

Blessed Are The Supernaturally Born Peacemakers

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[0:00] Has anybody heard of Fiddler on the Roof? It's a production, movie, and I can't remember if all Tevye's daughters sing this, but at least one of them does.

Matchmaker, matchmaker, make me a match. You know what I'm talking about? Well, over the last couple weeks, as I've been kind of simmering on Matthew 5-9, this isn't unusual to happen. I will grab a song I know, and I will rework it to meditate on the nature of the Scripture I'm thinking about.

So over the last two weeks, I've been singing this song in light of Matchmaker. Peacemaker, peacemaker, make us some peace. And so this past week, if you saw in your news feed or in the paper, another ISIS suicide bomber who has killed 300 more people, Peacemaker, peacemaker, make us some peace.

Friday morning, when I looked at my news feed and saw five dead Dallas police officers who were killed by a sniper, Peacemaker, peacemaker, make us some peace.

[1:24] When I hear about some of the ridiculous things being said from political stump speeches, Peacemaker, peacemaker, make us some peace. How long is this going to last?

And what about typhoons? Forest fires, famines and floods. Peacemaker, peacemaker, make us some peace.

How long is this going to last? I've got friends who've gone through horrendous fallout from a heroin addiction.

Peacemaker, peacemaker, make us some peace. Heroin dealers in hospitals? Are you kidding me? That's local.

And we all know what I'm about to say. All of us in this room have experienced relational strain. Hardship. Trouble.

[2:28] Maybe it's with your parents, whether you're a teenager, or maybe you're a grown adult still struggling with fallout from what happened with your parents. Peacemaker, peacemaker, make us some peace.

Trouble with your children. Trouble with your spouse. You have a dysfunctional family. You know what that really means? We lack peace.

Peacemaker, peacemaker, make us some peace. And then what goes on inside of you? There are people in this room who are angry.

And given the opportunity, they rage. In this room. Fearful. Verging on paranoid. Anxious.

Can't sleep. I have been there. Insecure. Maybe you've been diagnosed with OCD. Maybe you're depressed. Maybe you have cancer.

[3:28] It all leads to a lack of peace. Maybe disappointments have just piled up in your life, so you just reach the point where it's like, this life stinks.

Peacemaker, peacemaker, make me some peace. Do you feel trapped? You're singing the song. This creation, under the bondage of sin, sings a longing song for peace. All of us, whether redeemed or not, we all sing it.

Peacemaker, peacemaker, make us some peace. Peace. Here's what's amazing about the God of the Bible. Jesus Christ, God incarnate, the Prince of Peace, entered into this hostile, troublesome mess of a creation that we made.

And He came to make peace. What's more amazing is how He did it. He hung on a cross and shed His blood in order to make peace.

[4:48] And now here's what He does. He takes naturally born rebels and transforms them by His grace. He rebirths them into supernatural peacemakers.

You may be asking yourself the question, where are the peacemakers? Sitting in this room. By God's grace, we're the peacemakers.

Blessed are the peacemakers. For they shall be called sons of God. Matthew 5.9 I'm not sure if you know this, but God is on a glorious, eternal, international, peacemaking mission.

And at your conversion, brother and sister in Christ, you were commissioned to be His peacemaker. Blessed are the peacemakers.

For they shall be called sons of God. And so this morning, as we turn to Matthew 5.9, we're back in the Gospel of Matthew, back in the Sermon on the Mount, back into the Beatitudes.

[6:11] I want you to see two things. It's going to come out later in the sermon, but I want you to see two things this morning. You need to know what the Bible says about peace. You really do.

And then you need to know what it means to be a peacemaker for God. So you need to know what the Bible says about peace, and you need to know what Jesus means by being a peacemaker.

His peacemaker. Brother and sister in Christ, God has called you on a peacemaking mission with Him. So what does the Bible have to say about peace?

Well, the first thing you know is, what does it mean by peace? What is biblical peace? Well, since ancient times, Jews would greet one another with shalom.

And it's a little different than, yo, what's up? It's a pronouncement of blessing. Shalom means peace. And so when one Jew would greet another, they would say, they're saying, may the peace of God be upon you.

