

Matthew 5:9-12 Blessed are the Peacemakers and the Persecuted Beatitudes, Part 5

Intro 2 Corinthians 1:20- **“All the Promises of God are yes and Amen in Christ!”**

A) How many promises are there? – 300 – 3,000

B) Dr. Herbert Lockyer – has written a Book entitled **“All the Promises of God.”**

C) In this book he points out that there are actually at least **7,487 promises made from God to man**

1) About Health & Happiness / Peace & Prosperity / Freedom / Security

D) **Promise Keepers Vs Promise Believers –**

We love the Promises of God – except this one: “All who desire to live godly will suffer persecution.” 2 Tim 3:12

A) **Don’t want to claim that Promise?** - Not at the Top of my Pocket Bible Promise book!

B) But it is true- Persecution in some form is a part of living a life for JESUS

C) As the world we are living in becomes more and more **Post Modern** and more and more **tolerant** and **more accepting of other lifestyles**

1) Those who stand for what the Bible says will become more and more **ostracized and persecuted!**

D) Jesus has some great words to say to the Persecuted but before that He addresses the Peacemakers -

V.9 **Blessed are the peacemakers**, For they shall be called sons of God.

¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted for **righteousness’ sake**, For theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ **“Blessed are you when they revile and persecute you, and say all kinds of evil against you falsely for My sake.”** ¹² Rejoice and be exceedingly glad, for great *is* your reward in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Now at first glance it would seem odd to some that Jesus would put these two Beatitudes side by side.

The Peacemakers and The Persecuted

A) They seem to be at opposite extremes. – But we will see this morning – they go perfectly together.

B) **Blessed are the Peacemakers** – What does that mean? What is a peacemaker.

C) Simple definition would be someone who is always trying to **PRESERVE peace** where it is
AND
RESTORE peace where it is not!!!

Usually moms are the ones who are trying to **PRESERVE** the peace amongst the kids in the home.

A) In my family growing up I was the older Brother – Younger bro Albert - **So I was the antagonist.**

B) Six years older than my Brother – 16 he was 10 the car incident

1) Really didn’t upset him much after that.

C) But Moms are usually the ones – trying to maintain the peace in the home

D) Sometimes it is the kids who have to try and maintain peace amongst their parents-

1) Keep them from **Arguing and Fighting** – and splitting up.

E) Sad sometimes to see that the only person in the family **acting like an adult is the child!**

1) Stung? True – think about it

Are you a Peacemaker or an Antagonist ?

A) Some people just love a good fight. When an argument erupts they jump in and stir up the pot with their words – **Gasoline on a fire.**

B) They blow up the fires of dissension and discord by picking a side or stirring up both parties – **“Can’t believe he said that to you.”**

1) “You deserve better than that.”

Sad, that is how Some people get their sense of worth and identity- by sticking their nose into everyone else’s business.

A)Peacemakers are the opposite - The peacemaker gets the greatest Joy in defusing animosities and quenching discord.

In classical Greek culture a “peacemaker” was an ambassador sent to entreat for peace – they were honored and trusted diplomats.

A)They knew how to put the needs of their King and country before their own opinions, cares and concerns!

B)The Title of a peacemaker was one of the most RESPECTED TITLES that could be given to you!

C)TRUE IN THE CHURCH

“Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of Peace” – Ephesians 4:3 (NIV)

“Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.” – Romans 14:19 (NIV)

C)When Jesus uses this term – Peacemaker – I think he has something in mind that is greater than diffusing arguments.

1)Or even matters between countries.

D)I think that Jesus is primarily talking about matters of eternal scope and significance

Jesus is thinking in terms of the gospel! PEACE IS AT THE HEART OF THE GOSPEL MESSAGE!

A)JESUS IS THE ULTIMATE – PEACEMAKER

B)Mankind was alienated from God – Sin separated

1)In our sinful pursuits – Every man was doing what was right in his own eyes.

C)Living to gratify ourselves – whatever seemed to make us happy that is what man was pursuing!

