

midtown

M E S S E N G E R

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Peacemakers

By: Josh Blackmer

The beatitudes are what introduce the Sermon on the Mount. They serve as a framework or a starting place for the hearers of the message. They also serve as a reminder of the basic characteristics of a follower of God. They teach us so much about faith. They teach us how faith begins poor in spirit, with mourning and meekness. They teach us how faith grows, hungers and thirsts after righteousness. They teach us how faith matures merciful, pure in heart, and peacemakers. They also teach us how faith is tested by persecution. Among them is the concept of a peacemaker. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God” (**Matt. 5:9**).

What does it mean to be a peacemaker, and how does it affect our lives? A peacemaker is a person who is actively seeking to establish and maintain peace. They don’t make war or create conflicts with others. They seek to resolve conflicts and eliminate all hostility. They have a positive force for good and all that is profitable for mankind. Peacemakers are those who demonstrate peace in their lives. In that, they are at peace with God. “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (**Rom. 5:1**). Sin separates us from God and makes us enemies. “You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the

world makes himself an enemy of God” (**Jas. 4:4**).

Peacemakers are at peace with others. “So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another” (**Rom. 14:19**). “Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you” (**2 Cor. 13:11**).

Peacemakers are at peace with themselves. “My son, do not forget my teaching, But let your heart keep my commandments; For length of days and years of life And peace they will add to you” (**Prov. 3:1-2**). “Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful” (**Col. 3:15**).

The ultimate work of God is making peace between Himself and mankind. “Now the God of peace be with you all” (**Rom. 15:33**). If God is with us, He can help us maintain peace. “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet” (**Rom. 16:20a**). God resolves the war to bring peace to our lives. “The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you” (**Phil. 4:9**). Our trusting obedience in following His teachings will produce peace in our lives. We need to do our part to maintain the peace He has blessed us with and also show others the way of peace.

Follow the Example

Selected Article

Oh, how much easier things are when you have examples. When you are assembling something from Ikea for example. You saw it in the store. They had an example of a fully mocked-up room, and they showed you how the item could be used. You buy it, take it home, and start the process of assembling the item. The instructions are helpful, but sometimes it is good to see the actual, fully-formed item. To see how it all fits together and how it should function helps in the assembly. In a similar fashion, we have encouragement from the Scriptures to look toward good examples.

Paul writes, “Brethren, join in following my example, and observe those who walk according to the pattern you have in us” (**Phil. 3:17**). It is clear that Paul is not touting himself to be deity to be followed, just an example of one who walks with Christ. He wrote to the Corinthians, “Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ” (**1 Cor. 11:1**). It is simple to see the concept. Reading Scripture gives us knowledge. Yet, seeing it lived out in others helps us to understand the application. This only works because there is a standard. In the above verse from Philippians, Paul uses the Greek word “tupos” for “pattern.” It is the idea of a stamp or impression. It is a copy of the original. In the previous verse he wrote, “let us keep living by that same standard to which we have attained” (**Phil. 3:16**). Translated from Greek, it literally reads, “by the same rule walk, the same thing think” (YLT). The concept of following the example of others carries with it the responsibility for us to make sure those we follow are following the same rule. There are a lot of bad examples out there.

“For many walk of whom many times I told you—and now also weeping tell—the enemies of the cross of the Christ! whose end is destruction, whose god is the belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who the things on

earth are minding” (**Phil. 3:18-19**). This is the accusation that Jesus had against Peter, “Get thee behind me, adversary! thou art a stumbling-block to me, for thou dost not mind the things of God, but the things of men” (**Matt. 16:23**). Peter didn’t want Jesus to die for his own reasons. When we try to blend the will of heaven with our own fleshly will, we distort the pattern, and we are no longer good examples. We should be quick to discern between those who genuinely want to serve God and those that are serving their own gain.

It is clear that proper examples can be helpful. We all have the same instructions for life. Yet, seeing someone living them out is a great asset in our Christian walk. Beware of the bad examples around us. Compare them to the pattern given so as to divide between right and wrong. Then, be an example.

Pocket Directories for 2023:

Please check your family information on the table in the foyer. Put a check if correct, or make any changes needed. Deadline to make changes is Wed. Jan. 11, 2023.

Ladies Day Food Sign Up Sheet:

Ladies, please sign up to bring food for our Ladies Day coming up in February. The sign up sheet is located on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Upcoming Events

Sun. Jan 1: Potluck luncheon with a 12:45pm service in lieu of 5pm. Please bring a dish/dessert to share.

Sun. Jan 8: Youth Devo after evening services.

Sat. Feb. 4: Midtown will host Ladies Day with our sister Candice Starling as the speaker. Save this date Ladies!

Area Events (More info on the bulletin board in the hallway):

January 6-8: Creationism Versus Evolution at Mathis church of Christ.

March 2-5, 2023: Arise and Overcome at South-west church of Christ.

Prayer List

Prayer Requests:

Mary Younglove, Naomi Flonnory's grandmother, who will be going into hospice care.

Patsy Serenil, mother of Eddie Serenil, who was diagnosed with cancer.

Jerri Jeffres who will be going to a specialist in Houston for glaucoma.

Gloria Perez and June Aguilar who are recovering from a house fire last week.

Members

Jeff Cannady, Les Daltry, Kin and Sandra Marie, Ann Pantel, Veronica Serenil, Clark Withers, Dee Gilpatrick, Faye Henderson.

Service Roster

Week of December 25, 2022

Sunday Morning

Scripture Reading..... Kirk FitzSimmons

Song Leader..... Kevin Sheeran

Opening Prayer..... Ron White

Closing Prayer..... Mark FitzSimmons

Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread..... Lupe Escojido

Cup..... Bryant Siegel

Offering..... James Cammock

Assist..... Bill York

Assist..... Dan Fielder

Assist..... Jeff Cannady

Sunday Evening

Song Leader..... Ken Dorries

Opening Prayer..... Steve Randle

Closing Prayer..... James Cammock

Lord's Supper & Offering..... Lupe Escojido/
Bryant Siegel

Wednesday Evening

Adult Class..... Brandon Starling

Song Leader..... Kevin Sheeran

Devotional..... James Cammock

Other

Prepare Communion..... Debra Sanchez

Congregational News

Birthdays

Veronica Serenil..... Jan. 3

Elana Carroll..... Jan. 7

Food Helpers for the month of Dec. - Team B.

If you have any prayer requests or upcoming events to be announced, please contact our secretary, Nina Siegel, at (361) 573-0030 or email office.midtownchurch@gmail.com

Our Elders

Mark FitzSimmons
Ron White

Our Deacons

James Cammock—Evangelism
Lupe Escojido— Benevolence
Bryant Siegel—Education and Finance

Our Preacher

Brandon Starling

Weekly Reading

“A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches, loving favor rather than silver and gold.”
Proverbs 22:1

Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Class.....9:00 A.M.
Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 A.M.
Sunday Evening Worship.....5:00 P.M.
Wednesday Bible Class.....7:00 P.M.

Attendance Records

Week of December 18, 2022

A.M. Bible Class.....52
A.M. Worship.....97
P.M. Worship.....61
Wednesday Bible Class.....50

Financial information is located on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Supported Works

John & Carla Moore *Bible Land Passages*
B.K. York *Southwest School of Bible Studies*

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