

THE PROPHETIC WORD

PART EIGHT OF THE BEATITUDES:

**"BLESSED ARE
THE
PEACE-
MAKERS,
FOR THEY
SHALL BE CALLED
SONS OF GOD."**

Matt. 5:9

"DO NOT THINK THAT I CAME TO BRING PEACE ON EARTH.

I DID NOT COME TO BRING PEACE BUT A SWORD.

FOR I HAVE COME TO 'SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW'; AND 'A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THOSE OF HIS OWN HOUSEHOLD.'

Matt 10:34-37

"DO YOU SUPPOSE THAT I CAME TO GIVE PEACE ON EARTH? I TELL YOU, NOT AT ALL, BUT RATHER DIVISION. FOR FROM NOW ON FIVE IN ONE HOUSE WILL BE DIVIDED: THREE AGAINST TWO, AND TWO AGAINST THREE. FATHER WILL BE DIVIDED AGAINST SON AND SON AGAINST FATHER, MOTHER AGAINST DAUGHTER AND DAUGHTER AGAINST MOTHER, MOTHER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AND DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW."

Luke 12:51-53

Take a long, hard look at what is contrasted above from among the sayings of Jesus. The same Jesus who pronounces a divine blessing upon the peacemakers, elsewhere clearly warns that to become a true follower of His will potentially makes peaceful family relationships very difficult and very costly to achieve. Peace has always been costly. Peace usually follows as the aftermath of war. Jesus is describing a state of warfare even among family blood-relationships that is a potential result of making a stand for truth as defined by Jesus who is called "The Truth" (Jn. 14:6).

To understand the call to be a peacemaker, we must first understand what is, and what is not true peace. Consider these thoughts from an editorial published in 1986 by Dr. Harold S. Martin:

"FOR SOME, BEING AT PEACE IS THE SAME AS HAVING A TRUCE. HOWEVER A TRUCE IS MERELY A SUSPENSION OF FIGHTING ESPECIALLY FOR A CONSIDERABLE DURATION... FOR OTHERS, PURSUING PEACE MEANS EVADING THE ISSUES. SOME SEE PEACE AS SIMPLY IGNORING THAT WHICH CAUSES THE HOSTILITIES AMONG US — A SORT OF SWEEP-THEM-UNDER-THE-RUG-AND-HOPE-THEY-GO-AWAY APPROACH TO PROBLEM SOLVING.. FOR STILL OTHERS, PEACE IS SOUGHT AT THE EXPENSE OF TRUTH. TO SUCH, PEACE IS PARAMOUNT AND BECOMES "PEACE AT ANY PRICE." ...MOST PERSONS WANT TO AVOID NEEDLESS STRIFE, BUT THERE ARE TIMES WHEN STANDING FOR THE TRUTH WILL ACTUALLY STIR UP STRIFE..."

In this newsletter, we want to look at the difficult task of the pursuit of being a peacemaker without compromising one's need to stand for truth:

"...THAT YOUR WORDS MAY BE TESTED TO SEE WHETHER THERE IS ANY TRUTH IN YOU..."

Gen. 42:16

**"...THAT YOUR WORDS MAY BE TESTED
TO SEE WHETHER THERE IS ANY TRUTH IN YOU..."**

Gen. 42:16

In stating that "God tests the righteous" (Ps. 11:5), it is TRUTH that has been, and always will be, the litmus test by which God tests His people. The Old Testament bears witness that for the most part God's people have demonstrated a horrendous record for being willing to compromise God's truth:

**"NO ONE CALLS FOR JUSTICE,
NOR DOES ANY PLEAD FOR TRUTH.
THEY TRUST IN EMPTY WORDS
AND SPEAK LIES..."**

Isa 59:4

**"...CONCEIVING AND
UTTERING
FROM THE HEART
WORDS OF FALSEHOOD,
JUSTICE IS TURNED BACK,
AND RIGHTEOUSNESS
STANDS AFAR OFF;
FOR TRUTH IS FALLEN IN THE STREET,
AND EQUITY CANNOT ENTER.
SO TRUTH FAILS,
AND HE WHO DEPARTS FROM EVIL
MAKES HIMSELF A PREY."**

