“Finding Your Missing Peace”, Don't Worry - Be Happy! Part 7 of 8 – Oct. 20, 2013 at SBC

 Matthew 5:9

Three year old, Matthew, had a friend over, . . and, he was having a tough day. He was arguing, about the toys, and, was grumpy. He just, . . . wasn't, very nice. When his mom, put him down for his nap, she said, . . "Matthew, Luke is one of your, very best friends. You ought to, be nicer to him." He said, "Well, Mom, sometimes, I'm mean, . . . sometimes, I'm not. Like father, . . . like son." Out of the mouth, of babes.

When one of my boys, does something, I'm proud of, I say, "He's just like, his father!" When one of my boys, does something, I'm embarrassed by, my wife says, "He's just like, his father!" Either way, they're just, like me.

Jesus says, there's one thing, you can always know when, . . . we're like, . . . our heavenly father, Matthew 5:9 – *"Happy are the peacemakers, for they will be called, the sons of God."* You are a son of God, . . . when you're a peacemaker.

It doesn't say, "Happy, are the peace lovers", . . . everybody, loves peace. Or, "Happy, are the peaceable", . . . those who never, get disturbed by anything. It says, Happy are those, who **make** peace -- who actively seek, . . . to resolve conflict.

**\*\*\* Misconceptions, . . . about Peacemaking**

**1. It's not, . . . avoiding**. It's not, . . . running from, the problem. It's not pretending, . . . it doesn't exist. "I don't want to, talk about it", . . . is not peacemaking, . . . it's cowardice. None of us, like conflict, so we avoid it, postpone it, put it off, . . . but, it only gets bigger.

**2. It's not, . . . appeasement**. When you always give in, . . . and, let the other person, . . . have their own way. You let people, . . . run over you. That's passivity. Jesus was a very, controversial person. He stood his ground, . . . on a number of issues.

I’ve read marriage books, that says you ought to be a doormat, and always let the other partner, have their own way, and always give in -- for the sake of peace, be a doormat. Jesus never, said that. Jesus never said, you ever had to give up your identity, or be a chameleon. It's not appeasement, . . and, it's not avoiding. It's actively seeking, . . . to resolve, . . . the conflict.

**\*\*\* Why should I, . . . be a peacemaker?**

**1. Unresolved conflict, . . . blocks my fellowship, . . . with God.**

The Bible says, you cannot have close fellowship with God, and be out of fellowship, with other people, at the same time. I John 4:20-21 – *"How can a man say, `I love God', and hate his brother, at the same time?"*

If you're growing close to God, and the other person, is growing close to God, it's inevitably, going to pull you, closer together. When you're out of fellowship, with people -- horizontal -- you're out of fellowship, vertically.

**2. It prevents, . . . answered prayers.**

I Peter 3:7 – *"Husbands, if you don't treat your wife right, forget about praying."*  Matthew 5 says reconciliation is a prerequisite, . . . for worship. When you come to church, and you're ready to give your offering, and you remember somebody has something against you, . . . it says go, get that right, and then come back.

Nothing can substitute, for reconciliation. Not giving, sharing, reading the Bible. If you're having a hard time, getting an answer to prayer, . . . maybe, you'd better check out, . . . your relationships.

**3. It hinders, . . . my happiness.**

When we’re in conflict, with our spouse, . . . or, anyone else, . . . we’re miserable. Job 18:4 – *"You are only hurting yourself, with your anger."* Resentment, . . . is not wise.

When you get resentful, . . . it monopolizes, your attention. That's all, you can think about, is that other person. You're just bugged, . . . by that other person. They're having a great time, . . . and, you're the one, who's upset.

 You need to learn, . . . to be a peacemaker.

**\*\*\*\*\* Five things, . . . of how to be, . . . at peace.**

How to resolve conflict at home, at work, at school, with your friends, . . . . . . . . . . P.E.A.C.E.

**1) PLAN, . . . a Peace conference.**

Matthew 5:24 – *"If you remember, your brother has something against you, . . . go at once, to make peace."*

He says, you take, the initiative. Don't wait for them, . . . to make the first move. It doesn't matter, . . . if you're the offended, or the offender, . . . it's always, . . . my move.