1)Man’s rebellious nature drove him further and further away from God

Jesus came – to Bridge the gap – Make peace –

A)Angels announced to the Shepherds at His birth – “Glad tidings of great Joy.....Peace on earth good will toward men.” ~ Luke 2:10,14

B) Jesus left heaven and came to earth to die on a Cross – in paying the price for the sins of humanity

1)Bridge the gap – Bridge builder between Holy God and sinful man

C)Created A way for sinners to be Reconciled to God

“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” ~ Romans 5:1

D)Ephesians 6:15 The gospel –

(the good news about what Jesus did is referred to as the Gospel of peace) That was the mission!

PAUL Sums it up in Ephesians 2:13-18

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

14 For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, 16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity. 17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. 18 For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.

Gospel RECONCILES US TO GOD and UNIFIES us with EACH OTHER

A)Sinners in need of a Savior – brought together at the foot of the Cross!

B)I think this is primarily what Jesus has in mind here – when He uses this term Peacemaker

C)Those who realize their aim/ mission in life help reconcile men to God

Fits the Progression:

A) **Poor in Spirit** – realizing our utter need for God for everything
Beginning with Salvation – Sinners in need of Savior

B) Leads to a mourning over my sinful condition.

1) **Results in a Meekness** – A life that is surrendered unto Jesus – Harnessed by the Holy Spirit – Power under control.

C) I am at my best **when I am surrendered to Him** –

I am becoming who God intended me to be!

D) Leads to a **hungering and thirsting after Righteousness** – A desire for more of Jesus in my life.

The more of Jesus I get – the more Like Jesus I become!

A) **Merciful** – Mercy on others – compassion for others – heart breaks for humanity

B) **Purity of heart** – A desire to live Pure in my life and in my relationships

1) A Life that is undivided and unpolluted by the things of the World –

C) Because I don't want anything to come between my heart and Jesus

D) What happens when you experience Christ – and are growing in Christ?

1) YOU WANT OTHERS TO EXPERIENCE HIM TOO!!!!!!!

E) PEACEMAKER

1) A desire to see others come into Peace with God!

NOTE THE PROMISE Jesus makes to the Peacemaker – for they shall be called Sons of God!

A) Called Sons of God – Idea is like God – resemble Jesus

B) Peacemakers- those who's hearts break for others – remind you of Jesus

Eric Liddell, the Scottish runner whose life was portrayed in the movie Chariots Of Fire, **served as a missionary in China for 20 years**—the last 2 in

a Japanese prison camp during the Second World War.

He was known as a peacemaker among individuals and groups whenever **anger flared** in the stressful environment of the camp. **Liddell's life left a deep impression on everyone.**

When a Japanese guard asked why Liddell was not at roll call one day, a man told him that **Eric had died unexpectedly a few hours earlier.**

The guard paused, then replied, **"Liddell was a Christian, wasn't he?"**

Now think about that: Liddell spoke no Japanese; the guard spoke no English.

A) Their only direct contact was at the required roll calls, twice a day. -

B) How did the guard know that Liddell was a Christian?

1) He observed Christ in Eric as he resolved conflicts in the camp.

C) Being called a Peacemaker in the truest sense of the Word is one of the best compliments we can be given

- **The Source of Peace is God!**
- **The Opponent of Peace is sin!**
- **The Dispenser of Peace is the Christian!**
- **The Reward of Peace is Godliness!**
GOD LIKENESS -

BUT HERE IS THE RUB – Not Peace at all Cost!

A) SEE that **becomes tolerance**- LETS JUST GET ALONG - Can't do that –

B) We are **called to stand for something** –

1) Stand for **Righteousness**- Stand FOR TRUTH

C) Peacemakers – Know there is only one way to have peace – JESUS – **HE IS THE WAY – THE TRUTH.**

1) ONE GOD – ONE SAVIOR – ONE WAY

D) Often times that results in Persecution

1) Go on a college Campus today – talk about any religion – Buddhism - Islam - New Age - **NO PROBLEM**

2) **Mention Jesus – that is a problem – Exclusive Pastor Saaed Abedini – Serving an 8 Year prison sentence in an Iranian Prison – brutally beaten**

A) One reason – talking to people there about Jesus

B) **President Obama recently met with Nagmed-Saaed's wife – Calvary Boise – and his kids**

1) Goal to get him home for his son's Birthday March 15th

C) Be praying – That is Iran – NOT HERE

Woman on Staff at Calvary Knoxville – Death threats

A) Huge influx of Arab population - Led girl to Christ – DAD – daughter must die and this one must die ([See More of that here in America years to come](#))

**Persecution today:
How many are being persecuted for their faith world wide?**

A) **ESTIMATED 100 MILLION** persecuted for their faith world wide?