Isa 59:13-15



**"THIS IS A NATION THAT DOES NOT OBEY
THE VOICE OF THE LORD THEIR GOD NOR
RECEIVE CORRECTION.
TRUTH HAS PERISHED AND HAS BEEN
CUT OFF FROM THEIR MOUTH."**

Jer 7:28-29

**"THEY ARE NOT VALIANT FOR
THE TRUTH ON THE EARTH.
FOR THEY PROCEED FROM EVIL TO
EVIL, AND THEY DO NOT KNOW
ME, SAYS THE LORD. EVERYONE
TAKE HEED TO HIS NEIGHBOR,
AND DO NOT TRUST ANY
BROTHER; FOR EVERY BROTHER WILL UTTERLY
SUPPLANT, AND EVERY NEIGHBOR WILL WALK
WITH SLANDERERS. EVERYONE WILL DECEIVE HIS
NEIGHBOR, AND WILL NOT SPEAK THE TRUTH..."**

Jer 9:3-5

It is quite weighty to consider that God stated that His present people (the Church), are a people saved by Jesus who is THE TRUTH (Jn.14:6), a people guided and empowered by THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH (Jn. 14:17), a people to be set free and set apart by THE TRUTH (Jn.8:32, Jn.17:17), and are to be known as "THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD, THE PILLAR AND THE GROUND OF THE TRUTH" (1 Tim. 3:15). Forgive all my underlining emphasis above, but it is imperative that we begin to see ourselves as God sees us! If we fail to do so, then we may very well repeat the failed testimony of God's first covenant people toward truth.

As important as the subject of "peace" is, we must realize that truth cannot be compromised for the sake of obtaining peace. God wants us to love and strive to accomplish both together:



**"THESE ARE THE THINGS YOU SHALL DO:
SPEAK EACH MAN THE TRUTH TO HIS NEIGHBOR;
GIVE JUDGMENT IN YOUR GATES FOR TRUTH, JUSTICE, AND PEACE;
LET NONE OF YOU THINK EVIL IN YOUR HEART
AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR;
AND DO NOT LOVE A FALSE OATH.
FOR ALL THESE ARE THINGS THAT I HATE, SAYS THE LORD.
...THEREFORE LOVE TRUTH AND PEACE."**

Zach. 8:16-18

Much relational conflict in our lives stems out of confrontation over God's truth. One side loves it- the other side hates it. Therefore one chooses heartily to embrace it, and the other totally rejects it. Therefore we have such relational conflict as Jesus states in Matthew 10:34-37 and in Luke 12:51-53 (front page-opening Scriptures). There may be indeed disputes based on debating the proper answer to the preverbal question, "What is truth?" (Jn. 18:38). However, most conflict is not based on interpretation of truth, but rather stems out of the outright rejection of God's truth in favor of the world's erroneous philosophies. The apostle John makes this terse contrast for us:

**"YOU ARE OF GOD...THEY ARE OF THE WORLD.
THEREFORE THEY SPEAK AS OF THE WORLD, AND THE WORLD HEARS THEM.
WE ARE OF GOD. HE WHO KNOWS GOD HEARS US;
HE WHO IS NOT OF GOD DOES NOT HEAR US.
BY THIS WE KNOW THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH AND THE SPIRIT OF ERROR."**

1 Jn. 4:4-6

**"WOE IS ME!
 ...MY SOUL HAS DWELT TOO LONG WITH ONE WHO HATES PEACE.
 I AM FOR PEACE; BUT WHEN I SPEAK, THEY ARE FOR WAR."
 Ps. 120:5-121:1**

**THE
 SPIRIT OF TRUTH**

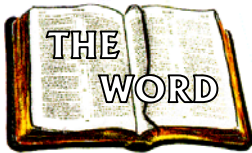
MAIN SOURCE OF RELATIONAL CONFLICT

**THE
 SPIRIT OF ERROR**



PEACE

**PEACEMAKERS
 SOURCE OF WISDOM:**



"DO NOT THINK THAT I CAME TO BRING PEACE ON EARTH. I DID NOT COME TO BRING PEACE BUT A SWORD. FOR I HAVE COME TO 'SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW'; AND 'A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THOSE OF HIS OWN HOUSEHOLD.'"