In 1979, Sadat won the Nobel Peace Prize, . . . because, he took the initiative. He broke the blockade, flew over to Jerusalem, and opened up peace talks, with Israel, . . . that eventually, awarded accords.

Always, take the initiative. Why? Because, Jesus said so. You take, the initiative. And, because you're, more mature. Go first. Schedule a, sit down, . . . face to face meeting. Conflict, is not resolved, accidentally. It doesn't, . . . resolve itself. You must intentionally, . . . deal with it.

When do you, deal with it? ". . . **at once**, . . ." Do it, now. Don't, postpone it. If you avoid, or delay, . . . it only, grows worse. The longer I wait, to resolve a conflict, . . the more difficult, it's going to be, to resolve it.

**2) EMPATHIZE, . . . with their feelings.**

Philippians 2:4 – *"None of you, should think only, of his own affairs, but consider other people's interests, also."* Circle "consider". The word in Greek, is the word "scopos", . . . from which we get the word, . . . scope. It means, . . . pay attention, . . . to their needs.

When you're upset, who are you thinking about? Me, my needs, my hurts, you hurt me. I don't care, about you. God says, . . . reverse that. Hold a peace conference, . . . and, think about, what are **their** needs, . . what can we do, . . . to help **them**? Focus on, their needs, . . . not, my own needs.

Parents have to, be peacemakers -- tug of war, over toys, in house fighting. You have to listen, to your kids, and be sensitive, . . . and, empathize with their needs, . . . and figure out, why are they hurting. Why are they arguing, over this? One of the values, of conflict, is when you solve it, . . . it usually, leads to greater intimacy, . . . because, you understand them, better. You've been, . . . listening.

**3) ATTACK, . . . the problem, . . . not the person.**

You can't focus, on fixing the problem, . . . and, fixing the blame, at the same time. It's impossible. If you go to the meeting, thinking you're going to blame, the other person, then forget it. Proverbs 15:1 – *"A gentle answer, quiets anger, . . . but, a harsh one, stirs it up."*

Engage your mind, . . . before, you engage, your mouth. Be sincere, . . . not sarcastic. You don't, get the point across, . . . by being cross. Attack the problem, . . . not, the person. Don't criticize, condemn, and compare.

Ephesians 4:29 – *"Do not use harmful words, but only helpful words, the kind that build up, and provide what is needed."*  Don't go condemning, . . . the person. Don't be criticizing, and comparing. Say things, that build people up, . . . not, put them down.

Book: **“The Language of Love”**, by Gary Smalley, . . . will teach you how, in conflict, . . . to say the right thing, . . . and, not the wrong thing. P.E.A.C.E.

**4) COOPERATE, . . . as much, as possible**. Be a bridge builder, . . . and, not a bridge, . . . tearer down-er. Go with, the spirit of compromise – what can we, . . . agree on? What can we, . . . do together?

Key V: Romans 12:18 – *"Do everything possible, on your part, . . to live at peace, with all men."* The hallmark of a Christian, ought to be your ability, . . . to get along, with other people. It's not how much you pray, read the Bible, sing, give. But, do you get along, . . . with other people? That's the mark, of a Christian.

Jesus said, in John 13:35 – *"By this, shall all men know, that you're My disciples, that you have love, for one another."* In Romans 12:18, circle the phrase, . . . "on your part". There are some people, . . . you just can't, . . . get along with. They are just, not going to, get along. They are, . . . irregular people.

Do everything, possible. Peace always, has a price. If you want peace, in your home, your marriage, . . . there's always, a price. It costs, your ego. It costs, your self-centeredness, your selfishness. You've got to be willing, . . . to give in.

Maybe, my wife, . . is right. Maybe, my husband, . . does have a point. Maybe, my kid, has a legitimate gripe. Maybe, my parents, . . do know, what they're talking about. You've got to give up, your pride, your ego. That's the cost, . . . for the price, . . . of peace.

The three most difficult words, in the English language is, . . . "I was wrong." That's compromise, cooperation. The two most difficult words are, . . . "I'm sorry". The five, . . . "I'm sorry. I was wrong."