[7:22] May you be experienced the goodness of God in ever-creasing measure in every area of your life. Shalom to you. Peace. Peace.

When we talk about peace, biblically, you've got to realize it's always connected to God. Always. Peace comes from God. He's the God of peace. And so what we deal with in our world is a world trying to make peace without God. But. As brothers and sisters in Christ, born of God, we make peace, first and foremost with God.

He is our peace. So what is peace? Biblical peace is the experience of God's goodness in relationship to others.

Biblical peace is the experience of God's goodness in relationship to others. And oftentimes we tend to, we think about peace as to what it is not.

[8:29] The absence of something. You know, when you don't experience tension in a relationship or there's no threats, no walking on eggshells, no division, no shame, no awkwardness, you're just like, oh, this is nice.

No troubles here. You can think that's peace. But you know what? That's not biblical peace. That's an aspect of it. But peace, shalom, is fullness of goodness.

Not just the absence of something. It's fullness. It's the experience of God's fullness. Fullness of trust. Fullness of love.

Fullness of understanding and affection and acceptance and safety. Unity. Peace is the experience of God's goodness in relationships.

So let me tell you the story of peace in the Bible. In your Bible from Genesis to Revelation, there is a theme running through it.

[9:39] It's the theme of peace. Peace begins in the garden, right? God at peace with Adam and Eve in the garden. And then, Revelation ends with the redeemed of God in the presence of God in the city of God.

The new Jeru. Shalom. The city of peace. What I'm about to tell you is what the Bible says is where we live.

The story of peace. Original peace starts in the garden. God created the heavens and earth. You remember Genesis 1? He kept on repeating something.

Oh, this is good. This is good. Good, good, good. Good, good. Fullness of goodness. Goodness. And then God drops Adam and Eve in the garden and they're loving it.

It's good. They experience goodness with God. Adam, think about this. Adam had a crystal clear conscience. He slept great.

[10:50] No fears. Full delight. All is great. Relationship with God. I mean, if Genesis 3, 8 is any hint, Adam and Eve would hang out with God in the cool of the day in the garden.

That's awesome. So, all was good with God. All was good within oneself. And Adam and Eve experienced marriage like it was meant to be experienced from the beginning.

God pulled Adam's rib out, created Eve, and handed Eve to Adam. And Adam said, Whoa, man! And they began to dance the dance. The dance of marriage. Adam leading, Eve following. And they were delighted. They were happy. At the end of Genesis 2, do you remember what it says? They were both naked and not ashamed. They knew each other fully.

[11:53] They were united at peace. No wrongs. No weirdness. No hostility. No trouble. Original peace.

And then lost peace. Genesis 3 rolls around. The serpent shows up. Adam and Eve sin. And you know what happens for the first time? You see this in Genesis 3, 8, 9, and 10. Do you remember what Adam did after he sinned? God comes down walking in the cool of the day. Adam, Adam, where are you? Do you remember what Adam did? Why did he hide? He was ashamed. For the first time, internal trouble, lack of peace, internal disintegration began Genesis 3. And we've all been dealing with it ever since. And it just didn't end internally. When God comes to hold Adam and Eve accountable, he says, Adam, what happened?

[13:02] And he's like, that woman made me do it. And then Eve said, that serpent thing made me do it. And when God speaks consequences on Eve and Adam, He introduces hostility into, He doesn't, they introduce hostility into their relationship.

And God says, here's a consequence for it. Now, instead of dancing the dance in unity, they're going to be stepping on each other's toes. They're going to be arguing about who's leading the dance.

Conflict, hardship, frustration. Adam is going to be tempted to either abdicate or he's going to be a tyrant. Eve is going to be tempted to either take the reins from Adam or just be a doormat. Peace lost. Peace lost. Peace lost. Peace lost. And then there's the relationship with creation. Before the fall, God's green earth gave in abundance and gave freely.

Oh, it was good. It was good. Boysenberry trees, oh, full of berries. Drop right in your hands, succulent, wonderful.

[14:12] After the fall came the curse on the earth. Creation subjected to frustration. And now Adam and Eve would experience life on this planet in sweat, toiling for their food.

