

NICK GUY & THE PIECE OF LAND PEACEMAKER AFFAIR

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THEME: What is the difference between “Peacekeeping” and “Peacemaking,” and why does it matter?”

NOTES: In Matthew 5:9, Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” What does it mean for us to be peacemakers? What is the essence of real peace?

PRELUDE TO PEACEMAKING: A.W. Pink, in his commentary on Matthew 5:9 wrote: “This seventh Beatitude has to do more with conduct than with character, though, of necessity, there must first be a peaceable spirit before there will be active efforts put forth to make peace.” A peaceable spirit is what motivates someone to be a peacemaker and work to bring peace out of conflict.

In this first section of the Sermon on the Mount, known as the Beatitudes, Jesus is defining the character of those who are citizens of the Kingdom of God. About this, Pink wrote: The first four [Beatitudes] may be grouped together as setting forth the negative graces of their hearts. They are not self-sufficient, but consciously poor in spirit; they are not self-satisfied, but mourning because of their spiritual state; they are not self-willed, but meek; they are not self-righteous, but hungering and thirsting after the righteousness of Another.

“In the next three [beatitudes], the Lord names their positive graces: having tasted of the mercy of God, they are merciful in their dealings with others; having received a spiritual nature, they now hate impurity and love holiness; having entered into the peace which Christ made by the blood of His Cross, they now wish to live in amity with all.”

The one who experiences peace with God understands, first of all, how far short he falls of righteousness and appreciates the mercy and grace he has received from God. He understands his dependance upon God for salvation. Having experienced peace with God, he sees its value, and desires that peace for others.

We should consider the peace with God that we have experienced through the blood of Jesus, and apply the manner, the precepts and the causes of that work as the template for resolving this situation and bringing about a just and long-lasting peace.

PEACEMAKER VS. PEACEKEEPER: There is a sharp contrast between being a peacemaker and being a peacekeeper. A peacekeeper is interested in pacifying both sides in a disagreement. The strongest desire is to “keep” peace. But the peacemaker is more interested in administering justice, which brings about a true and final

reconciliation.

The peacekeeper views peace itself as the highest goal, whether justice is present or not. But, the peacemaker sees justice as central to true peace. For example, the peace we have with God is centered on justice. Jesus secured our reconciliation, our peace, with God by taking upon Himself the just penalty for our sin - which is what had separated us from God. He fulfilled justice, so our peace with God is not temporary, but eternal.

DEFINING TERMS: When we think of peace, and those who strive to either keep or make peace, there are several words that are commonly heard.

The word **peace** itself could be defined as freedom from disturbance; a state of quiet and tranquility. The cessation of war or violence

Then there's the word **appeasement**. The word "Pacify" means to quell anger or agitation. It means to cause someone who is angry or upset to become calm. The word "appeasement" means acceding to the demands of a person or persons as a means to pacify or placate or satisfy them.

Of course, when we are interpreting Scripture, it's important to understand how the Bible uses and defines these words. In his commentary on Matthew 5:9, where Jesus promised: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God," Pink writes: "It is not a peace at any price which the Christian loves and aims to promote. No, indeed, that is a false peace, unworthy to be called peace at all..."

"Peace is not to be sought at the expense of righteousness...it is such...peace as God Himself approves of...We are to avoid all needless occasions of contention, yet not to the point of sacrificing the Truth, compromising principle, or forsaking duty"

The *Peacekeeper* is eager to simply pacify or appease each side in a dispute. The *Peacemaker* seeks to administer justice and reconciliation.

History has shown how attempts at peacekeeping, attempts to appease and pacify, may yield short-term peace, but ultimately delivers long-term conflict. Whereas, with peacemaking, where justice is desired and established, although it may result in short term strife, the end result is long term peace.

Perhaps one of the clearest examples we have of this in recent history is the attempts made to appease Adolph Hitler in the 1930s. He became aggressive and threatening, and those who desired to keep the peace willingly gave in to his demands in the hope that once he got what he desired, his aggression and threats would cease. But, unfortunately, appeasement only fueled his passions and he demanded more. In the end, the attempts to keep the peace yielded only short-term peace. It would take a war to make peace.

Often confrontation will bring more turmoil instead of less, but the only way to peace is the way of righteousness.

PEACE IN LIGHT OF THE GOSPEL: It might be helpful for us to see peace making in light of the Gospel. Because of our sin, we are all estranged from God, and there is enmity between us and Him. The peace that God provides replaces strife with righteousness. And that righteousness brings harmony and true well-being.