Eric Seagle's book, made into a movie, Love Story -- "Love means, never having to say, you're sorry." He was, dead wrong! Love means, saying you're sorry. Over, and over. In relationships, you get hurt, . . . and, you hurt, . . . other people. Accidentally, intentionally, . . . you just, do it.

James 3:17 – *"Peacemakers, will plant seeds of peace, and reap a harvest, of goodness."* Whatever you sow, . . is what, . . . you're going to reap. If you want people, to cooperate with you, . . . you have to cooperate. If you want people, to be nice to you, . . . you've got to be nice to them. If you want people, . . . to compromise, with you, . . . you've got to compromise, with them.

Whatever you're dishing out, . . . is what you're getting back. If you've got conflict, in your family, . . somehow, you're dishing some of it out. It takes two, . . . for conflict. So, you say, "What can I do? What seeds, . . . am I planting?" If you are always, planting seeds, . . . of griping, complaining, arguing, hassling, and putting down your mate, . . . guess what, you're going to reap. Conflict.

Whatever seeds, you're planting in your marriage, is what you're going to grow. Start planting, seeds of peace, and compromise. Empathize, with their feelings, and take the initiative, don't wait for them. Go to them, first.

Matthew 5, and Mark 11 -- one of them says, when somebody offends you, go to them, . . . the other says, when you offend them, you go to them. Either way, . . you take the initiative. If you want to be a peacemaker, that's what it means, to be like God.

**5) EMPHASIZE, . . . reconciliation, . . . not resolution.**

Reconcile means, to re-establish, a relationship. It does not mean, you resolve, all the problems. A lot of times, there are some legitimate, honest differences, . . between, husbands and wives, . . employees and bosses, . . men and women. There are major differences, . . . between men, and women. We think, differently.

The average man, speaks 15,000 words a day. The average woman, speaks 27,000 words a day. When you say, my husband, just won't listen to me, you have to realize, he doesn't have the brain, with the capacity, . . . to hold that much! Our little brains, can only handle, about 15,000 words, a day. You've got a 12,000 word excess, . . . that's going to fly, right over his head. Women are more verbal, . . . it's a fact of life.

There are honest differences, and many times, . . you're not, going to resolve those. Reconciliation means, you bury the hatchet, . . . not the issue. You keep talking about it, . . . but, you talk about it, . . . in harmony. You can disagree, . . . agreeably. You can walk, arm in arm, together, . . . without seeing, . . . eye to eye. You can have reconciliation, . . . without, having resolution, . . . of every problem.

Reconciliation focuses, on the relationship. Resolution focuses, on the issue, the problem. When you focus, on A, . . . B often, becomes insignificant. When you focus on A, Reconciliation -- "We're married, let's be on the same team. Why are we fighting, . . . each other? We're supposed to be, . . . on the same team.”

We have a major disagreement, . . on how to raise the kids, or how to spend the money, or whatever -- that's the issue -- first, focus on reconciliation, of the relationship, . . . and, often, when you do that, then, (A) this starts to resolve itself, or (B) it becomes immaterial, or (C) at least now, you've got two people working, in the same direction, . . . to resolve it. You focus on, emphasizing reconciliation, . . . not resolution.

2 Corinthians 5:18 – *"God has reconciled us to Himself, through Christ, and given us, . . . the ministry of reconciliation."* Circle "reconciled", and "reconciliation". God models, . . . what He wants you, to do.

The synonym, for peacemaker, is reconcilor -- one who brings people, together. God sent Jesus Christ, to bring us to Him, . . . so we could have, peace with God. God is the, original peacemaker. Jesus is the, Prince of Peace. What He has modeled, . . . He now wants us to do, . . . with other people.

When you help restore relationships, you're doing what God would do. When you help bring people together, who have been estranged, that's the most Christlike thing, you could do. The ministry, of reconciliation.

When God looks down on you, and you're taking the initiative, to restore harmony, in that marriage, or harmony in that office, or with that parent, or child, or estranged relative -- when you're doing that, . . . God looks down on you, "That's my girl!", or "That's my boy!", . . . That person, . . . is a child of God.

