

Crossroads Baptist Church  
June 27, 2007 6:30  
Matthew 5: 9  
Beatitudes: The Pursuit of Happiness #7

## “Can You Be Happy and Peacemaker?”

We must not forget that the purpose of these Beatitudes is to perfectly paint the portrait of Jesus Christ and then secondly, to paint that portrait of a believer who Jesus lives in. These attributes are not attainable through hard work, church attendance or anything less than the person of Jesus Christ living through you and me.

And we must not overlook the beginning of the verse, “Blessed are the...” We have seen it now seven times, but don’t forget the meaning of that word, “Blessed.” It is to be spiritually prosperous, happy, blessed, satisfied, fulfilled, and independent of one’s circumstances.

There is more here than speaking of the absence of strife, tension or war. In fact, this is where we must be careful to permit Scripture to interpret Scripture. If you only look at one verse in the Bible, you can sometimes make that one verse say whatever you want it to say. But God did not give us one verse, he gave us 66 books that are all equally inspired.

Let me show you an example.

Romans 12:18 “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.” NASB

If possible...there are some times peace is not possible.

1. The spirit and temperament of other people will not permit you to be at peace with them.
2. The efforts to reconcile and maintain harmony are refused.

Luke 10: 5 Jesus taught his disciples to go to houses saying, “Peace be to this house.” Verse 6 “if a man of peace is there, your peace will rest on him; but if not, it will return to you.” Verse 10 “But whatever city you enter and they do not receive you, go into its streets and say, ‘Even the dust of your city which clings to our feet we wipe off in protest against you; ....’”

Some will not accept but you go as a messenger of peace with the message of peace.

3. When peace and truth are in conflict.

Jesus, as we will see afresh in a moment, was called The Prince of Peace but caused more upheavals and riots simply because he refused to back down from the truth. Paul’s reward night club was called the local jail house.

In fact, no truth..no peace. Some time you have to “rock the boat”, stand for the truth, engage, even offend. “But speak the truth in love.” There is never a time to be unkind or unloving.

This is not peace at any cost because sometime the cost is too high.

Don't misinterpret what Jesus stated. He is not speaking about people with a peaceful disposition or those who love peace at any cost. He did not say "*Blessed are the pacifists*". **Barclay** alludes to that possible misinterpretation writing that

The blessing is on the Peace-*makers*, not necessarily on the peace-*lovers*. It very often happens that if a man loves peace in the wrong way, he succeeds in making trouble and not peace. We may, for instance, allow a threatening and dangerous situation to develop, and our defense is that for peace’s sake we do not want to take any action. There is many a person who thinks that he is loving peace, when in fact he is piling up trouble for the future, because he refuses to face the situation and to take the action which the situation demands. The peace which the Bible calls blessed does not come from the evasion of issues; it comes from facing them, dealing with them, and conquering them. What this beatitude demands is **not the passive acceptance** of things because we are afraid of the trouble of doing anything about them, but the active facing of things, and the making of peace, even when the way to peace is through struggle. (Barclay, W: The Gospel of Matthew The New Daily Study Bible Westminster John Knox Press) (Bolding added)

4. When peace and purity are in conflict.

**C H Spurgeon** devoted the March 17 evening devotional to this beatitude writing...

This is the seventh of the beatitudes: and seven was the number of perfection among the Hebrews. It may be that the Saviour placed the **peacemaker** the seventh upon the list because he most nearly approaches the perfect man in Christ Jesus. He who would have perfect blessedness, so far as it can be enjoyed on earth, must attain to this seventh benediction, and become a **peacemaker**. There is a significance also in the position of the text. The verse which precedes it speaks of the blessedness of "the pure in heart: for they shall see God." It is well to understand that we are to be "first pure, then peaceable."

Our peaceableness is never to be a compact with sin, or toleration of evil. We must set our faces like flints against everything which is contrary to God and his holiness: purity being in our souls a settled matter, we can go on to peaceableness. Not less does the verse that follows seem to have been put there on purpose. However peaceable we may be in this world, yet we shall be

misrepresented and misunderstood: and no marvel, for even the Prince of Peace, by his very peacefulness, brought fire upon the earth. He himself, though he loved mankind, and did no ill, was "despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief." Lest, therefore, the peaceable in heart should be surprised when they meet with enemies, it is added in the following verse, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." Thus, the peacemakers are not only pronounced to be blessed, but they are compassed about with blessings. Lord, give us grace to climb to this seventh beatitude! Purify our minds that we may be "first pure, then peaceable," and fortify our souls, that our peaceableness may not lead us into cowardice and despair, when for thy sake we are persecuted.

### So what does it mean?

#### 1. He is a man of peace having met the Prince of Peace.

The word for peace is "eirene." It means the joining together that which has been separated. "Having it all together." "Everything is in place as it should be."

Man does not have it all together and everything is not in place. And there is only one way to get it all together and have it all in place – Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace.

The greatest need of man is to be right with God through Jesus Christ.

Isaiah 9:6 "For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And His name will be called....Prince of Peace."

The LXX word used is shalom. It means health, wholeness, soundness, well-being. "All is well."

Used as a greeting. II Kings 5:22 "Is all well? All is well."  
Judges 18:15 NASB "...asked him of his welfare."

It was used in the Aaronic benediction of Numbers 6:26 "The Lord lift up His countenance on you. And give you peace."

This was the mission and message of Jesus.

Romans 5: 1 "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...."

Isaiah 53:5 "The chastening of our well-being (NASB) peace (KJV) fell upon Him...."

Ephesians 2: 12-17

Our Lord and Master is a man of peace, so should we be by carrying the gospel of peace.

Ephesians 6:15 "and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace."

#### 2. He seeks peace, especially in the body of Christ.

Philippians 2: 1-5 speaks of this harmony and unity:

"...make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus."

Jesus loves unity in His body. But this unity does not come because we all dress alike, or vote alike, or even believe alike. But instead we have the same purpose and attitude.

Eph. 4:3. Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

- ◆ Peacemaking requires risk-taking. In reconciliation someone must initiate the painful process.
- ◆ Peacemaking does not bring equals together. In reconciliation someone must be willing to suffer wrongs.
- ◆ Peacemaking does not reconcile all details. Someone must be willing to forgive the past and relinquish the right to blame.
- ◆ Peacemaking requires soothing words of reconciliation. Someone must avoid the temptation for the last or cutting word.
- ◆ Peacemaking begins at the cross. Persons must seek reconciliation for Christ's sake.

Romans 16: 17 "Now I urge you, brethren, keep an eye on those who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which you learned, and turn away from them."

Proverbs 6:19 He is listing the things that the Lord hates and he adds: "A false witness who utters lies, and one who spreads strife among brothers."

Isaac from Syria notes that... "If you are not a peacemaker, at least do not be a troublemaker."

Warren Wiersbe sums up this beatitudes going beyond the body of Christ when he says, "Christians should bring peace, between people and God and between those who are at odds with each other. We share the Gospel of peace."

**Notice the affirmation the Lord gives to such people "They shall be called sons of God."**

The word "called" is passive voice. Someone else is calling you this, not yourself. Who?

1. God
2. Others

Phillips "...for they will be known as sons of God."

John 13:35 "By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."