

THE BEATITUDES

BEAUTIFUL CHARACTER
FORMED BY CHRIST



PT. 6:

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS

A POOL CUE AND A CHARACTER COSTUME

What does a pool cue and a homecoming character costume have in common? Both have been used as peacemakers! One time, one of my close friends was playing pool and was about to get in a fight with a stronger and meaner individual. As they lunged at one another to commence the donnybrook, the pool cue snapped between them. It struck them so funny they couldn't even fight - lucky for my friend. Another time, as a scrap was about to happen on a schoolyard, Meredith, who was dressed in a character of a show, intervened with the comic wit of her character, breaking the tension and diverting the attention of the would be fighters. One thing is for sure, comedy is a good peacemaker! But this isn't about comedy. There is a far more powerful peacemaker in our world - One who has the power to bring the most hated of enemies together into a family - the family of God. And it's the people of God who are called to be peacemakers.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.



Peace-making doesn't just mean "stopping a fight." It doesn't really mean that we appease others and avoid conflict. Conflict comes for everyone, at some point or another, and being a peacemaker does not mean being trying to keep peace at any price. For example, sometimes, when you share about people's sin and their need for Jesus, the response is not peaceful. But if having peace at any price was what it meant to be a peacemaker, then people would not want to share about Jesus. But, consequently, those who do not hear the good news of Jesus will have no peace with God. See, peacemaking is not the absence of conflict - but it does impact how we are in conflict.

Peacemaking, for one, means that we don't seek out conflict nor are we responsible for it. Paul was a peacemaker, but people constantly were trying to rile up crowds against him - but he was always innocent of any wrongdoing. (Read Acts 22-26 for a good account of this!) The Bible rather, tells us to "seek peace and pursue it, and to make every effort to live at peace with everyone (Rom. 12:18, Heb. 12:14, 1 Peter 3:11). (Stott) And consequently, peacemakers are a sign of those who are the children of God. These are the people who have the character of God - meaning that the peacemakers reflect the heavenly Father's peacemaking character so vividly that they are acting as His children. (Carson)

//BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS//

That's a pretty important thing to see isn't it: To be called "children of God" means that people recognize that the fruit of your life is consistent with the character of God. Consider what James says of wisdom that comes from above (James 3:17-18): **17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. 18 Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.** It looks like James pulled this right out of the Beatitudes, and I agree, the beatitudes are wisdom from above, and they lay out what it means to be children of God. When Jesus says "They will know you by your love" - peacemaking is a huge part of love. Love will step into a potentially conflict causing situation because they are compelled to do so due to love. That love is meant to bring peace. When Jesus steps into the conflicting messiness of our life, he does so to bring reconciliation with God for us (2 Cor. 5:17-20). And that is costly - real peace and real forgiveness isn't cheap. Likewise, we don't enter into conflict just "to be right and prove the other person wrong." We are seeking to make peace, and that impacts how we step out in love for others - and it costs us our pride sometimes, as well as an easy way out. Peacemaking is hard work, but it's work that we are called to as sons and daughters of the peacemaking and gracious God, who himself brings us peace and reconciled His enemies to himself. What an amazing God!

REFLECT. PRAY. ACT

Reflect: When have you found yourself acting as a "peacemaker"?

How is reconciliation often times costly?

How does the gospel - the reality that all Christians have been reconciled to God - promote peace among Christians who are vastly different from one another? **(Read 2 Cor. 5:17-20)**

Pray: Take a moment to pray and ask God to show you the situations in life where you can be a peacemaker. Pray for the people in your life who you know you need to seek peace and pursue peace with and for. Write down these situations and names in the chart below. Write down the steps you will pursue to seek peace, and pray for it diligently!

Act: Fill out the below chart, and write down some steps to pursue peace in each situation (chart adapted from John Stott, *The Beatitudes*)

PEACE IN THE GOSPEL IS NOT
JUST A CEASEFIRE,

*but the ability to look at people who were
formerly foes and call them family.*

John Onwuchekwa



©CHALLIES

CATEGORY	NEED FOR RECONCILIATION	STEPS TO PEACE
Relationships		
Family		
Church		
School		
Team/Activity		