And threat! Now grizzly bears became an issue. Threat! natural disasters were real. Worst of all, Adam and Eve were kicked out of the presence of God.

Out you go from my presence. And we've all been living east of Eden ever since. Out of the presence of God. Original peace, lost peace, this is good news I'm about to tell you.

In Genesis 3, when God is speaking to the serpent, He says something. He says, there's going to be enmity between your offspring and the offspring of the woman.

And then He starts saying something really interesting. He starts talking about an offspring from Eve that will come and crush the serpent's head. though He will bruise His heel.

[15:37] That's called the proto-evangelium. The first gospel. The first speaking of Jesus coming to crush the head of Satan to bring peace.

And so the Old Testament, you know what it is? We see the disintegrating effects of sin while there's this anticipation for this offspring of Eve who will come.

The Messiah. And with Him will bring peace. And so we enter into the coming of Jesus. Christmas. The incarnation of the second person of the Trinity.

The Prince of Peace has come. And what we learn from passages like Colossians 1, 19-23 is this. He came, lived a perfect life, died, shed His blood, was raised from the grave to make peace.

To make peace with the biggest problem we got. Being separated from God. Jesus came and died on a cross to reconcile us to God through the blood of the cross.

[16:50] And with His coming, He makes it now possible for us to experience unity internally. Unity with other people. And eventually, He puts a hope in us for experiencing unity with this planet.

What I love about the coming of Jesus is this. Our God just didn't stand around and throw a pity party and huff and puff. He entered our mess to make peace.

And so, here we are living after the first coming of Jesus. And those of us who have bowed our knee to Jesus, who by faith believed, trusted in the finished work of Christ, we're at peace with God. It's what Ben read. Romans 5.1. Therefore, since you've been justified by faith, you have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

But it's a partial peace. Though we're at peace with God, we still deal with our own stuff, we still deal with the stuff of others, and we still feel threat from this world.

[18:11] So, reconciled peace is a partial peace. But there's a perfect peace coming. So, we've seen original peace, lost peace, reconciled peace in Jesus.

Perfect peace is coming. And perfect peace is unrestricted. Perfect peace is a fullness of God's goodness in relationship to Him, in relationship to yourself, in relationship to others, in relationship to this planet.

When Jesus comes back, He's bringing with Him perfect peace. Resurrected body for you, brother. Resurrected body for you, sister.

No sinful inclination whatsoever. You're united internally. And then you're in the midst of people who have resurrected bodies, the redeemed of God from the ages, every tribe, tongue, and nation, all together with resurrected bodies.

No fights, no divisions. Unity. We live in the New Jerusalem, the city of peace. No sweat, no threat.

[19:19] It's sweet and a treat. And of course, the greatest all aspects of the perfect peace is that we will actually be with the Prince of Peace.

We will see Him face to face. He will wipe away tears. We're going to be with Him in His place forever. The story of peace in the Bible.

You know what that means? Here's what that means. Here's what we need to be crystal clear on. The problem that causes all the trouble in the world.

You know where the Bible identifies that? You know where the Bible locates that? You know where God says, okay, here is the source of all the troubles that you are experiencing. Do you know what the Bible says about that?

God doesn't couch it in economics. God doesn't couch it in education. Not politics. Not race. God says the problem that this world faces, the source of all the hostility, is sin in the human heart.

[20:45] That's the real problem. I have a friend who went under the knife years ago. His doctor said, we got to do some surgery on you because we think this is the problem.

He went under the knife. It was exploratory surgery, and so they just kept on cutting them to try to find out what the problem is. You know what they found? No problem. They misdiagnosed the issue.

And so their solution missed the mark. For those of us who are called to peacemaking, now at this time, we've got to be laser focused on the problem so that we are laser focused on the solution. we can't misdiagnose what's going on. And God doesn't let us. God says the greatest problem we face is sin in our hearts that separates us from God, that disintegrates us internally, that separates us from our friends and family, and that originated the problem with this planet.

If you turn in your Bible to Mark chapter 7, Jesus says this, and Jesus said what comes out of a person is what defiles him.