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Luke 12:51-53



WAR

**TROUBLEMAKERS
 SOURCE OF WISDOM:**



These contrasting passages from the apostle James depict for us two different sources of conflicting wisdom that set the stage for the relational dramas in which, from time to time, we all find ourselves unavoidably immersed:

"WHO IS WISE AND UNDERSTANDING AMONG YOU? LET HIM SHOW BY GOOD CONDUCT THAT HIS WORKS ARE DONE IN THE MEEKNESS OF WISDOM. BUT THE WISDOM THAT IS FROM ABOVE IS FIRST PURE, THEN PEACEABLE, GENTLE, WILLING TO YIELD, FULL OF MERCY AND GOOD FRUITS, WITHOUT PARTIALITY AND WITHOUT HYPOCRISY. NOW THE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IS SOWN IN PEACE BY THOSE WHO MAKE PEACE."

Note carefully the diversely stated outcome from embracing each source of wisdom. It is a stark contrast of day and night, light and darkness, good and evil at work. There is only one cure to this conflict. It is the replacement of demonic wisdom from below with God's wisdom from above. As long as the two sources of wisdom are at work, the outcome remains relational disorder between the two camps as Jesus described.

"BUT IF YOU HAVE BITTER ENVY AND SELF-SEEKING IN YOUR HEARTS, DO NOT BOAST AND LIE AGAINST THE TRUTH. THIS WISDOM DOES NOT DESCEND FROM ABOVE, BUT IS EARTHLY, SENSUAL, DEMONIC. FOR WHERE ENVY AND SELF-SEEKING EXIST, CONFUSION AND EVERY EVIL THING ARE THERE."

James 3:13-4:1

"...PURSUE RIGHTEOUSNESS, FAITH, LOVE, PEACE WITH THOSE WHO CALL ON THE LORD OUT OF A PURE HEART. BUT AVOID FOOLISH AND IGNORANT DISPUTES, KNOWING THAT THEY GENERATE STRIFE. AND A SERVANT OF THE LORD MUST NOT QUARREL BUT BE GENTLE TO ALL, ABLE TO TEACH, PATIENT, IN HUMILITY CORRECTING THOSE WHO ARE IN OPPOSITION, IF GOD PERHAPS WILL GRANT THEM REPENTANCE, SO THAT THEY MAY KNOW THE TRUTH, AND THAT THEY MAY COME TO THEIR SENSES AND ESCAPE THE SNARE OF THE DEVIL, HAVING BEEN TAKEN CAPTIVE BY HIM TO DO HIS WILL." 2 Tim 2:22-26

However, let us understand that the initiative for continuing to seek a peaceful solution lies more upon the people who draw their wisdom from the Word:

However, we must also note that it is not without great significance that the very next string of verses in Timothy that follow this exhortation to God's people reveal the great magnitude of what all servants of the Lord will be up against as distinguishing marks of the last days.

Notice these "perilous times" stem out of what character **"MEN WILL BE"** in these difficult last days.

