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A Disciple's Heart Is ... Eager to Restore Peace
"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."
Matthew 5:9

Today we will unpack the seventh of the eight "blessed" statements, found at the beginning of the SOTM, and discover what Jesus means when he says "**blessed are the peacemakers.**" A peacemaker is the seventh distinguishing mark, or recognizable trait, of a true child of God.

Once a man sees his position before God and understands how the world was meant to be, he becomes singly focused on God's Kingdom. He is relentless, as he searches for opportunities to restore peace between God and man. **A disciple's heart is eager to restore peace.**

The Jewish idea of "shalom" - not just the absence of trouble
A complete, fully reconciled, whole life

James 3:18 *And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*

Here Jesus is saying; it is a good thing when you understand that man's biggest need is peace with God. Happy is the man who assists in the peace process between man and God. Jesus says; you'll be seen as one of Mine when you help reconcile man to God because people will recognize that you are God's family.

The idea here is that a peacemaker's efforts result in good things, gospel things

A peacemaker is marked by:

- Honesty in evaluation of relationships (God, others, the world)
- Taking a situation or relationship and putting it in the context of the gospel
- Willing to risk pain, suffering, persecution
- Pain in apologizing for our own sin against God and others
- Pain in the risk to rebuke someone else of their sin

Sin is rebellion, an intentional lack of peace between God and man

Being a peacemaker is not passivity - it's not just walking away to avoid confrontation, allowing sin in us or in someone else to rule the day

This is a struggle for a lot of us:

1. We may see ourselves as victims, always run over by lesser, not so nice people in our lives

2. We may see ourselves as the sheriff in town, making it our job to evaluate and call out other people. We sometimes mistake peacekeeping with making peace.
3. We may see ourselves as helpless against being at war with someone, like we don't know what to do with ourselves if we're not currently in an inter-personal battle. We're not happy unless we're fighting.

None of us can be a peacemaker, unless we have already found peace in Jesus

1 John 3:1 *See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it does not know him.*

God the Father's greatest expression of His love for us is that He would reconcile us to Himself; that He would adopt us - He gives us peaceful relationship with Him.

To be "called" is to be owned

A "child of God" is also seen in the resemblance and imitation of the Father

Romans 8:14-17 *For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, Abba! Father! The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs - heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him.*

In **Colossians 1:15-22** we see that Jesus was eager to restore peace between man and God.

"He (Jesus) is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities - all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. **For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.** And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you whole and blameless and above reproach before him."

*Jesus is the chief Peacemaker - His was and is a rescue mission of peace
His death on the cross paid the price so we, broken, fractured people could return to our original created state - unity with God.

*We get to be peacemakers - participating in the same rescue mission
*As peacemakers we contribute to unity in the Body of Christ, expressed primarily in our own church body

If your heart is not eager to help restore peace between man and God, be honest about that.

Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart and show you why your heart is cold.

Ask God to give you his heart for lost people.

Thank Jesus for humbling himself and dying on the cross, so that you might be saved.

Praise Jesus because he made the way for you to have peace with God.

Give praise to God because on the new earth there will be no war, strife, broken relationships or jealousy.

To be on mission is to be a peacemaker

A missionary is someone devoted to sharing that peace can be had with God

If your heart is timid towards your mission as a peacemaker, be honest about that.

Pray and admit your fears to God.

Pray and ask the Holy Spirit to empower you, just as the Apostle Paul did in **Ephesians 6:19** "And also for me, that words may be given me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly as I ought to speak."

Thank Jesus that he made peace between you and God.

Thank Jesus for his righteousness that allows you to boldly approach the throne of God.

Praise God for his great love for you and for drawing you to him.

Tell God that you look forward to the day when you will stand perfect in his presence.

We were once broken - but are now redeemed - and we look forward to our eternity of full restoration.

What binds us together? Love...because He first loved us

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