Matthew 5:9 – *"Happy are the peacemakers, for they will be called, the children of God."* God says, "They are doing exactly, . . . what I would do, if I were in that situation. I would be trying, to bring harmony, . . . where there, . . . is disharmony. I would be trying, to bring unity, . . . where there is conflict." God has given us, . . . that ministry, of reconciliation, . . . of peacemaking.

\* Who can be, a peacemaker? You can. Anybody, can become, a peacemaker. But, first you must have peace, on the inside, of you. You can't spread peace, . . . if you're at war, . . on the inside. Only what you have, can you offer, . . . to others.

Many of us, remember the generation, that was involved in the Peace movement, of the 60's. You could go to those peace rallies, and you never saw, such a group, of angry people. It is no wonder, that they didn't have, much of an effect. **You can't bring peace, . . . if you don't have it!** (Repeat.) If you don't have peace, . . . in your heart, . . . you certainly can't offer it, . . . to anybody else.

You're looking to other people, . . . to meet your needs, . . . instead of God. When you do that, you're asking for trouble. When I'm expecting everybody else, to meet my needs, and they don't, then I get ticked off, and we have conflict. God says, I never intended for you, to have all of your needs met . . by another person.

There are some of those spiritual, emotional needs, . . . that only God, . . can meet. When you look to God, and you have peace with God, . . . then your relationships, can get better. The reason why some of you, have rotten relationships, . . . is because, you have a war, . . . going on inside. You're asking other people, . . . to meet needs, . . . that, they never will, . . . be able to meet -- the deepest needs, . . . of your heart.

What do you do? How do I find, the missing peace? Where is the missing peace, in my life? It's the, peace of God. How do you get it? You meet, . . . Jesus Christ. You invite Him, . . into your life. He's called, . . . the Prince of Peace.

Jesus said, *"My peace, I give to you, not as the world gives, but My peace."* It's peace, that can't, be taken away. It's not based on circumstances, whether there's a traffic jam, on the freeway, or not. It's inner peace, . . . peace, that you can have, . . . in the midst of chaos, when everything's falling apart -- you can still, be at peace. That's the kind of peace, . . . that God wants, . . . to give you. When you have that, . . . in your life, . . . then, you can become, . . . a peacemaker.

Colossians 3:15 – *"Let the peace of Christ, rule in your hearts."* Circle "rule". The word in Greek, is the same word, as we get the word, . . . "umpire". That means, . . . somebody, who calls the shots, who keeps you in boundaries, a referee, . . . somebody who keeps the game going, . . . and, keeps it in focus.

He's saying, "Let the peace of God, umpire your heart." When you have peace with God, . . . then, you get the

. . . peace of God. And, when you have, the peace of God, . . . then, you can have peace, . . . with other people. That's, the order. You let the peace of God, . . . rule in your heart.

This is the missing peace, that a lot of you are missing, in your life. You say, "I tried a lot of stuff, to find peace of mind. I tried making it, the acquisition trip, and got all the things, . . . but, I still was unhappy. I tried fame, sex, drugs, going to Disneyworld -- all the different things, . . . but still, don't have peace." The missing peace, . . is Christ. He created, a God shaped vacuum, in your life. And, only He, can fill, that vacuum.

There are a lot of people, who think, they have peace with God, . . . but, really all they have, . . . is a cease-fire. They have, a truce. And, there's a big difference. They say, "God, You stay on Your side of the fence, and, I'll stay on my side of the fence, and never the twain shall meet. You stay up there in heaven, and do the thing with the angels, and let me run my own life. If You won't bother me, I won't bother You."

That's no peace, with God, folks. That's a truce. And, it's not, . . . going to last. The Bible says, that until you invite Christ, . . . into your life, and let Him fill you, . . . with His peace, . . . you're at war, . . . with God. Because, you want to do, your own thing, . . . be your, own boss, . . . call your, own shots.

God says, "How can we ever, be at peace, . . . if you're totally ignoring, the purpose, for which I made you?" You're not here, by accident. God made you, for a purpose. Peace comes, when you find, your niche in life, when you find your purpose, . . . when you meet God, . . . and, you have a relationship, . . with God.

We’re not talking about religion, . . . we’re talking about relationship. Then, when you have that peace, . . . in your heart, . . . you can be at peace, . . . with others.