But, God's peace did not come without conflict. Jesus had to suffer and die on our behalf to secure it. Sometimes strife is necessary to bring about peace. Peace does not mean all avoidance of conflict, but the just settling of conflict. To sacrifice purity for the sake of peace is a false peace. (Jer 6:14) God's peace never evades issues, it does not gloss over, rationalize or excuse sin. It confronts problems and seeks to solve them. After the problems are solved it builds a bridge between those who were separated by the problems.

THE PLIGHT OF THE PEACEMAKER: It's not uncommon for peacemakers, although they try to bring righteousness and truth, to be frequently accused of being troublemakers and disturbers of the peace. When King Ahab saw the prophet Elijah in 1 Kings 18:17 he greeted him with by saying, "Is it you, you troubler of Israel?"

Even Jesus was accused of being a troublemaker. The Jewish leaders in Luke 23:2,5 accused Him of misleading the nation and stirring up the people. In both of these cases, it was truth and righteousness that prompted the accusations.

In Matthew 5:9 when Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God," the peace Jesus is speaking of is more than simply the absence of conflict and strife. He is speaking of the presence of righteousness. Jesus is the Maker of Peace. Peace between God and man. And that peace is dependant upon righteousness.

THE GREATEST GIFT: Man's biggest problem is sin. Where one spends eternity is determined by sin. The sinful man will never, can never, get to Heaven. With this being the case, Jesus is the greatest gift of peace the world has ever known, because only He can remove our sin and bring us peace with God.

In Ephesians 2:13,14, the Apostle Paul tells us: "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in His flesh the dividing wall of hostility."

Jesus reconciles God and man. As it says in Colossians 1:19,20 "For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fulness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross."

ROMANS 5:1: Romans 5:1 reads - "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith,

we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”

We do know that the peace we have with God is based upon justice. The sin that separates us from God has been removed by Jesus taking upon Himself the penalty for our sin. He made peace for us with the Father through His blood.

Referring back to Colossians 1:19,20, we remember “For it was the Father’s good pleasure for all the fulness to dwell in Him, and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross.”

It is Peace through the *blood* of His cross. Sometimes for peace to be genuine non-peaceful methods are required. The peace Jesus was speaking of in Matthew 5:9 was not just the absence of conflict. God’s peace not only brings conflict to an end, but it replaces it with righteousness. And that brings harmony and true well-being.

“SONS” OF GOD: In Matthew 5:9, Jesus promised that those who serve as peacemakers would be called “sons of God.” According to Romans 8:17, the sons of God are “Heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.” These are terms of tender affection and endearment.

The Greek words *huios* and *teknon* are used in the New Testament to speak of the believers’ relationship with God. *Teknon* means a child. It’s a term of tender affection and endearment. (see John 1:12; Eph 5:8; 1 Pet 1:14). They express dignity and honor of the relationship of a child to his parents. And the word *huios* expresses the dignity and honor of the relationship of a child to his parents.

And for Jesus to use the phrase “shall be called” is in a continuous future passive tense, indicating that this relationship with God will exist throughout eternity. The passive tense indicates that all heaven will call peacemakers Sons of God because God Himself has declared them to be His children.

As A.W. Pink wrote: “To be made a child of God is to be renewed in His image and likeness; to be called so is to be esteemed and regarded as such. The Lord Himself is “the God of peace” (Heb. 13:20), and where this holy disposition is manifested by His people He owns them as His children.”

The idea that sinners could be so transformed as to be called children of God was a radical idea in the first century. Until Jesus taught His disciples to pray with the declaration of ‘Our Father,’ no one would have dared refer to God as their Father.

Pink wrote: “Ultimately, God will make it manifest to all the universe that we are His children.” Although we may be considered troublemakers by men, God, Who’s endorsement is of far greater value, sees us as His sons and daughters.

CONCLUSION: Jesus Christ came to earth to reconcile man to God. 2 Corinthians 5:19 tells us that “ in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself.”

Ephesians 2:14 and 16 tell us that Jesus “Is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in His flesh the dividing wall of hostility...and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.”

Jesus reconciled us to God in His flesh. When He went to the cross, He took upon Himself the penalty that was due our sins, sacrificing Himself on our behalf. And that sacrifice was sufficient once for all time. The peace we have with God through Jesus is not temporary, but eternal. *That* is peacemaking.

Once we’ve experienced peace with God, we can be ambassadors for Him in telling others of that peace. And working to help bring peace about.

RESOURCES: A.W. Pink, Sproul, MacArthur