B) Christians in more than 60 countries face persecution from all sorts of Governments – or surrounding neighbors simply because of their faith in Christ

C) Each month

- 320 Christians are killed for their faith
- 214 Christian churches or properties are destroyed
- 722 acts of violence – including beatings and rapes and abductions

How were people persecuted in the first century?

A) **AT WORK:**

B) Lets say you were a first century stone mason – your company gets a contract to build a new temple to one of the gods.

C) Or someone wants to hire you to build a new statue of one of the gods.

D) **What do you do?**

1) Refuse – persecuted – **black balled** – no work comes your way

Tailor: Contract to weave garments for the pagan Priest of the goddess Aphrodite

A) Again – what do you do? **Refuse – they could make way for you to completely go out of business**

B) A young man went to Tertullian – First century theologian of the day

1) He went to complain that he was losing work because of his Christianity – he said – what I am to do – I need to live ?

C) **Tertullian's response: Do you? –**

1) See when faced with making a living or loyalty to Christ – many choose loyalty to Christ –

D) **Threat of affecting your livelihood (Still today Passed up on Promotions – won't cheat/lie Socially**

A) Invited to a friend or relatives house – common custom – they would take a glass of wine and pour it out – in honor of the gods

B) You refuse to do it – Insult to your host and the gods

C) Suddenly – you are blackballed from society

D) Still go through that today – right

1) **Story of Daniel -**

C) 1st century Christian Martyrdom:

- Fed to the lions –
- Dipped in Wax – human candles
- Dressed as animals and chased down by wild dogs
- Torn apart on the Rack
- Beheaded and Crucified

WE GET UPSET BECAUSE SOMEONE POSTED SOMETHING MEAN ABOUT US ON FACEBOOK

Reasons for Persecution?

A) **V.10 For Righteousness sake – V.11 His sake**

B) Important to mention this – because some Christians get persecuted for being weird. –

1) Say stupid things – witnessing fast food line

C) False spirituality – talking funny

D) Witnessing on the Job when supposed to be working

1) Got fired – Persecuted for Righteousness sake

For Righteousness – HIS SAKE

A) You want to live for JESUS – Persecution

{Honest in Business dealings

B) No longer invited to the Parties – Lose friends

C) Say no to drugs – Porn - Persecuted and teased

John 15:18-20

¹⁸ “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before *it hated you*. ¹⁹ If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.

²⁰ Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.

PROMISE TO THE PERSECUTED:

A) Same as Poor in Spirit - - Kingdom resources
Strength to endure it –

B) Ability to rejoice in the midst of it (Paul and Silas – singing in Prison at midnight – can’t imagine that)

C) Peter and John -

1) Acts 5:40 “And they agreed with him, and when they had called for the apostles and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. ⁴¹ So they departed from the presence of the council, **rejoicing** that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name. ⁴² And daily in the temple, and in every house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.”

D) That is not normal but supernatural

Fear of persecution? Not sure I could handle that

A) **Corrie ten Boom Story** – when do I give you the ticket?

B) Early Church prayed not for Persecution to end – but for the Strength to continue to be bold.

C) Special Fraternity -Fellowship of His sufferings – Philippians 3:10 Know him in his Resurrection power and the Fellowship of his sufferings

Promise to the Persecuted – Kingdom Resources

A) But also a Great reward: Great is your reward in Heaven

➤ Romans 8:18 “**I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.**”

➤ 2 Corinthians 4:17 “**For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.**”

Quote from Spurgeon – Yesterday Morning and Evening Devotions

“**Christian, meditate much on heaven**—it will help you to press on, and to forget the toil of the way.

This valley of tears is but the pathway to the better country! This present world of woe is but the **stepping-stone to a world of bliss.**”

Stepping stones – not Stumbling blocks

Stand for Jesus today – rewarded tomorrow