

The Beatitudes the Seventh Beatitude

by A.W. Pink

The seventh Beatitude is about being peacemakers, which refers to being instruments in God's hands for reconciling sinners to Him.

Scripture: Job 22:21, Matthew 5:9, Matthew 13:43, Romans 10:15, 2 Corinthians 5:20, Ephesians 1:10, Ephesians 6:15, Colossians 1:19-20, Hebrews 13:20, 1 Peter 1:14

Topics: "Christian Identity", "Peacemaking"

Description

A.W. Pink expounds on the seventh Beatitude, 'Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God,' emphasizing that true peacemaking goes beyond mere peacekeeping or peace-loving. He highlights that peacemakers are those who actively seek to reconcile others to God, reflecting the character of Christ and fulfilling their role as ambassadors of peace. Pink contrasts the Old Covenant's call to war with the New Covenant's mission of reconciliation, asserting that genuine Christians must have a heart for the salvation of others. He concludes that peacemakers, despite facing persecution, are recognized by God as His children and will ultimately be honored in His Kingdom.

Transcript

THE BEATITUDES

THE SEVENTH BEATITUDE

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God"

Matthew 5:9

seventh Beatitude is the hardest of all to expound. The difficulty lies in determining the precise significance and scope of the word peacemakers. The Lord Jesus does not say, "Blessed are the peace-lovers," or "Blessed are the peace-keepers," but "Blessed are the peacemakers." Now it is apparent on the surface that what we have here is something more excellent than that love of concord and harmony, that hatred of strife and turmoil, that is sometimes found in the natural man, because the peacemakers that are here in view shall be called the children of God.

Three things must guide us in seeking the true interpretation: (1) the character of those to whom our Lord was speaking; (2) the place occupied by our text in the series of Beatitudes; and (3) its connection with the Beatitude that follows. The Jews, in general, regarded the Gentile nations with bitter contempt and hatred,

and they expected that, under the Messiah, there should be an uninterrupted series of warlike attacks made on these nations, till they were completely destroyed or subjugated to the chosen people of God [an idea based, no doubt, on what they read in the Book of Joshua concerning the experiences of their forefathers].

In their estimation, those emphatically deserved the appellation of "happy" who should be employed under Messiah the Prince to avenge on the heathen nations all the wrongs these had done to Israel. How different is the spirit of the new economy! How beautifully does it accord with the angelic anthem which celebrated the nativity of its Founder: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!" (Dr. John Brown). This seventh Beatitude has to do more with conduct than character, though, of necessity, there must first be a peaceable spirit before there will be active efforts put forth to make peace.

Let it be remembered that in this first section of the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord Jesus is defining the character of those who are subjects and citizens in His Kingdom. First, He describes them in terms of the initial experiences of those in whom a Divine work is wrought. The first four Beatitudes, as has been previously stated, may be grouped together as setting forth the negative graces of their hearts. Christ's subjects 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-important, not lowly or meek. They are not self-righteous, but hungering and thirsting for 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 from the Spirit a spiritual nature, their eye is single to behold the glory of God. Having entered into the peace that Christ made by the blood of His cross, they are now anxious to be used by Him in bringing others to the enjoyment of such peace.

That which helps us, perhaps as much as anything else, to fix the meaning of this seventh Beatitude is the link that exists between it and the one that immediately follows. In our previous chapters, we have called attention to the fact that the Beatitudes are obviously grouped together in pairs. Poverty of spirit is always accompanied by mourning, as is meekness or lowliness by hungering and thirsting after the righteousness of God. Mercifulness toward men is united to purity of heart towards God, and peacemaking is coupled with being persecuted for righteousness' sake.

Thus verses 10-12 supply us with the key to verse 9. By approaching the seventh Beatitude from each of the three separate viewpoints mentioned above, we arrive at the same conclusion. First, let us consider the marked contrast between the tasks that God assigned to His people under the Old Covenant and New Covenant respectively. After the giving of the Law, Israel was commanded to take up the sword and to conquer the land of Canaan, destroying the enemies of Jehovah. The risen Christ has given different orders to His Church.

Throughout this Gospel dispensation, we are to go into all nations as heralds of the cross, seeking the reconciliation of those who by nature are at enmity with our Master. Second, this grace of peacemaking supplements the six graces mentioned in the previous verses. Perhaps the fact that this is the seventh Beatitude indicates that it was our Lord's intent to teach that it is this attribute that gives completeness or wholeness to Christian character. We must certainly conclude that it is an unspeakable privilege to be sent forth as ambassadors of peace.

Furthermore, those who fancy themselves to be Christians, yet have no interest in the salvation of fellow sinners, are self-deceived. They possess a defective Christianity, and have no right to expect to share in

the blessed inheritance of the children of God. Third, there is a definite link between this matter of our being peacemakers and the persecution to which our Master alludes in verses 10-12. By mentioning these two aspects of Christian character and experience side by side in His discourse, Christ is teaching that the opposition encountered by His disciples in the path of duty is the result of their faithfulness in the service to which they have been called.

Thus we may be certain that the peacemaking of our text refers primarily to our being instruments in God's hands for the purpose of reconciling to Him those who are actively engaged in warfare against Him (cf. John 15:17-27). We have dealt at some length on the reasons that have led us to conclude that the peacemakers referred to in our text are those who beseech sinners to be reconciled to God (2 Cor. 5:20), because most of the commentators are very unsatisfactory in their expositions.

They see in this Beatitude nothing more than a blessing pronounced by Christ on those who endeavor to promote unity, to heal breaches, and to restore those who are estranged. While we fully agree that this is a most blessed exercise, and that the Christian is, by virtue of his being indwelt by Christ, a lover of peace and concord, yet we do not believe that this is what our Lord had in mind here. The believer in Christ knows that there is no peace for the wicked. Therefore, he earnestly desires that they should acquaint themselves with God and be at peace (Job 22:21).

Believers know that peace with God is only through our Lord Jesus Christ (Col. 1:19, 20). For this reason we speak of Him to our fellow men as the Holy Spirit leads us to do so. Our feet are "shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace" (Eph. 6:15); thus we are equipped to testify to others concerning the grace of God. Of us it is said, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" (Rom. 10:15). All such are pronounced blessed by our Lord.

They cannot but be blessed. Next to the enjoyment of peace in our own souls must be our delight in bringing others also (by God's grace) to enter into this peace. In its wider application, this word of Christ may also refer to that spirit in His followers that delights to pour oil upon the troubled waters, that aims to right wrongs, that seeks to restore kindly relations by dealing with and removing difficulties and by neutralizing and silencing acrimonies. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."

The word called here seems to mean "acknowledged as." God shall own them as His own children. He is "the God of peace" (Heb. 13:20). His great object, in the wonderful scheme of redemption, is to "gather together in one all things in Christ," whether they be things "in heaven," or things "on earth" (Eph. 1:10). And all those who, under the influence of Christian truth, are peacemakers show that they are animated with the same principle of action as God, and as "obedient children" [1 Pet. 1:14] are cooperating with Him in His benevolent design (Dr.

John Brown). The world may despise them as fanatics, professors of religion may regard them as narrow-minded sectarians, and their relatives may look upon them as fools. But the great God owns them as His children even now, distinguishing them by tokens of His peculiar regard and causing His Spirit within them to witness to them that they are sons of God. But in the Day to come, He will publicly avow His relationship to them in the presence of an assembled universe. However humble their present situation in life may be, however despised and misrepresented by their fellow men, they shall yet "shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father" (Matthew 13:43). Then shall transpire the glorious and long-awaited "manifestation of the sons of God" (Rom. 8:19).

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