"BUT KNOW THIS, THAT IN THE LAST DAYS PERILOUS TIMES WILL COME: FOR MEN WILL BE LOVERS OF THEMSELVES, LOVERS OF MONEY, BOASTERS, PROUD, BLASPHEMERS, DISOBEDIENT TO PARENTS, UNTHANKFUL, UNHOLY, UNLOVING, UNFORGIVING, SLANDERERS, WITHOUT SELF-CONTROL, BRUTAL, DESPISERS OF GOOD, TRAITORS, HEADSTRONG, HAUGHTY, LOVERS OF PLEASURE RATHER THAN LOVERS OF GOD, HAVING A FORM OF GODLINESS BUT DENYING ITS POWER. AND FROM SUCH PEOPLE TURN AWAY!" 2 Tim 3:1-6

Perhaps a consideration of these verses as stated in the Amplified Bible will help to bring to front the severe gravity of what we are facing as followers of Christ in these last days:

**“BUT UNDERSTAND THIS, THAT IN THE LAST DAYS
WILL COME (SET IN) PERILOUS TIMES OF GREAT STRESS AND TROUBLE,
HARD TO DEAL WITH AND HARD TO BEAR.
FOR PEOPLE WILL BE...
LOVERS OF SELF AND UTTERLY SELF-CENTERED...
THEY WILL BE ABUSIVE...
RELENTLESS, ADMITTING OF NO TRUCE OR APPEASEMENT;
THEY WILL BE SLANDERERS (FALSE ACCUSERS, TROUBLEMAKERS)...
THEY WILL BE TREACHEROUS BETRAYERS, RASH,
AND INFLATED WITH SELF-CONCEIT.
THEY WILL BE WITHOUT NATURAL HUMAN AFFECTION
(CALLOUS AND INHUMAN),...
DISOBEDIENT TO PARENTS...UNGRATEFUL...
FOR THEY HOLD A FORM OF PIETY (TRUE RELIGION),
BUT THEY DENY AND REJECT AND ARE STRANGERS TO THE POWER OF IT
(THEIR CONDUCT BELIES THE GENUINENESS OF THEIR PROFESSION.)
...AVOID ALL SUCH PEOPLE(TURN AWAY FROM THEM.)”**

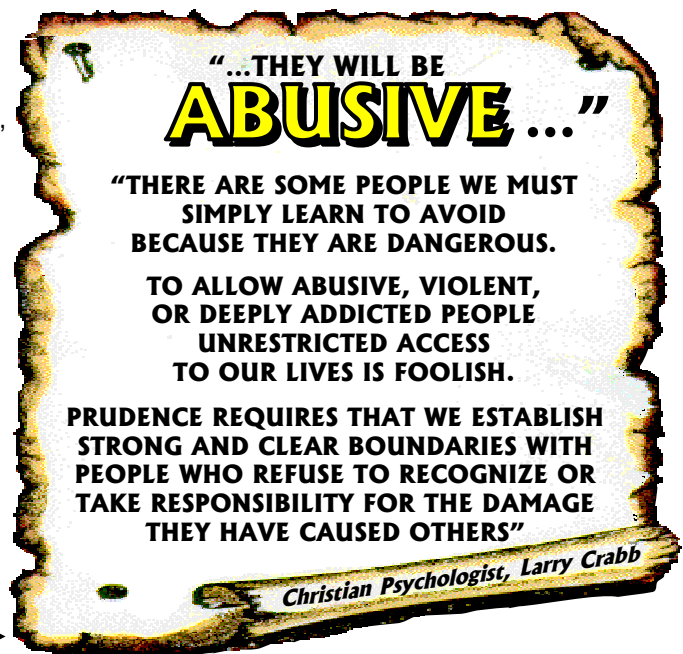
2 Tim 3:1-5 Amplified Bible

As Christians, we tend to shrink back from what we perceive as harsh and unloving commands such as stated above, “avoid all such people (turn away from them.)” Was Paul “harsh and unloving” in saying,

**“BUT NOW I HAVE WRITTEN TO YOU
NOT TO KEEP COMPANY
WITH ANYONE NAMED A BROTHER,
WHO IS SEXUALLY IMMORAL,
OR COVETOUS, OR AN IDOLATER,
OR A REVILER, OR A DRUNKARD,
OR AN EXTORTIONER --
NOT EVEN TO EAT WITH SUCH A PERSON.”**

