

Christ's Beatitudes

The Blessed Peacemakers

Wars that are fought

Is the main business of earth war? In Noah's day, the earth was corrupt before God and filled with violence (Gen. 6:11). David says: "I have seen violence and strife in the city." Asaph says: "Violence covereth them as a garment" (Ps. 73:6). Jerusalem is said to be full of violence (Ez. 7:23). In such a world, there is the call for peace and love, but those who call for it do not live at peace in their own marriages and families. It seems clear that the way of peace is not known (Rom. 3:10-17), and that people are living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another (Tit. 3:3).

What is the root of the trouble? Albert Einstein (1948): "What terrifies us is not the explosive force of the atomic bomb, but the power of the wickedness of the human heart, its explosive power for evil." He did not know how true he was (Js. 4:1; Ps. 140:1-2; Mk. 7:20-22; Gal. 5:19-21). "All human conflict is man's deep-rooted determination to get his own way, an attitude which inevitably brings him into contention not only with God but with his fellow man." This has come as a result of the fall into sin. Man is born a rebel against God, and at enmity against Him (Rom. 8:7). Jonathan Edwards: "Unconverted men would kill God if they could get at him."

Peace that is made

The gospel lets us hear of God, the Peace-Maker, who in His wisdom found a way to restore the sinner into His favour. He did not have to. He could have sentenced man justly to eternal perdition as his sin deserved. But instead He put into operation His plan made from all eternity to bring peace between Himself and a sinful people (2 Cor. 5:19). "In sending the Lord Jesus into the world to take upon himself the sin, guilt and condemnation which sinners justly deserved, God removed the barrier which separated sinful creatures from their sinless Creator. In His death Jesus made peace between God and all those for whom He died by removing once and for all the cause of their separation" (Cf. also Col. 1:21-22).

The death of Christ has not only broken down the barrier between God and man, but the barriers which divided people from each other (Eph. 2:14-18). Where ought there to be such oneness as in the church of Christ (Gal. 3:28)? The Christian is someone with concern for people of every age, race, colour or creed that they may come to know true peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 10:36).

Task that he has

Being a peacemaker does not mean being easy-going, avoiding conflict and confrontation at all cost. The word describes "ambassadors commissioned to negotiate peace with alienated parties." God's love fills them, and they do what they can to bring others into a right relationship with God and with each other. What describes the peacemaker?

1. Peacemakers are people of prayer (Ps. 122:6; 1 Tim. 2:1-2)
2. Peacemakers seek to live at peace with others. A.W. Pink: "It is part of Christian duty to see to it that we so conduct ourselves as to give no just cause of complaint against us." Thomas Watson: "murmuring is the devil's music." What causes peacebreaking? Pride (Prov. 13:10), anger (Prov. 15:18; 15:1), gossip (Prov. 26:20). "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men" (Rom. 12:18).
3. Peacemakers have a message to bring. God has given us the ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18).

Likeness that it shows

"They are doing the very work which the Son of God began when he came to the earth for the first time and which he will finish when he returns for the second time" (J.C. Ryle). "He that is not a son of peace is not a son of God" (Baxter).