

Attitude #7 Reconciliation

Jesus said: *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God."*
Matthew 5:9

I ask forgiveness from all those I have hurt or dealt with unfairly.

Reconciliation — A change from hostility to friendship. It is mutual, it is the change wrought in both parties who have been at enmity. **Words that are synonymous are: settlement, resolution, reunion, bringing together, ceasefire.**

It is interesting how Jesus describes who is blessed when he mentions the bible principle of reconciliation. He says that the "peacemaker" is the one who is blessed. We also know that when we seek the peace of another individual and they are receptive to our effort they will be blessed as well.

If I am to be a peacemaker, it means that I am to be pro-active if I am to accomplish the objective of reconciliation. If I am to be blessed, I am the one who is expected to take the initiative and begin to build the bridge that has been broken down because of an offence. We often think that if the offence is not our fault, then we are not responsible for making the effort to restore the relationship. In **Matthew 5:9** Jesus does not even make mention of who is at fault, He simply says that we are to be peacemakers regardless of who is at fault.

There lies the challenge! Because of our pride we are already reluctant to say that we are sorry when we are wrong, but when we are not wrong, we are even more reluctant to risk getting hurt or offended again by reaching out to someone who has offended us to experience reconciliation. The only way that we can get better at something that God expects us to do, that in most cases we do not want to do, is to get our instruction from the word of God. When we get our instruction, we then ask God for the help to apply it and carry it out.

Our biblical instruction:

Psalms 34:14,15 - Depart (turn aside, to avoid) from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it. 15 The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry.

- 1. An Intentional Decision. Depart (turn aside, to avoid) from evil (bad or badness), and do good**

There are at least two things to consider when we are tempted with evil. One, is this something that I am personally responsible for allowing in my life? Am I initiating it? Two, if I am not responsible, what can I do to resist it and/or what can I do to avoid it again?

The intentional decision is when I am faced with evil, I turn away from it and with God's help stay away from it. David does, however, give us another way to respond once we have turned from evil when he then says that we are to do good. In other words, it is not enough to do one thing (turn aside) for the expected result without doing the other (do good).

Romans 12:21 - Be not overcome (to conquer) of evil, but overcome evil with good.

The peacemaker does not fight fire with fire despite being tempted to do so. He knows that the battle is the Lord's and all he must do is the good that the Lord leads him to do in order that he might overcome the evil around him and when it is directed toward him.

2. An Ongoing Solution. Seek peace, and pursue it.

We could accurately say that the opposite and/or absence of evil would be peace. If we are going to experience peace we are, according to God's word, to seek after peace. To seek means, "to seek in order that we might find;" so then, it is an ongoing effort. We know this because David tells us to "pursue" peace which means to "follow after." We also know this because there are times when we do experience peace and there are other times when we do not. However, despite what is going on around us, God can always supply His peace within us.

Romans 14:19 - Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Paul speaks also of the believer to fulfill the personal responsibility of "following after the things which make for peace" and we are to add to that the "things wherewith one may edify one another." If I want to decrease conflict in and around my life, I can be a part of the solution by lifting others up and not tearing them down.

3. A Comforting Reality. The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous.

How would our outlook on life really be if we really lived with the awareness that God sees and cares about every detail of our lives? This verse does not mean that the eyes of the Lord are "only" on the righteous, but it does give us the assurance of the promise that His eyes are on them.

Genesis 6:5 - And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.

Proverbs 15:3 - The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.

God sees everything which means he sees my effort or the lack thereof. He sees the motives and the intents of my heart. He sees when I am wronged and when I am doing wrong. He sees when I am misunderstood, and He understands. But when I know that He knows and that He knows everything, I know that He can help me to be a peacemaker.

4. A Priceless Advantage. And his ears are open unto their cry (cry for help).

The greatest thing that we have on earth outside of our relationship with Christ is the promise and privilege to pray. The word of God provides so many promises regarding the reality of our need to pray and the reality that God hears us when we do pray.

1 John 5:14 - And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us:

Psalms 145:18 - The LORD is nigh unto all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.

Psalms 145:19 - He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him: he also will hear their cry and will save them.

Proverbs 15:29 - The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

James 5:16 - Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.