learn that a "*peacemaker*" isn't one who avoids conflict, rather is an active *mediator*.

This means confronting the problem. That could involve bringing conflicting brothers to the negotiating table to iron out differences or speaking directly to someone whom the peacemaker wants to reconcile.

A very challenging but necessary directive. I am convinced that conflict resolution is a high priority circumstance for the Christian. It is a component of carrying one's cross daily and following Jesus.

The concept of spiritual unity is paramount to a properly functioning *body of Christ*. To be at odds is not only detrimental to the mission of the church, but to any and all that one is trying to reach.

James 1:19 (Slide 8)

19 So then, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath; 20 for the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God.

I've seen cases where brethren in Christ became so mad at another's point of view that they jumped out of their pew and stormed out of the building. Can you imagine what that would do to the minds of visitors who witness such a spectacle. They likely would never return.

James and John, sometimes known as the ***"sons of thunder"*** (**Mark 3:17**) wished to call for the destruction of a Samaritan village for refusing lodging for Jesus in:

Luke 9:51-56 (Slide 9)

51 Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, 52 and sent messengers before His face. And as they went, they entered a village of the Samaritans, to prepare for Him. (Slide 10) 53 But they did not receive Him, because His face was set for the journey to Jerusalem. 54 And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?"

(Slide 11) ***55 But He turned and rebuked them, and said, "You do not know what manner of spirit you are of. 56 For the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." And they went to another village.***

Jesus taught the disciples, especially John who would embody love and dedication in his writings, to operate on a different level than just that of the flesh.

Proverbs 15:1 (Slide 12)

***A soft answer turns away wrath,
But a harsh word stirs up anger.***

Proverbs 15:18 (Slide 13)

A hot-tempered man stirs up strife, but he who is slow to anger quiets contention.

How many can we reach if we become angry at their beliefs or where they can perceive anything other than a genuine concern for them expressed in humility.

A tremendous effort must be made to resolve conflict:

Matthew 18:15-20 (Slide 14)

15 "Moreover if your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault between you and him alone. If he hears you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he will not hear, take with you one or two more, (Slide 15) that 'by the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established.' 17 And if he refuses to hear them, tell it to the church. But if he refuses even to hear the church, let him be to you like a heathen and a tax collector.

Yet, despite the effort, as it is born out here peace isn't always attainable.

Romans 12:18 (Slide 16)

If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

We may be able to work, be courteous, sometimes helpful and live in some ways with those who are without the body of Christ, yet we cannot have true spiritual peaceful fellowship with them if we continually tolerate their sin.

If we are to be Holy like He is Holy then we must share His attitude:

Psalm 5:4 (Slide 17)

For You are not a God who takes pleasure in wickedness, Nor shall evil dwell with You.

Habakkuk 1:12-13 (Slide 18)

12 Are You not from everlasting, O LORD my God, my Holy One? We shall not die. O LORD, You have appointed them for judgment; O Rock, You have marked them for correction. 13 You are of purer eyes than to behold evil, And cannot look on wickedness.

Romans 8:7 (Slide 19)

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.

Peace we strive for but sometimes it is impossible to achieve. Yet, we are also encouraged to live peaceably with all men without sacrificing what we believe.

Titus 3:1-2 (Slide 20)

1 Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to obey, to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing all humility to all men.

There exists no encouragement in this admonishment in **Titus 3** to ever compromise our faith. Rather a readiness to express our faith in good works in the spirit of peace.

Similarly, Apostle Paul tells Timothy:

1 Timothy 2:1-4 (Slide 21)

1 Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, 2 for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a (Slide 22) quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior,

4 who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

A peaceful approach to all men in every situation maintains the integrity of the Gospel and influences all men toward righteousness, whether in our firm but humble rebuke or our encouragement toward them.

The admonition therefore is this; to be considered as a son of God, be the peacemaker, as much as it depends on you!

Invitation

Take up your cross daily. When we picture Jesus carrying the cross of which He was to be crucified, we must understand the difficult course of which He endured as he labored to reach that place called Golgotha.

Carrying our cross is sometimes difficult because it is heavy, taxing on our body and our mind, and even dangerous. But it is necessary. Nevertheless, great reward will be there awaits at the end of your journey.

Have you put yourself in a position to begin that journey? If not, don't delay! Become a child of God by being baptized into the life giving Blood of the Lamb!

If you are a child of God but need encouragement to endure, may we pray with you? We are ready, able and willing to help you in your walk with Christ.

Please let us know how we may assist you this day.....

Proverbs 17:1-14

***1 Better is a dry morsel with quietness,
Than a house full of feasting with strife.***

***2 A wise servant will rule over a son who causes shame,
And will share an inheritance among the brothers.***

***3 The refining pot is for silver and the furnace for gold,
But the LORD tests the hearts.***

***4 An evildoer gives heed to false lips;
A liar listens eagerly to a spiteful tongue.***

***5 He who mocks the poor reproaches his Maker;
He who is glad at calamity will not go unpunished.***

***6 Children's children are the crown of old men,
And the glory of children is their father.***

***7 Excellent speech is not becoming to a fool,
Much less lying lips to a prince.***

***8 A present is a precious stone in the eyes of its possessor; Wherever he
turns, he prospers.***

***9 He who covers a transgression seeks love,
But he who repeats a matter separates friends.***

***10 Rebuke is more effective for a wise man
Than a hundred blows on a fool.***

***11 An evil man seeks only rebellion;
Therefore a cruel messenger will be sent against him.***

***12 Let a man meet a bear robbed of her cubs,
Rather than a fool in his folly.***

***13 Whoever rewards evil for good,
Evil will not depart from his house.***

***14 The beginning of strife is like releasing water;
Therefore stop contention before a quarrel starts.***

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