

# Blessed Peace

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Well, if we could, for a short while, if we could turn to the Gospel of Matthew, Matthew chapter 5. And with the Lord's help, we're going to look at the next beatitude.

I have three questions for the gentlemen at the back and the ladies and gentlemen in the congregation. Just so you're listening. Question one is, what is this week's beatitude?

What is this week's beatitude? Okay, you got that? Yeah. Question two is, what is the Hebrew word for peace? What is the Hebrew word for peace? And question three, what peace do Christians possess?

What peace do Christians possess? So what is this week's beatitude? You'll hear that in a second. What is the Hebrew word for peace? What peace do Christians possess? Okay, you get them right, you get sweets at the door and you can eat them before bed. Okay, Matthew chapter 5, we're reading from the beginning. Seeing the crowds, Jesus went up on the mountain and when he sat down, his disciples came to him. And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. And our text this evening, verse 9. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons or the children of God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

[ 2 : 1 0 ] When you live in a house with three young men, it can sometimes feel like a war zone. Most of the time, that's because they're playing soldiers with their Nerf guns. And they've built defense walls at either end of a long hallway in the manse. And well, while they're shooting one another, you really have to watch yourself and be careful not to get caught in the crossfire. But at other times, the war zone is because they're, as boys, scrapping and scuffling with one another. And that usually involves shouting and screaming and then fighting and fallouts. And when things get really heated, that's when the parents are called in. The parents are called in to be the referee and the judge. And our role and responsibility is to act as an intermediary or a mediator, an arbitrator within this war zone.

And we have to try and come to reach a sort of resolution and some restoration. And even in some cases, there has to be some repentance. But as you know, the war zones of life, they aren't confined to just the immature actions of children. Because sometimes war zones can be found among mature adults. Adults living within congregations and living within communities. But as Jesus reminds us here in the Sermon on the Mount, and he reaffirms to us in this beatitude, that as Christians, as citizens of the kingdom, as children of our heavenly Father, and as disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ, we are to be peacemakers. We are to be peacemakers. We're to be peacemakers because we possess peace with God and the peace of God. We're to be peacemakers because we possess peace with God and the peace of God. And there are two headings this evening, peace with God and the peace of God.

Peace with God and the peace of God. So first of all, peace with God. Jesus says, blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

Now, as you know, Jesus, he introduces his Sermon on the Mount with these nine beatitudes. They're nine statements of blessing or nine benedictions of blessedness. And they appear right at the outset and the introduction to the Sermon on the Mount because Jesus is teaching us what it means to be a Christian.

He's telling us what it is to be a citizen of the kingdom of heaven, what it means to be a child of our heavenly Father and a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ. But as we said before, in the Beatitudes, Jesus isn't just telling us what we're to do as Christians or even what we're to be as Christians.

[ 5 : 13 ] Jesus is telling us what we already are as Christians. And what we are, as we can see, repeated, the word that's repeated throughout the Beatitudes is we are blessed.

We are blessed people. As sinners who have submitted and surrendered under the authority of King Jesus, as sinners who have come kneeling before their Savior with our heads bowed and our hand outstretched, we have received from the gracious, loving, and merciful hand of King Jesus something we do not deserve at all.

He has blessed us. And He has blessed us, as Paul says, with every spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ. But as we said before, being blessed doesn't just add to something, add something to what we already have.

No, when we submit and surrender our lives to King Jesus, the gospel empties us of all that we are in order to fill us and to bless us with all that Jesus is.

And that's why Jesus, He begins the Sermon on the Mount with the Beatitude in verse 3. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[ 6 : 31 ] It's only those, says Jesus, it's only those who are poor in spirit, those who are emptied of pride and emptied of self, they are the ones who will receive the kingdom of heaven.

Then He says, blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted. It's only those who truly mourn over their sin that will be filled with the comfort and consolation of the gospel.

Then He says, blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. It's only those who are emptied of their self-confidence and their self-assurance and their self-will. They are the ones who will inherit the earth.

Then He says, blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied. It's only those who are declared righteous. And those who desire righteousness, who will find satisfaction.