1 Cor 5:11

Such things were written for our protection. Among the list above from 2 Tim. 3:1-5 is the statement, “...they will be abusive.” Consider carefully this warning from Larry Crabb about the danger of continuing to associate with abusive people: →



Christian Psychologist, Larry Crabb

Note also in the above passages from 2 Tim. 3:1-5 that Paul includes some “believers” along with the obvious class of unbelievers. They hold to a profession of belief in Christ, but are strangers to the power of Christ at work in their lives. Paul states their conduct undermines any genuineness to their profession of belief in Christ. We are commanded to avoid such people, to turn away from them. In Titus 1:16, Paul proclaimed about such professors of God:

**“THEY PROFESS TO KNOW GOD, BUT IN WORKS THEY DENY HIM,
BEING ABOMINABLE, DISOBEDIENT, AND DISQUALIFIED FOR EVERY GOOD WORK”**

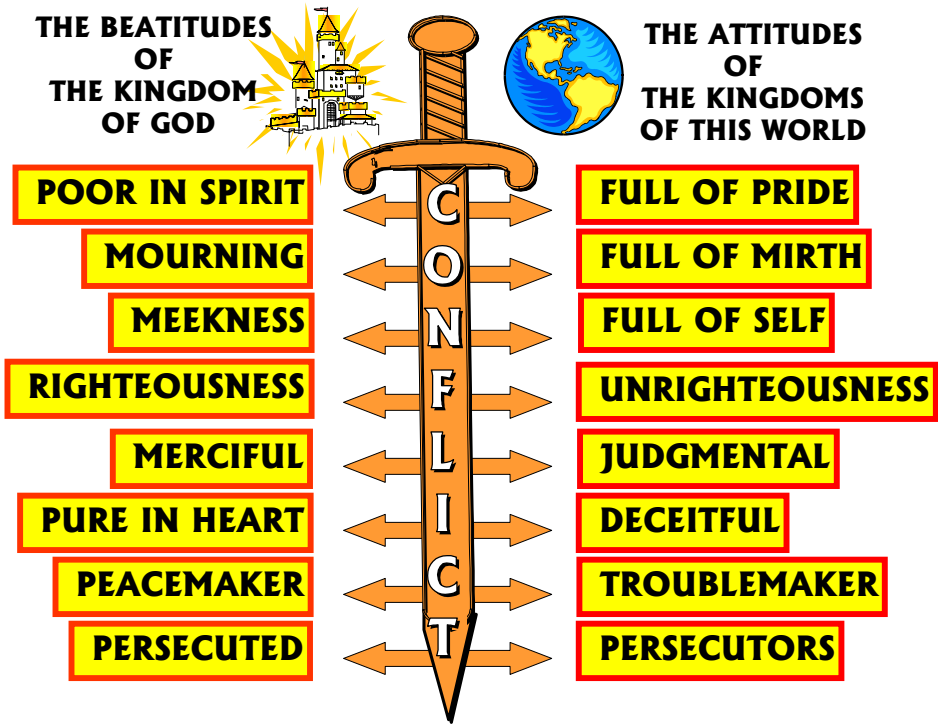
The Amplified brings the point home even more:

“THEY PROFESS TO KNOW GOD [TO RECOGNIZE, PERCEIVE, AND BE ACQUAINTED WITH HIM], BUT DENY AND DISOWN AND RENOUNCE HIM BY WHAT THEY DO; THEY ARE DETESTABLE AND LOATHSOME, UNBELIEVING AND DISOBEDIENT AND DISLOYAL AND REBELLIOUS, AND [THEY ARE] UNFIT AND WORTHLESS FOR GOOD WORK (DEED OR ENTERPRISE) OF ANY KIND.” Titus 1:16-2:1 Amp.

