

ACTNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Cell Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Cell Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

Blessed are the Peacemakers

Matthew 5:9

Pastor Eddie Ho

SERMON SYNOPSIS

1. God calls us to be peacemakers. Matthew 5:9 says "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." In order to understand what God is telling us, we have to understand (a) what is peace, and (b) what does it mean to be called children of God?
2. What is peace?
 - i. The world understands 2 types of peace—external, and internal. External peace usually refers to a lack of noise, or a peaceful and serene environment. Internal peace is something we experience when our spirit is quiet and at rest.
 - ii. The biblical word for peace is shalom. Shalom refers to a state of completeness, without defects. It gives us a picture of paradise, of the Garden of Eden before the fall, perfect and without defect.
 - iii. When man fell, peace was broken, and we became at enmity with God. Sin, sickness and death entered in and destroyed the shalom that man used to enjoy. Ever since then, God has been working to restore man to the shalom peace that we used to enjoy. Shalom, the verb form of shalom – means to restore something to the original, to make whole again. When we accept Jesus, He restores us to completeness in Him.
3. What does it mean to be called God's children?
 - i. The term "sons" was not only used to refer to biological male offspring. Rather, it is a metaphor indicating that we have the likeness of the person. As children of God, we take on God's qualities, because He lives in us.
 - ii. If God is life-giving, the children of God should be life-giving. If God is a peacemaker, the children of God should be peacemakers as well. Just as we have received God's peace, we should share it with others.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. (a) What does peace mean to you? What are some things that help you to feel at peace?

(b) For children: Have you ever quarreled with someone and you were in the wrong? What happened? Was it easy or difficult to fix? Why?

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2. What is God's peace, and who can have it? To what extent are you experiencing God's peace in your life right now? How does the Bible's teaching about God's peace make a difference to your situation?

[Verses to help us go deeper: Leviticus 26:6; Philippians 4:7-9, 4:11-12]

3. John 8:4-11 tells us about an encounter between Jesus and some teachers of the law who caught a woman in adultery. How did Jesus bring peace to the situation, both externally and spiritually? Following Jesus' example, what are some specific situations in your life where you can share God's peace with others?

[Verses to help us go deeper: Colossians 3:12-15]

PRAYER POINTERS

- Ask the Holy Spirit to teach us about the true meaning of God's peace that does not depend on our circumstances.
- Commit one another's challenges to God in prayer and ask for supernatural peace in the midst of our trials.
- Ask God to give us opportunities to bring about peace.

MEMORY VERSE

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. (NIV)