Then He says, blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy. It's only those who have been shown mercy who will ultimately show mercy. Then last time we considered verse 8, blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

[ 7 : 37 ] It's only those who have a pure head, heart, and hand who shall see God. And then our text this evening, blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

You know, my Christian friend, as citizens of the kingdom, as children of our heavenly Father, as disciples of Jesus Christ, you know, the outworking of this blessedness in our life.

The fact that we are those who are blessed means that we are to possess and also practice blessed poverty, blessed mourning, blessed meekness, blessed righteousness, blessed mercy, blessed purity.

And this evening we're being taught to practice and possess blessed peace. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.

And you know, as those who have been blessed by King Jesus, we're to possess and practice blessed peace. And this is what we need to remember. We have been blessed by King Jesus.

[ 8 : 45 ] We have come kneeling before our Savior, with our head bowed and our hand outstretched, and we have received from His hand what we do not deserve.

He has blessed us with a gift. And it's the gift of blessed peace. So we have been blessed by receiving peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

That's what we're reading about in Romans 5. What Paul said, he said right at the beginning of Romans chapter 5, Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

So Paul tells us and he teaches us that we have received blessed peace through our blessed righteousness. We have received blessed peace through our blessed righteousness.

We saw before when we considered verse 6, when we considered the beatitude of blessed righteousness. We've been blessed with blessed righteousness. We have received the righteousness of Christ.

[ 9 : 52 ] We have received the gift of righteousness from the hand of King Jesus, just like we've received the gift of peace. And we've received the gift of righteousness, and we've received something that we do not deserve.

We've been made righteous. And this is something we do not deserve, because as you know, by nature, we are sinful. We're sinful by nature. We're sinful by practice.

We are fallen sinners. Our sin leaves us hostile to God. We are at enmity with God. We're enemies of God, says the Bible. We're strangers to grace and to God, says McShane.

There's this great chasm that exists between the holy God of heaven and the unholy mankind who deserves hell. But the glory of the gospel is that those two parties who are at enmity with one another, they are reconciled to God, says Paul.

They're reconciled to God by making peace through the blood of the cross. That's what Paul says to us in Colossians 1. Christ has reconciled us to God by making peace through the blood of his cross.

[ 11 : 04 ] Therefore, the gospel, it's a message of peace. It's a message of redemption, yes. It's a message of restoration, yes. But it's also a message of reconciliation, where we are reconciled to God.

The gospel is a message of reconciliation between a righteous God and his rebellious creation. They are brought together where they were once enemies.

And, of course, this reconciliation is through the righteousness of Christ. This reconciliation is through righteousness, which, as you know, it's Calvary's great transaction.

The worst about me laid upon him. The best about him laid upon me. My rags of righteousness removed his robe of righteousness given to me.

As we read in 2 Corinthians 5, verse 21, For our sake. For our sake. Always stop on those words.

[ 12 : 08 ] For our sake he was made to be sin. Even though he knew no sin. All so that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

It was Calvary's great transaction. It was reconciliation through righteousness. Reconciliation through righteousness.

And that's why Paul said in Romans 5, Since we have been justified by faith. Since we've been made righteous by faith. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

More than that, we're not only righteous, says Paul in Romans 5. We rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through whom we have now received reconciliation.

We have received reconciliation through righteousness. We have been reconciled. God has made peace through the blood of the cross.

[ 13 : 16 ] Do you know, my friend, in Christ, we've not only received blessed righteousness, but we've also received blessed peace. Therefore, peace with God is a gift.

Peace with God is a gift. Because, you know, it's shalom with God. It's shalom with God. Are you listening, boys? The Hebrew word for peace, as you know, is shalom.

The Hebrew word for peace is shalom. But the word shalom, it means much more than just peace. Much more than the sense of peace and quiet.

Or peace without stress. Or peace not war. Shalom refers to a complete and comprehensive peace. It's the safety and security of peace.

It's perfect peace. The peace that only God can give. And you know, in Israel today, when you greet or say goodbye to someone, you would say shalom.

[ 14 : 22 ] But when you say shalom, you're really saying, may God's blessing of peace be upon you. May God's blessing of peace be upon you.

Not only in your going out, but also in your coming in. So, when you say shalom, you're saying that God's blessing of peace be upon you. Therefore, shalom with God, it's the blessing of peace.

