

Joy in the Lord Part 8: Joy for the Reconciled

April 16, 2023

Matthew 5:9

God is the God of peace, Rom. 15:33, 2 Cor. 13:11, Phil. 4:9. God is not peaceful towards unbelievers and scoffers they are at war with Him. Members are commanded to be at peace with one another, 1 Thess. 5:13.

What being a peacemaker is not: 1) Trying to bring peace to the world, nation, state, city, etc. The issue is sin in the hearts of men. 2) It is not pacification, there is pain and difficulties dealing with conflict. 3) It is not peace at all costs. It is not denying the realities of disobedience. 4) Not self-righteous piety it includes situations that cause discomfort. 5) Not a peace to be popular. 6) Not a truce, it is a desire to love and show love to another and obey the Lord.

Genuine Believers Characterized by Peacemaking in 4 Spheres of Influence:

- 1) **You and God:** Matt. 5:9, God has chosen to show grace and make peace through Christ. Being a peacemaker is a characteristic of being a believer not a way to make peace with God. Rom. 5:8,10, we were enemies reconciled through the death of His Son. God has made peace with us through Christ.
- 2) **God and Others:** 2 Cor. 5:18, we have been given the ministry of reconciliation (ambassadors of Christ 2 Cor. 5:20), God exchanged our wickedness for His righteousness, 2 Cor. 5:21. We are commanded to tell of this offer of reconciliation with others. Christ has reconciled all things to Himself, Col. 1:19-20. We don't sugarcoat the Gospel; it is meant to convict of sin and bring judgement upon those who have rejected Christ. Repentance is required, turning from the old man.
- 3) **You and Others:** It takes discernment to know when to engage in a dispute. We don't avoid efforts by others to correct issues in us. We must mend our relationships according to Matt. 18:15. We consider Gal. 6:1, to confront a brother in a spirit of gentleness. There are times when the correction might seem more direct and tough, 1 Cor. 4:21. If we have even a hint that there is an issue, we go to them and make it right before worshipping, Matt. 5:23-24.
>>Sin is a barrier to peace. Once forgiveness is given, acceptance, inclusion, and love follow. Forgiveness is a covenant with God that the sin or trespass will never be brought up again. According to Luke 17, forgiveness is immediate, there is no time lapse. Listen to others when they come to speak about an issue with you. Pride is the basis of sin when in conflict with others, Prov. 8:13, and 21:4. Pride is present in all.

10 Reasons Why Believers Have Issues Rightly Resolving Conflict:

- 1) Not understanding 1 Pet. 4:8, loving one another with a fervent love.
- 2) Sinful refusal to believe the best of others and giving the benefit of doubt, 1 Cor. 13:7.
- 3) Self-righteous anger. Anger on our own behalf, not getting your way. Words say one thing and actions reveal a self-righteous heart.
- 4) Lack of discernment between issues of sin/preference. Is it really a sin issue?
- 5) Not believing God's sovereignty for the opportunity for my personal sanctification.
- 6) Refusal to genuinely listen until they tell you you've heard them properly.
- 7) Having a mindset to win- be willing to be wronged to the grave, Christ is our example.
- 8) Refusal to discipline your mind, Phil. 4:8.
- 9) Pride which cannot hear correction. Those who have a list of steps they have taken and good things they have done to justify actions. Can I receive correction?
- 10) Belief that God's discipline is for others, Heb. 12:4-6.

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When do we confront others? 1) Rebellious against authority, gossip, a disregard for leadership in home, work, etc. 2) Harming another or an institution: i.e. home, church, 1 Thess. 5:14-15. 3) Harming themselves. Helping others along in life, Pro. 19:20. 4) Most importantly: Someone you love who is unsaved and not in the Lord. The word of God brings division, apart from Christ we are at war with God.

When do we NOT confront others? 1) When it is crossing over to being a pain. Instead, pray for wisdom. 2) When I don't have adequate information- instead believe the best. 3) When I have anger only for myself, likely will end with sin with my mouth when I speak with them.

4) **Others and Others:** This is a work to restore believers to Gospel effectiveness, Phil. 4:2-3. Romans 12 gives reasons for peacemaking. What to do when others come to me with issues about other believers: **Ask them these 7 questions:**

- 1) How are you honoring the other person? Rom. 12:10, giving preference, giving honor.
- 2) How is your humility in this situation? V16, have you prayed? Do you have enough of the facts? Do not be wise in your own eyes.
- 3) Have you engaged in any sort of revengeful behavior? V17, have you given them the silent treatment, distanced from them, avoided them? Unbelievers think vengeance is wrong.
- 4) Have you put forth every effort possible? V18, sought out peace with them.
- 5) Are you too eager for immediate justice? V19, given time for the Lord to work things out.
- 6) Are you showing sacrificial and tangibly love towards them? V20, doing good and showing mercy.
- 7) Am I being overcome with evil? V21, have made a plan to overcome evil with good.

Blessed be the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God. This is primarily a blessing in the future, but also it is a calling to bring peace to others and imitate the ultimate mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ.

Further Discussion and Application

Dealing with conflict in issues that you have been wronged. We might have to take some wrongs to the grave with us. Why is this a godly response to others who use and mistreat us? Who is our example? What treatment did He receive to bring many sons to glory and righteousness?

Think of an unresolved issue you have with a child or family member. How have you progressed through the 10 reasons of resolving conflict to bring closure to the issue? If you haven't brought resolution to the issue, how can you walk through the reasons and take a godly approach to resolving the issue?

How do we properly prepare for initiating conflict with others? What boundaries must be set in order to achieve a godly first step or positive direction with others in this issue?