**Sermon on the Mount, Session 7**

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

**1) The calling of a peacemaker is much wider than simply restoring broken relationships**

1a) A Biblical “peacemaker” is much more than a political negotiator or a calm family maker who is always trying to bring warring family members together.

1b) Peace is not just an absence of problems, struggle or conflict.

**2) Peace is the presence of God’s blessing, the presence of SHALOM**

2a) In the Old Testament the priests were commanded to say a certain form of words in order to put God’s blessing on the people. “The Lord said to Moses, “Tell Aaron and his sons, ‘This is how you are to bless the Israelites. Say to them: “The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. (SHALOM”). So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them.” (Numbers 6, 22-27).

2b) The Hebrew word “Shalom” and “blessing” are very similar in meaning. If God blesses you you have SHALOM. If you have SHALOM you have been blessed by God.

2c) The blessing ends with these words; “So they will put my name on the Israelites, and I will bless them” (Numbers 6, 27). God’s name is His character. In speaking the blessing, they are physically and spiritually attaching something of God onto the people of God. This is similar to the New Testament concept of “The Kingdom of God”.

2d) You can’t have SHALOM outside of God’s rule. If the Kingdom of God is present, you have SHALOM. The two go together.

2e) SHALOM is the tangible expression of God’s blessing. My vision of Pakistan.

**3) The two places in the Bible where Shalom reigned**

3a) There are only two places in the Bible where people lived in the fullness of God’s blessing or SHALOM. One right at the beginning (the Garden of Eden). The other right at the end, in the heavenly city.

3B) In the beginning, as God created the world and everything in it, the Bible tells us that “God saw that it was good”. (Genesis Chp. 1 vs 9, 12, 18, 21, 25 & 31).

Everything that God had made was bursting with life & health, perfectly ordered and in complete harmony with everything else. Everything was filled with the glory and the presence of God. It was full of SHALOM or Peace.

3b) We get a similar picture of life in the New Jerusalem (Isaiah 65, 17-25; Rev. 21)

**4) The meaning of the Biblical word of Peace - SHALOM**

4a) The word SHALOM applies to 4 different areas of life;

4b) Peace with God. You can’t get peace without connecting to the source of peace, the God of peace.

4c) Living at peace with God brings the following attributes into your life;

You are one with God. Living in His presence. There is a constant two way communication between you and God. From man’s side, there is obedience and submission. From God’s side there is blessing, favour & His presence.

**5) Peace in yourself**

5a) If you want to have peace in yourself, you have to be at peace with God.

When you live at peace with God, you are at peace with yourself.

5b) Living at peace with yourself brings the following attributes into your life;

Your life is full of Praise & Worship. You are overflowing with Joy. You enjoy good Health and a strong sense well-being. You are confident, strong, complete, whole, free, and fulfilled. You are living life in all its fullness.

**6) Peace with others**

6a) You can’t have peace with others if you aren’t living at peace in yourself.

When you are living with feelings of hurt or rejection, of jealousy, insecurity or fear, there’s no way you can be a peacemaker. Those feelings affect the way that you interact with others. They damage your relationships.

6b) When you life at peace with yourself, what’s in you normally overflows to those around you. You become a Peacemaker.

6c) Living at peace with others brings the following attributes into your life;

You are comfortable and secure in who you are, so you can live in harmony with others. You enjoy strong and fulfilling relationships, characterised by openness, honesty, trust, honour and love. You live in Safety, enjoying the protection of God and others.

**7) Peace in your environment**

7a) When you live at peace with others, it spills over and helps to create a peaceful environment in which you live.

7b) Living at peace in your environment brings the following attributes into your life;

The place where you live and the areas where you work are blessed by God. Your world is full of goodness, light, abundance, fruitfulness, order, creativity, beauty and growth.

**8)We choose how much peace we have in our life**

8a) Adam and Eve swapped a life full of peace for an apple.

8b) If they had understood the full implications of their choice, they would never have done it.

8c) In most issues of life, there is God’s way and there is the other way. If we choose the other way, we lose all the things whose source is God, for example love, joy and peace.