It's complete and comprehensive peace. It's safety and the security of peace. It's perfect peace. The peace that only God can give.

It's blessed peace. It's the gift of peace. And you know, that's why Jesus said to his disciples in the upper room.

You remember in John 14, Jesus is just about to go to Gethsemane and on to the cross and die. But he says to his disciples, peace I leave with you.

[ 15 : 24 ] My peace I give unto you. Shalom I leave with you. My shalom I give unto you. You know, what better message to hear when you are being told that your Savior is going to die.

Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you. You know, my friend, we have received shalom with God. We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

But as those who possess peace with God, we also possess the peace of God. As those who possess peace with God, we also possess the peace of God.

That's what we see secondly. The peace of God. So peace with God, the peace of God. The peace of God. Jesus says, You know, it was once said that peace is not only the absence of conflict.

Peace is the presence of Christ. Peace is not only the absence of conflict. Peace is the presence of Christ.

[ 16 : 41 ] Therefore, as those who possess peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, we are also those who possess the peace of God in Jesus Christ.

Through our union with Christ, we possess peace with God and the peace of God. And peace is the presence of Christ.

That's what we read there. Peace is not only the absence of conflict. Peace is the presence of Christ. And so we have the presence of Christ in us. So therefore, we possess peace with God and the peace of God.

And as you know, my Christian friend, the peace of God is peace in your heart. It's what you could say, shalom in your soul. It's complete.

It's comprehensive. It's safe. It's secure peace. It's perfect peace. It's the peace that only God can give. And it's a peace that is probably you would say indescribable.

[ 17 : 40 ] And inexplicable. Because it's a peace which passes and surpasses our understanding. That's why Paul said to the Philippians, you remember in Philippians 4, he says, do not be anxious about anything.

But in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. Why? That the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

And you know, what Paul was saying was that when you pray, when you pray, when you bring your prayers and petitions to the Lord, when you cast all your cares upon the Lord, the peace of God will guard your heart and keep your mind.

When you pray, the peace of God will support you and strengthen you and sustain you. When you are praying about sin in your life or the conflict with Satan or stress or sickness or suffering or sorrow, when you're praying about these things, Paul says, the peace of God, that peace which surpasses all understanding, that peace which we cannot explain to someone else unless they've experienced it for themselves, that peace is what will guard your heart and keep your mind.

That's the peace that will strengthen you and support you and sustain you in all that you're going through. But you know what Jesus teaches us here in this beatitude is that the peace of God is not only to have an influence and an impact upon our lives, it's also to have an influence and an impact upon the lives of others too.

[ 19 : 33 ] Because as those who have received reconciliation, as those who enjoy and experience reconciliation with God, we have been given a ministry and a message of reconciliation.

That's what we were reading about in 2 Corinthians 5. Paul said, he said, if anyone is in Christ, so if anyone is in union with Christ, if anyone is a Christian, he or she is a new creation.

The old has passed away. All has become new, he says. And all this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, entrusting to us the message of reconciliation.

Therefore, says Paul, we are all ambassadors for Christ. God is making his appeal through us. And the appeal, says Paul, is we implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.

Paul says that as those who have been reconciled with God, we have now received a ministry and a message of reconciliation. Therefore, we're to be reconcilers.

[ 20 : 53 ] We're to be peacemakers. We're to exhort and encourage our spouse and our siblings, our family and our friends, our next door neighbor and our neighbors down the road, our colleagues and our classmates.

We're to exhort and encourage them to be reconciled to God, to have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

That's what it means to be a peacemaker. So we're to speak and share the gospel of peace. We're to speak and share about the prince of peace because he's the true peacemaker.

He's the only one who can give sinners that needed and necessary shalom. In fact, as we said before when we were going through all these beatitudes, they highlight for us a Christ-like character, conduct and conversation because when we read all these beatitudes, we're asking the question, well, who are they actually describing?

Who is the one who is poor in spirit? Who mourns over sin? Who is meek? Who is righteous? Who is merciful? Who is pure in heart? Who is a peacemaker?