[22:03] For from within, out of the heart of man, come evil thoughts, sexual immorality, theft, murder, adultery, coveting, wickedness, deceit, sensuality, envy, slander, pride, foolishness.

All these evil things come from within and they defile a person. Martin Lloyd Jones, preacher, bygone era, said this, the explanation for all our troubles is is human lust, greed, selfishness, self-centeredness.

It's the cause of all the trouble and the discord, whether between individuals or between groups within a nation or between nations themselves. And only I would add is even within you. What the story of peace in the Bible shows us is the greatest problem we face peace. Is sin in the human heart. Which means the only solution, the starting point for peace is the gospel of Jesus Christ.

That's the greatest hope. He alone is able to transform a rebel heart into a peace loving heart. [23:21] Jesus is the ultimate peacemaker. He's the one who is able to change hearts. That's the story of peace. That's what your Bible has to say about peace.

Now let's address this. What does it mean to be a peacemaker? Matthew 5, 9. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

I just want to remind you of a couple things. In order for you to be a peacemaker and know what a peacemaker, what it means, first thing that it means is you never forget.

You never forget that you, Christian, were a natural born rebel. You never forget.

You never forget. In Ephesians 2, Paul reminds these Christians in Ephesus that they were born enemies of God.

[24:30] Dead in their sin. Following the prince of the power of the air. They were under God's wrath. But God in His grace made them alive together with Christ Jesus.

and seated them in the heavenly places. What does it mean to be a peacemaker? First and foremost, it means remembering what you were and what God has done for you.

You were dead. Have you seen those 9-11 stickers, billboards? Never forget. Never forget. I saw a guy with a tattoo.

Twin towers, 9-11. Never forget. Never forget. The Bible never lets us forget who we were. We were enemies, rebels in the flesh.

But God by His grace did something miraculous. brother and sister in Christ, I'm not sure if you think about yourself this way.

[25:45] But did you know that you are actually a living billboard for the supernatural outworking of God's grace in the life of a rebel? Did you know that? You are living proof that God is still doing the miraculous.

miraculous. He was able to transform you, a rebel, into a peacemaker by the blood of Jesus. It's a supernatural work of God's grace.

When Jesus was talking to Nicodemus in John 3, He talked about it like this. You've got to be born again. You need to experience the rebirth that only the Spirit provides.

2 Corinthians 5, the Apostle Paul talks about it as we are new creations. Old is gone. New has come. In God's eyes, when a sinner becomes a believer, the miraculous happens.

Life is given to the dead. Rebels are made peacemakers. It's a radical work of grace. It's a miraculous work of grace. It's a spiritual rebirth.

[26:57] It's a becoming a son or daughter of God most high. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons and daughters of God. You can never forget, brother and sister of Christ, who you once were.

It'll help you remember who you are now. I'm a peacemaker. If you opened up your Bibles to the book of Revelation and you just paged through it, don't turn there right now, but if you did, and you just paged through it, you know what you would read?

You would see these little choruses, little choruses of God's people singing to God. And you know what they keep on singing about? How their great God rescued them over and over and over again. It's a great chorus book. The blood of the Lamb has delivered me again and again. So the first thing of what it means to be a peacemaker is to remember.

Remember what God has done for you in Christ Jesus. You were a rebel, made a peacemaker by the grace of Jesus, the ultimate peacemaker. We'll never forget.

[28:15] That's why we sing the songs we do. We'll never forget. We'll keep it in front of us. We were dead but made alive. It's something to sing about, isn't it? The second thing you need to know what it means to be a peacemaker is being a peacemaker is part of God's supernatural package.

It's a package deal. This is one piece of the package. Now this is how the Beatitudes relate to one another. And as I've been talking to people over the last few months, what I'm about to say has really helped people.

Because if you're like me, you used to approach the Beatitudes kind of like spiritual gifts. You know, God apportions spiritual gifts each to a particular Christian for the building up of the body.

And so we tend to approach the Beatitudes as, well, Jim here is, well, you know what, he definitely is the mercy guy. And then Lisa over here, well, she's definitely the pure in heart lady.

And then, you know, Ron, well, he mourns a lot over his sins, so we got that covered over there.