**9) Peace lost with God**

9a) When peace is lost with God, it’s like cutting off the flow of water at the top of a stream. All the water downstream will stop flowing.

9b) When you loose your peace with God, your life becomes characterised by;

Separation from God instead of closeness. God’s curse in the place of blessing. Judgment instead of welcome. Darkness and death instead of Light and Life.

**10) Peace lost in yourself**

10a) When you lose your peace with God, you can never live fully at peace with yourself because the deepest part of who you are is out of order.

10b) When you don’t have peace in yourself, your life is characterised by;

You feel empty, frustrated, dissatisfied and incomplete, like something is missing. You often are sorrowful, in despair, complaining and mourning, living in anxiety and fear. Life often brings sickness, pain and distress. You feel weak and insecure and you are unable to break free from these feelings. You sense that life is being lost and evil and death are never far away.

**11) Peace lost with others**

11a) When you don’t have peace in yourself, you can’t fully live at peace with others.

11b) When you lose peace with others, life is characterised by;

Discord and division. Lying. You deceive and are deceived. You are surrounded by broken and unfulfilling relationships. You experience loneliness and separation, blaming others for your problems. Y are never able to fully open yourself up because you can’t trust others. You feel jealous of others and compete for acceptance. You fight and hate others and they do the same to you. You often feel vulnerable or wounded.

**12) Peace lost in your environment**

12a) When you are not living at peace with God, yourself or others, the environment that you live in reflects that lack.

12b) When peace is lost in your environment your life will be characterised by;

Loss, Lack. Poverty. Struggle. Sweat. Pain. Thorns & thistles.. Pollution. Devastation. Captivity. Rot, Decay and Death.

**13) God the Father is “the God of Peace”**

13a) In the OT God the Father is called “Jehovah Shalom” (Judges 6, 24). In the beginning, when He created the earth, He filled it with His SHALOM.

13b) In the NT, 5 times He is called 5 times “The God of peace”. (Romans 15, 33; Rom. 16, 20; Phil. 4, 9; 1 Thess. 5, 23; Heb. 13, 20).

**14) The Holy Spirit gives peace**

14a) The Holy Spirit brings supernatural peace into the lives of believers (John 20, 21-22).

14b) Peace is one of “The fruit of the Spirit is … peace” (Gal. 5, 22).

**15 Jesus is “The Prince of Peace”**

15a) Jesus came into the world to win back for humanity the possibility of peace with God, peace with themselves, others and their environment.

15b) Long before Jesus was born It was prophesied that Jesus would be called “The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9, 6),

15c) Jesus made peace between us and God through his death on the cross. “He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53, 5; Eph 2, 14, Col. 1, 19-20; 1 John 3, 8).

**16) Peace now and not yet**

16a) Although Jesus death brought us peace, that peace is not fully realised yet in the world around us. The fullness of God’s Kingdom will not be experienced until Jesus comes back to the earth for a second time.

16b) When Jesus comes back, the Bible tells us that;

* Jesus will overthrow all of God’s enemies (Rev. 19, 11-21; Joel 3; Zech. 14, etc)
* Satan will be bound for 1000 years (Rev. 20, 1-3)
* He will be established as the King of the earth, ruling for 1000 years from the city of Jerusalem (Rev. 20, Joel 3, 17-21; Zechariah 14, Isaiah 65, 17-25)
* During that time, the Bible tells us ( Isaiah 65, 17-25) people will enjoy exceptional health and live for hundreds of years
* There will be no more warfare or strife. People will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. (Isaiah 2, 4 & Micah 4, 3).
* Even nature will be at peace, with the wolf and the lamb feeding together and the lion eating straw like the ox

16c) Until Jesus comes back, his SHALOM will not fully reign upon the earth.

**17) How much of God’s peace can we expect to live in now?**

 (These % are EXTREMELY approximate and depend on your spiritual maturity, your environment and those around you).