[ 22 : 12 ] And of course, they describe Jesus. The beatitudes depict and describe Jesus because he is the blessed man. And so as Christians, as followers of Christ, as citizens of this kingdom, as children of the heavenly Father, as disciples of Jesus Christ, as those who have been blessed by King Jesus, we are those who are called and commissioned and commanded in the gospel to imitate and emulate Jesus Christ.

We're to possess and practice blessed peace. We're to possess and practice the peace of God by being peacemakers. We have received a ministry and a message of reconciliation, which means that we're to speak and share the gospel of peace about the Prince of Peace.

And you know, there's one thing we're not to be. We're not to be like false prophets. Do you remember the false prophets in Jeremiah's day? The people were cutting out for themselves broken cisterns that could hold no water.

And these false prophets, they were proclaiming peace, peace when there is no peace. But you know, my friend, as a church and as a congregation, Paul says, we have a ministry.

We have a message. A message to share to our congregation and our community. It's a message of reconciliation. We have a Savior of shalom that we're to speak about because He's our friend and our Savior.

[ 23 : 55 ] We're to share Him with others. We're to speak a word in season when the opportunity arises. And you know, when you read through the Bible, you know, it actually has this great emphasis upon peace and the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ.

We sang earlier in Psalm 122. And as you know, Psalm 122 focuses upon Jerusalem. And in fact, the whole Bible focuses upon Jerusalem because for the Israelites, Jerusalem was the center of the earth.

It's where the temple was. It's where the Lord dwelt amongst His people. But Jerusalem, as we said, the name Jerusalem means city of peace.

And the kings who dwelt in Jerusalem were often referred to as kings of peace because they were the king in Jerusalem. But you know, the Bible, it also exhorts and encourages us to follow the true king of peace, the prince of peace.

Listen and listen to the gospel of peace. But you know, when you read through all these exhortations in the Bible, the commission in the Bible is go in peace.

[ 25 : 07 ] Hold your peace. Jesus says to His disciples, peace be unto you. Peace be still. As we serve our congregation and community, we're to be at peace with one another.

We're to plan peace, says the Bible. We're to perfect peace. We're to practice peace. We're to pray for peace. We're to pursue peace.

We'll sing that later on in Psalm 34. We're to pursue peace. We're to speak peace. We're to seek peace. We're to show peace. We're to strive for peace. We're to look for peace.

We're to live in peace. We're to love peace because the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

Peace is emphasized to us again and again throughout the Bible because as those who have been reconciled to God, we have been given a ministry and a message of reconciliation.

[ 26 : 09 ] As those who have experienced and enjoy peace with God and the peace of God, a peace that passes all understanding, as those who have been shown shalom, we are also to show shalom to others.

As those who have received blessed peace, we're to be peacemakers. That's what Jesus is saying. We're to speak peace and share peace. We're to show peace and strive for peace and seek peace within our congregation and within our community.

You know, there's one chapter I find in the Bible that's very, very challenging and it's Romans chapter 12.

I want you to read Romans chapter 12 when you get home. Don't do it just now. Read Romans chapter 12. Romans chapter 12 is a challenging chapter which sets out for us as Christians the call, the commission, and the command of the Christian to live our lives in a Christ-like character, conduct, and conversation.

And one of the Christ-like characteristics which Paul highlights is the need to possess and practice and even pursue peace with the people around us.

[ 27 : 36 ] Paul says, if possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Now you think about that. You think about those around you. You think about those maybe in the workplace or living close to you. If possible, so far as it depends on you.

So the onus, says Paul, is on you. You are the peacemaker. You're the one who has peace with God. You have the peace of God. So if possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

Now you read the whole of Romans 12. It's a very challenging chapter. But you know, my friend, we are to possess, practice, and pursue peace with the people around us.

And we're to do it by our worship, by our witness, in our work. And when we do it, Jesus says, we shall be called the children of God.

[ 28 : 45 ] We will be known as peacemakers. We'll be known to those around us as peacemakers. We will demonstrate and display that we have peace with God and the peace of God.

my friend, as Christians, as followers of Christ, and I'm saying this with you, not at you. I'm saying it with you.

As Christians, as followers of Christ, as citizens of the kingdom, as children of our heavenly Father, as disciples of Jesus Christ, this beatitude, it's reminding and reaffirming to us that we are to imitate and emulate our prince of peace.