If you have not done that, . . I'd encourage you, to do it today. Open your life to Christ, and invite His peace in, and experience, the Prince of Peace. Most of you, have made that decision, at some point, in your life.

\*\* So, my question to you is, What do you, want to be, remembered for? What do you want people, to write on your tombstone? Peacemaker? Or, Troublemaker? What do you have a reputation for, . . . at work, . . . even, at church, . . . peacemaker, . . . or, troublemaker?

St. Francis of Assisi, used to pray "Lord, make me an instrument, of Thy peace." That's a great prayer, to pray. Wherever there is hostilities, . . . let me, bring peace. Let me do the thing, . . . that is the most Christlike thing, I could do, . . . bring people together. Bring harmony, where there is disharmony, . . . restitution, where there is conflict.

Every time you go out, and win somebody to Christ, every time you tell somebody about the Lord, . . . you're being, a peacemaker. Every time, you tell that friend next door, or somebody at work, "Jesus loves you, and, He wants to make a difference in your life, and He has a purpose for you, and He wants to forgive, every sin you've ever done wrong, and give you a real meaningful life", . . . and, you introduce them, to Christ, . . . you're being, . . . a peacemaker.

Happy, are the peacemakers. Why? First, they're at peace, with themselves. Second, they will be rewarded for it, . . . by God. Some of you need to get on the phone, . . . and, make a peace conference. You need to call up that person, you have been estranged from, relative, friend, former friend, employee, employer -- somebody, . . . who there is still resentment, in your life, toward.

How do you know, . . . that it's not settled? Do you still, remember it? Are you still, thinking about it? Are you still, rehearsing it in your mind, over and over, and it still hurts, today? Then, it's not resolved. I'm not saying, . . . you're going to resolve, . . . all the issues. I am saying, . . . you need to, take the initiative.

What if you, call the person up, and say, "I'd like to get together, and see if we can, patch things up", and they say, No. You have done, . . . your part. The Bible says, in Romans 12:18 – *"Do everything possible, on your part, to live at peace, with all men."* You're not responsible, . . . for their response.

Maybe, you need, . . . to write a letter. I'm not saying, you should bury, the issue. You probably, . . . still have meaningful differences, with that person. But, to be able to say, to that person, . . . "In my heart, . . . I've released, the resentment, . . . that, I had toward you."

That's what it means, . . . to be a peacemaker. Their attitude, is up to them. In fact, it doesn't matter, . . . how, they respond. You have done your part, . . . and, God looks down on you, and says, "That's my boy!"

“Finding Your Missing Peace”, Don't Worry - Be Happy! Part 7 of 8

Matthew 5:9 "Happy are the peacemakers, for they will be called the sons of God."

**\*\* Misconceptions about Peacemaking**

1. It's not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

2. It's not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**\*\* Why be a Peacemaker?**

Because unresolved conflict:

1. Blocks my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I John 4:20-21, 1:3-4

2. Prevents \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ I Peter 3:7

3. Hinders my \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 Job 18:4 – “You are only hurting yourself with your anger.”

**\*\* How to Become a Peacemaker. P.E.A.C.E.:**

**Plan \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 Matthew 5:23-24 – “If . . . you remember your brother has something against you . . . go at once to make peace.”

**Empathize \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 Philippians 2:4 – “None of you should think only of his own affairs, but consider other people's interests also.”

**Attack \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 Proverbs 15:1 – “A gentle answer quiets anger but a harsh one stirs it up.”

 Ephesians 4:29 – “Do not use harmful words, but only helpful words, the kind that build up and provide what is needed.”

**Cooperate \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 Romans 12:18 – “Do everything possible on your part, to live at peace with all men."

 James 3:17 – “. . . Peacemakers will plant seeds of peace and reap a harvest of goodness.”

**Emphasize \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

 2 Corinthians 5:18 – “. . . God has reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gives us the ministry of reconciliation.”

 Colossians 3:15 – “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.”

Romans 12:18 – *"Do everything possible, on your part, to live at peace, with all men."*

 Next Week’s Sermon: “Handling Harassment for Your Faith”, Matthew 5:10-12