17a) **Peace with God = up to 100%.**

“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 5, 1)

17b) **Peace in yourself =Up to 90%.**

Through the cross, Jesus died to set us free from the power of sin, sickness, fear and death. (Isaiah 53, 4-6). However we still live in a broken, sinful world in weak, mortal bodies and will ultimately die. “We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.” (2 Cor. 4, 7).

“If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”

(1 John 1, 8)

17c) **Peace with others = up to 70%**

Although we should strive to live at peace with everyone around us, it will not always be possible. Jesus was clear that if we follow him, many people will hate us and persecute us. Following Jesus is sometimes the cause of conflict rather than peace.

“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.” (Matt. 10, 34-36).

“(Pray) … for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.” (1 Tim 2, 2)

“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone”

(Rom. 12, 18)

 “ Blessed are you when people hate you, when they exclude you and insult you and reject your name as evil, because of the Son of Man. ….Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets.”

(Luke 6, 22-26)

**17d) Peace in their environment = up to 50%**

Although we should aim to bring God’s blessing and peace into the physical world around us, we still live in a fallen world that is subject to God’s curse (Gen. 3, 16-19). Even if you create the perfect garden, weeds will still grow, pests will still come and destroy and plants will still die.

“For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God” (Rom. 8, 19-23)

17e) In spite of the difficulties, Peacemakers are called to bring as much of God’s Kingdom to the earth as they possibly can.

**18) Peacemakers role is to bring God’s supernatural Kingdom to the earth**

18a) “Blessed are those whose strength is in you, whose hearts are set on pilgrimage. As they pass through the Valley of Baca, they make it a place of springs; the autumn rains also cover it with pools.” (Psalm 84, 5-6).

18b) **A Peacemaker is one whose strength is in God**. A peacemaker is not just called to bring human wisdom to dispel an argument, but to bring the supernatural SHALOM - the atmosphere of heaven - into the situation.

18c) “If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation: The old has gone, the new has come. All this is from God, who has made peace with us through Christ and has given us the ministry being peacemakers” (2 Cor. 5, 17-18).

**19) A peacemaker is one who’s heart is set on pilgrimage.**

19a) The biggest obstacle to God’s peace coming to the earth is our heart.

* We find it hard to forgive those who have hurt us.
* We find it hard to love all those that God loves
* We find it hard to believe that God’s shalom could come into that situation.

19b) The size of our heart limits how much of God’s Kingdom can come through us onto the earth. Our heart is the portal through which the life of God flows from heaven to earth.

19c) Every time we say “NO” or turn away from someone God loves, our heart becomes a little smaller and a little harder. Every time we say “YES” or open our heart to love someone, our heart becomes a little larger and a little softer.

19d) We say; “My life is full. I don’t have enough capacity to care for that one or to pray for that situation or to give to that cause”.

19e) God might say; “That’s true. Your heart is at the limit. But ask of me and I will make your heart big enough so that you can have the nations as your inheritance”.

We need to commit ourselves to constantly be working on our heart. Set your heart on Pilgrimage.

**20) “As they pass through the valley of Baca, they make it a place of springs”**

20a) The valley of Baca was a dry desert valley, a valley without water. The Hebrew word Baka literally translates as “Weeping”. The valley is a dry, arid place of weeping.

20b) To be a peacemaker you have to look for those valleys of Baca and head straight for them. It’s not a place that we would naturally want to go to. The peacemaker looks for all those places where God is absent, where God is needed.

20c) As he walks through the valley of Baca, it becomes a place of springs. Your tears become the spring of living water in that dry place. After you have passed through, it is no longer an arid desert valley but a place of springs.

**21) “The autumn rains also cover it with pools”.**

21a) When you move into the valley of Baca, it starts to rain in that dry desert valley where it has never rained before.

For example, you find some family that’s living in trouble, in conflict, in poverty, and you start coming alongside them, praying for them, helping them, trying to bring them to God. Your prayers will start to bring the SHALOM of God into that family for the first time ever. If they accept the rule of the Prince of Peace, that arid, God forsaken home will become a beautiful place filled with springs of living water.

**22) Peacemakers are called “Children of God”**

Jesus said that “Peacemakers” are called the children of God because they are sharing the character and the works of their heavenly father.