And then, you know, the peacemaking, well, that's rich because everybody talks to rich when they get in fights with one another.

[29:34] And so we can approach the Beatitudes that way, but that's not what Jesus intended. The Beatitudes are a packaged profile of a citizen of the kingdom of Jesus.

they're all true of a Christian in growing measure. The Beatitudes form a profile, and when you look at them, you can't help but see Jesus.

They reveal spiritual rebirth. Let me put it this way. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.

A sinner doesn't recognize their poverty of spirit without first the spirit of God showing them.

Blessed are those who mourn their sin. Sinners don't mourn their sins unless they're convicted by the Holy Spirit.

blessed are the meek, the gentle. Gentleness is the fruit of the spirit. Putting others first, God's agenda first, sinners don't do that naturally of themselves.

[30:50] That's a work of God's spirit. Hunger and thirsting for righteousness, what? Are you kidding me? An appetite for holiness, that isn't come up naturally from a sinner.

That's born of the spirit of God doing a work, a glorious work. In someone reborn. Blessed are the merciful.

Goodness and kindness, that's the spirit of God work. Purity of heart, that kind of cleansing is a spirit cleansing. A transformation God does.

Peacemaking, peacemaking isn't something that sinners can do. Not in God's way of peacemaking. naturally born rebels don't incline themselves to peace, but one born of the spirit, a child of God, they want peace because they take after their father.

The Beatitudes are a profile of those born of the spirit into God's family, into God's kingdom. It's a package profile. It's what's to be true of each of us Christians in growing measure.

[32:05] It's quite a call, isn't it? The other thing to note is it's progressive. You can't be a peacemaker without first being poor in spirit and mourning your sin.

It just won't work. The Beatitudes build on one another and the spirit of God is at work in each of us making us beautiful in our father's eyes.

we're taking on the character of Jesus. That's what you need to know to be a peacemaker.

You can't forget who you were so that you can remember who you are, what God has done for you in Christ Jesus. And you've got to remember that being a peacemaker is part of this packaged profile of beauty that God is seeking to do in you by his spirit.

Let me summarize it this way. Brother, sister in Christ, will you listen carefully to this?

[33:15] Your conversion to Christ was your commissioning by Christ to be a peacemaker for Christ.

Christ. Your conversion to Christ was your commissioning by Christ to be a peacemaker for Christ.

God reconciled you through Jesus so that you would be a minister of reconciliation to others.

That's who you are. What you need to remember before we get into the work of peacemaking,

you've got to remember who you are as a peacemaker. God made you a peacemaker by his grace.

Now, I've only got a few minutes. I want to answer this question. What do you do as a supernaturally reborn peacemaker? What do you do?

Well, I have four things, but I can only really focus on two this morning for the sake of time. The first one I was going to tell you is to be a reminder of God's peace.

[34:19] That you remind yourself that you're at peace with God by the blood of Jesus. Jesus. Peacemakers got to remind themselves that God has made peace with them through the blood of Jesus. You've got to do it. You've got to preach the gospel to yourself.

The other thing I want to tell you is that on this side of Jesus' second return, we are prophesiers of a perfect peace. We tell a world that is in mess that there is a perfect peace coming with the coming of Jesus.

We're prophesiers of a perfect peace. In the meantime, we're just living in the reality of Matthew 24 where Jesus said, hey, there's going to be wars and rumors of wars.

There are going to be earthquakes and famines and mess. There's going to be tribulation in mounting measure for my followers. That's where we're living right now. Perfect peace is coming. But the two things I wanted to really focus on this morning is a peacemaker is a striver for peace. A striver for peace.

[35:30] I know three things are true of every person in this room right now. I know every one of you is experiencing what I'm about to say in one of three ways, okay?

Either you have experienced personal strain and trouble with someone else. You've experienced that. Or you are presently experiencing turmoil, tension, distrust in a relationship.

Or three, you will experience this in a relationship. I know that's true of everyone. I know it's true of me. What a striver of peace, a peacemaker is seeking to do is bring God's goodness into relationships with others.