We're to possess, practice, and pursue peace with other people. We're to be peacemakers. We're to speak peace and seek peace and share the gospel of peace.

Because as Jesus says, blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children, the children of God.

[ 30 : 01 ] Well, may the Lord bless these few thoughts to us. Let us pray. O Lord, we realize that when we come before thy word, we are not what we ought to be.

And Lord, we give thanks to thee that thou art the God who has begun that good work and who will bring it on to completion. Our prayer this evening is that thou wouldst make us peacemakers.

Give to us that ministry and message of reconciliation. Remind us, Lord, that we are those who are to pursue peace and practice peace and possess peace in our lives.

And Lord, we do pray that we would be the children of God that we're meant to be, that we would live lives that are worthy of the gospel, that we would be worthy of the name Christian, that we would be followers of Jesus, seeking first his kingdom and his glory.

O Lord, forgive us when we stray. Forgive us when we wander. Forgive us, Lord, when we seek our own gain and our own glory. O Lord, that we would seek first thy kingdom and the glory of God.

[ 31 : 16 ] Bless us, Lord, we pray. Bless thy truth to our souls that it would encourage us, that it would challenge us, convict us and make us more willing to love the Lord more deeply, to follow him more closely, to seek him more earnestly.

O Lord, bless us then we pray. Go before us, do us good for Jesus' sake. Amen. Well, we're going to sing again this time in Psalm 34.

Psalm 34. Psalm 34. Again in the Scottish Psalter, we're singing from verse 8 down to the verse marked 13.

And as usually happens at the end of this singing, the live stream will be, will come to an end. And we'll be asking some of the gentlemen here to pray. But before we sing, I just want to highlight to those who are maybe at home not to switch on the telly to something else, but to take time to pray.

To pray for those who are sick, those whom you know, those who are suffering, those who are sorrowing. And also to pray for those congregations that we're often encouraged to pray for each week, to pray for one another.

[ 32 : 43 ] This week, we're encouraged to pray for London City, Presbyterian Church, LCPC, probably the furthest British congregation away from us. And yet we're encouraged to pray for them.

They are our brothers and sisters in Christ. We actually have a close connection to them in many ways because Bill and Effie were members there for many years. And they were also members in Cobham as well, the other congregation that was in London.

To pray for them, they had a vacancy. The vacancy has recently been filled. The Reverend Andrew Longwee, who was a close pal of mine and who was in Cumbernauld, he's now moving to London.

So pray for them as they move. I suppose it's a huge move, really. They've got two young children. So pray for them as they move to London and begin a ministry there.

There's also a small congregation we're encouraged to pray for, the congregation of Badenoch. God, serves King Yusea and Newton Moore in the Highlands. And they're a lovely congregation.

[ 33 : 45 ] I worship there. I don't know if you've ever been there yourselves. It's a lovely congregation. They're a small group, faithful group. They were there when I was doing a church camp and that's where we worshipped.

And Reverend Alistair Wilson, who's there, who was in Dumasani, who's now in ETS, he's ministering to them and present. So pray for them that they would be encouraged, that they'd know the Lord's blessing in their congregation.

So just to highlight that to you. Psalm 34, we're going to sing Psalm 34 from verse 8 down to the verse marked 15. Did I say 13? 15. Oh, taste and see that God is good, who trusts in Him is blessed.

Fear God, His saints, none that in fear shall be with want oppressed. And then verse 14, depart from ill, do good, seek peace, pursue it earnestly.

God's eyes are on the just, His ears are open to their cry. These verses of Psalm 34 to God's praise. O taste and see that God is good, who trusts in Him is blessed.

[ 35 : 05 ] Fear God, the saints, are glad to fear shall be with want to face.

The lions, young may hungry be, and they may not live for virtual but keen after laid back.

Sing now, are Abend. On the First list in peace, oh, shall drift your faith guard through his feast and ram on the pushing of the earth.

to be given. I shall you teach to understand how ye the Lord should be.

What mind is he that life desires to see good who play home?

[ 36 : 44 ] Thy history bring from speaking and from ill words thy tongue.

Cheap heart from ill to good seek peace pursue eternally God's eyes are on the just clear tears are open to the cry.

cry nothing what are we doing to recover from damaging xa