“BUT UNDERSTAND THIS, THAT IN THE LAST DAYS WILL COME (SET IN) PERILOUS TIMES OF GREAT STRESS AND TROUBLE, HARD TO DEAL WITH AND HARD TO BEAR. FOR PEOPLE WILL BE... LOVERS OF SELF AND UTTERLY SELF-CENTERED... THEY WILL BE ABUSIVE... RELENTLESS, ADMITTING OF NO TRUCE OR APPEASEMENT; THEY WILL BE SLANDERERS (FALSE ACCUSERS, TROUBLEMAKERS)...THEY WILL BE TREACHEROUS BETRAYERS, RASH,AND INFLATED WITH SELF-CONCEIT. THEY WILL BE WITHOUT NATURAL HUMAN AFFECTION(CALLOUS AND INHUMAN),... DISOBEDIENT TO PARENTS...UNGRATEFUL... FOR THEY HOLD A FORM OF PIETY (TRUE RELIGION), BUT THEY DENY AND REJECT AND ARE STRANGERS TO THE POWER OF IT(THEIR CONDUCT BELIES THE GENUINENESS OF THEIR PROFESSION.) ...AVOID ALL SUCH PEOPLE(TURN AWAY FROM THEM.)”

2 Tim 3:1-5 Amplified Bible

For the point of impacting our understanding of the severity of the times in which we live, compare the above list of what “men will be” with the chart below. What you will find is a contrast of what God seeks from His people via the Beatitudes of the Word of God, to the opposite attitudes found in people (believers and unbelievers) who prefer to have their character formed by the world in which we live:



Perhaps we can now begin to see why Jesus stated so vividly that truth is a sword of conflict capable of even separating blood relatives from one another!

"DO NOT THINK THAT I CAME TO BRING PEACE ON EARTH. I DID NOT COME TO BRING PEACE BUT A SWORD. FOR I HAVE COME TO 'SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW'; AND 'A MAN'S ENEMIES WILL BE THOSE OF HIS OWN HOUSEHOLD.'"

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Luke 12:51-53

In our last newsletter, we saw the importance of the heart (Leb-center) becoming the pivotal point in directing man properly if the Word of truth is the chosen source of daily guidance.

However, we also saw that when worldly wisdom replaced God's truth as the source of guidance, the heart of man quickly became deceived to the point that he cannot even recognize a lie when he sees it

From the chosen pathway of the heart flows both the remaining two godly beatitudes of a pure heart contrasted to the two worldly attitudes of the deceived heart:

"FOR OUT OF THE ABUNDANCE OF THE HEART HIS MOUTH SPEAKS"

Luke 6:45

"ONE THAT SEEKS TO BE AT PEACE, THE PURSUIT OF PEACE... A DESIRE TO SEE PARTIES RECONCILED THAT ARE AT VARIANCE..."

Webster



IN HEART

PEACEMAKER
PERSECUTED



IN HEART

TROUBLEMAKER
PERSECUTOR



"ONE THAT IS A SOURCE OF TROUBLE; A PERSON WHO FOMENTS STRIFE AND DISAGREEMENT OFTEN FROM ULTERIOR MOTIVES..."

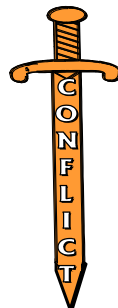
Webster



We all must ask ourselves in the midst of trouble, am I seeking to be the peacemaker or am I the root troublemaker? The answer depends on what is in your heart, purity or deception? The answer depends on which source of wisdom you are using. Is it wisdom from above or wisdom from below?

**A
B
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V
E**

"WHO IS WISE AND UNDERSTANDING AMONG YOU? LET HIM SHOW BY GOOD CONDUCT THAT HIS WORKS ARE DONE IN THE MEEKNESS OF WISDOM. BUT THE WISDOM THAT IS FROM ABOVE IS FIRST PURE, THEN PEACEABLE, GENTLE, WILLING TO YIELD, FULL OF MERCY AND GOOD FRUITS, WITHOUT PARTIALITY AND WITHOUT HYPOCRISY. NOW THE FRUIT OF RIGHTEOUSNESS IS SOWN IN PEACE BY THOSE WHO MAKE PEACE.



