



Becoming a Bridge Builder

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"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

Matthew 5:9

Q—What is keeping others from connecting with God? What keeps us from connecting with each other?

Today's "Be" Attitude:

You're blessed when you build bridges between people with differences, and between others and God. You will then experience how God's gifts for you are to be extended to those around you.

This Week's Spiritual Practice:

Reflect on the relationships in your life that need God's peace. Ask God to show you how you can encourage others to see God's promises and presence in their situation so they can experience peace in that relationship.

Jesus is teaching us how to live a life worth living.

Seeking what will truly lead to peace:

- A life worth living is not easy. A life worth living is sacrificial and gives more than it takes. And sacrifice is often difficult- but a sacrificial, God-serving life is worth living.
- A life worth living is blessed.

Which kind of life do you want to live? Which kind of life do you want to be known for?

The people around you with the greatest depth of character are those who have walked through tremendous difficulty, and yet come out the other side with a deeper sense of faith and a greater appreciation for life.

John 1:12 - *to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God*

Ephesians 2:8-9 - *For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.*

Our life in Jesus is a gift because of what God initiated and gave us access to through Jesus- we are simply to receive and respond to who he is and what he has done.

Jesus is not declaring this verse as a way to earn or enter his Kingdom. This verse is descriptive, not prescriptive.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God."

- If you make peace, you will live a life worth living.
- If you make peace, you will be blessed.
- If you make peace, others will call you by your Father's name.
- If you make peace, you will be called children of God.

Hebrews 12:14 - *make every effort to live in peace with everyone*

1 Peter 3:11 - *They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it.*

Philippians 4:7 - *and the peace of God which transcends all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*

God's desire, for all peacemakers, is that they will be more committed to God and his ways than their own selfish ways. This is what it means to pray, "Not my will, but yours be done."

Jesus is not divided. Since God created everyone, and every person is made in his image, he is completely FOR each person. He wants each person to live a blessed life. He wants each person to live a life worth living.

This week's second spiritual practice: Listen for differences and ask God to see how he could work in and through different opinions. What is God's will in conflict?



Study & Discussion for Your Next Small Group

Theme: *Building Bridges*

Reflect together: From last weekend's Online Experience- What impacted you most from the message? How were you encouraged to build bridges?

Read together: **2 Corinthians 5:11-21**

Discuss together:

- What does the world around us think of Christians today?
- Do they see us making peace? Or are we known for division? Does the world see us having lots of arguments? Do they see us saying one thing and doing another?
- As a result of our actions- is the name we are called spoken with respect?
- How can we improve in our peacemaking with those who don't know God?
- What is the "ministry of reconciliation"?
- What does it mean in today's divided and changing world, to be a maker of peace?

Micah 6:8- Live justly. Love mercy. Walk humbly with your God.