And so, a peacemaker, a striver for peace, you know what that means? If you are in discord with someone else, whether a Christian or a non-Christian, if you are in discord with someone else, the first thing that you must do is entrust yourself in that situation to the prince of peace.

And so, it looks like this. God, there's something not right here. I'm picking up on a vibe or God, did I do something with this person? Because it is awkward right now. Prince of peace, would you bring peace to this situation?

[37:00] And in that praying and entrusting yourself to the prince of peace, you're going to ask the prince of peace something like this. Oh, Lord Jesus, have I done something here?

Have I wronged this person? Is there something for me to confess to this person? Do I need to address in order to remove an obstacle to the peace you want for us?

Is that what you want for me? Show me, Lord Jesus, what I must do. And it's okay if it's painful. Peacemaking is painful.

It's painful for Jesus. It will be painful for us. And then, after we ask him, oh, Lord, what must we do? Is there something for me to confess? Do I need to confront? Do I need to bring somebody else in and make peace? What must I do? Do I need to do? Next thing you do is this.

[38:00] God, help me to love. Help me to love. Do you know what drives peace? Biblical peace? God, peace?

Love. Love drives it. It's the stuff, it's the energy that gives, compels us to make peace with others. That's what God did with us.

Here's the deal. And I know a lot of you are here right now. You're waiting. You're waiting on peace. But there's blessing in it.

There's joy in it. Do you know what it is? It's knowing that you've entrusted it to the Prince of Peace. And he's going to do a work. Either now or when he comes back.

Peace is coming to that relationship. Wait on him. A striver for peace is a prayer for peace.

[39:02] And so if you, there's no other steps you can take right now towards peace. There is. You pray. You pray. You pray God's blessing on this other person.

You pray good for them. God's goodness for them. That they would delight more and more in the living God. Whether they're non-Christian, oh God, bring them to faith. If they're a believer, oh God, bless them.

And bring peace. I know of a story recently. Ten years it took for a brother to come around to another brother to make peace.

It came. It came. Be a striver for peace. I want to give you a couple passages to be grist in your mill of peacemaking.

Hebrews 12.14. Strive for peace. Romans 12.18. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.

[40:02] Peacemaker. Peacemaker. You are a peacemaker. Strive for peace. Do what you can. Trusting in the Prince of Peace. Experience the joy of knowing that He's in it and He's working for it.

The last thing I wanted to tell you this morning. The work of a peacemaker is this.

Brothers and sisters in Christ, we are ambassadors of peace. The peace of God. We are ambassadors. 2 Corinthians 5.18-20.

Paul, the Apostle Paul, talks about we were made new creations and entrusted with the ministry of reconciliation, of peacemaking. Do you know what an ambassador does?

An ambassador lives in a foreign land and has hard conversations with where he's at to represent his country. Don't forget, we live in a foreign land.

[41:13] We're exiles. Our country is yet to come. But here's what I want to encourage you with. Two things. 2 Corinthians 5.

I think this is verse 20. When we speak the gospel to somebody else, when we speak the prince of peace to a rebel, Paul says, it's God making His appeal through us.

God making His appeal through us. Brother, sister, you are a peacemaker and God wants to make an appeal to peace to rebels through you. Be encouraged.

It's His work. Here's the second thing. God doesn't make mistakes in placing people where they're at. When you leave this building, either the front door or the back door, there's going to be a little thing written above the doorway.

You are now entering your mission field. Ambassador of Christ, you're going into your mission field. God has placed you in your immediate family and extended family.

[42:25] That's not an accident. He wants you there as an ambassador for His peace. Neighborhoods, workplace, jazzercise, class, athletic team, you're there for a reason.

You're an ambassador, a peacemaker. Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God. Where are the peacemakers?

Here are the peacemakers. God has called you to Himself to be a peacemaker. Let's pray. God, thank You so much for Jesus.

Jesus, thank You for the peace You've made for us through Your cross and that we fear no more because our biggest problem has been solved. And God, we would ask that You would make us peacemakers in this city.

That we would be ambassadors. That we would strive for peace. That we remind each other of peace. And of course, that we would prophesy of the peace to come. Pray this in the name of Jesus.

[43:30] Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.