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James 3:13-4:1

**B
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W**

There is an old English proverb that states, "The proof (test) of the pudding is in the eating." If it tastes good, then obviously it was made by following the right mix of ingredients of a proven recipe. If it tastes bad, then it is now obvious that something was lacking in carefully following the recipe. There is nothing wrong with the recipe. God's plan (recipe) works in the lives of those who submit to it and will produce good fruit in themselves. Hear it: The peacemaker is guaranteed to bear good fruit in himself in the midst of trouble. However, we must accept that nothing good may develop in the life of the troublemaker. He's following the wrong recipe. The proof of the pudding is in the eating.



PEACE

PEACEMAKERS

In closing out our thoughts on this beatitude of seeking to be a peacemaker, let us ponder briefly a series of Scriptures in which we can truly establish that this is primarily an INWARD fruit that God is seeking in His people in the midst of trying and difficult times such as Paul describes:



WAR

TROUBLEMAKERS

"BUT UNDERSTAND THIS, THAT IN THE LAST DAYS WILL COME (SET IN) PERILOUS TIMES OF GREAT STRESS AND TROUBLE, HARD TO DEAL WITH AND HARD TO BEAR..."

2 Tim 3:1 Amplified Bible

It is significant to note that this passage in Rom. 12:18 is sandwiched between these two comments, "Repay no one evil for evil" and, "Beloved, do not avenge yourselves". In other words, this is counsel for people potentially in the midst of very disturbing trouble. This is counsel for the believer to do "as much as depends on you" to live peaceably with all men. Don't fall for the trap of returning evil deeds with evil deeds of your own. Don't seek revenge. If such is needful, God's counsel is for His people to leave that responsibility totally in God's hand. He alone is the Righteous Judge.

"...IF IT IS POSSIBLE, AS MUCH AS DEPENDS ON YOU, LIVE PEACEABLY WITH ALL MEN..."

Rom. 12:18

"...AND LET THE PEACE OF GOD RULE IN YOUR HEARTS, TO WHICH YOU WERE CALLED..."

Col. 3:15

"PURSUE PEACE WITH ALL MEN... LEST ANY ROOT OF BITTERNESS SPRINGING UP CAUSE TROUBLE, AND BY THIS (bitterness) MANY BECOME DEFILED"

Heb. 12:14-15

".....ENDEAVORING TO KEEP THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE..."

Eph. 4:3

"...BE DILIGENT TO BE FOUND IN HIM IN PEACE, WITHOUT SPOT AND BLAMELESS."

2 Pet. 3:14

Likewise we find this verse from Col. 3:15 is prefaced contextually with the admonition to "bear with one another, and forgive one another, if anyone has a complaint with another, even as Christ forgave you, so also must you do" (Col. 3:13). It is imperative to note the responsibility lies upon the "peacemaker" to LET (allow) the peace of God to rule in your own heart regardless of what is taking place in the heart of the other party.

These passages from Heb. 12:14-15 place before us an ongoing mandate to "pursue peace with all men." Do all that is within your power to be at peace. Note what follows is a warning to watch out for "roots of bitterness" springing up when it does not go well. If we fall short of walking in God's grace, this verse warns us that many can become defiled through such things as bitterness, frustration and unforgiveness due to a lack of achieving desired peace. Let us cultivate the fact that God is not only at work in these situations, but also that the devil is at work as well.

Do not be surprised that nearly every Scripture which admonishes us to be at peace is surrounded with potential conflict. This passage from Eph. 4:3 is no exception. The verse above it calls us to "...longsuffering, bearing with one another in love." Our text verse uses the word "endeavoring" which simply implies a need to work hard at it, which is not an easy task.

Our final passage is similar to the one above. We must be "diligent" in our effort to be found in a blameless state of peace. That does not mean we will solve every problem we may have. It speaks of an inward peace. This is what marks a peacemaker in God's sight.

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"THE PROPHETIC WORD"

Pastor Randy Shupe
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