



The Trinity Pulpit



Peacesharers Matthew 5:9; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21

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“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.” The seventh beatitude in Christ’s first discourse known as the Sermon on the Mount had great implications to everyone present then and to us this morning. It was and is a call for action. The followers of Christ cannot listen to that statement and not be moved to act, for peacemaking cannot be accomplished without going and doing. It isn’t something that can be done internally. Being a peacemaker means crafting or fashioning peace in the midst of turmoil. Peacemaking is an action!


However, being a peacemaker is not a position people are lined up to take on. The role of a peacemaker is often seen as being cowardly. It is looked upon as being weak and scared to take on the opposition. Peacemakers are often portrayed as passive and as an ‘appeaser.’ However, contrary to popular belief, a peacemaker is exactly the opposite. A peacemaker is one who actively seeks peace. He or she is not content on maintaining the status quo. A peacemaker works **actively** to bring sides together to find a solution. Yes, it is often a lonely role, being either the only one or just one of few who are willing to stand up and seek peace in the midst of angst and anger, but it is a position Christ calls his followers to take.

God intends all to have peace. Christ desires for all to have peace in our relationship with God, within ourselves and with others. In our relationship with God, we find peace in our salvation. Within ourselves, we find peace

knowing we are loved and cared for by the Maker of the universe. We were worth God’s incredible sacrifice in Christ and that brings us comfort and peace. Finally, we are to be at peace with others in our lives. As peacemakers, we are to help bring peace in people’s lives rather than anxiety and worry. We are to be part of the solution rather than the cause of the problem.

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 tells us that in Christ, we are a new creation. The old has gone and the new has come. Since Christ reconciled us, he has in turn given us the ministry of reconciliation. We are not to judge the wrongs of others but rather share the message of reconciliation. We are Christ’s ambassadors to bring reconciliation and peace to our community, our nation and to our world.

Jesus is our greatest example of a peacemaker. Let’s not forget that the Jews were looking for a military king who would become their savior. They were looking for a leader who would deliver them from their enemies. However, Jesus continued to turn their world upside down by teaching that blessed are the poor, blessed are the meek, blessed are those who seek righteousness, blessed are the merciful, and blessed are the peacemakers. Jesus is the ultimate peacemaker, bringing peace into the world through his life, death and resurrection. Christ destroyed the barrier that separated us from the eternal love of God. There were no more walls that separated the Jews



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—Matthew 5:9*

and Gentiles. We were made as one. Sin and death were no longer barriers that separated humanity with its Creator. Reconciliation was made possible through Christ.

Unfortunately, many have bought into the lies the world sells us; lies that destroy the peace in our lives. Here are just a few:

- Look out for number one
- God helps those who help themselves
- Surely God doesn't want me to go through hardship
- I'll forgive you but I can't forget
- Don't get mad, get even
- I deserve better than this

However, as followers of Christ, we are called to make the sacrifice and to pay the price for peace. This means dying to self and our own selfish desires. It means giving up the right to be indignant, for we realize our own faults. It also means giving up the right to reply for we should not pour fuel into the fire. Furthermore, it means dying to our own pride to be able to say "I'm sorry," for humility brings levity to all situations. Peacemaking is not a tool for conflict management. Peacemaking is a lifestyle.

This morning, I would ask that we not only see ourselves as peacemakers but also as peacesharers or sharers of peace that only Christ can give us. The peace of Christ is not something we can make, but it is something we can share. As the local body of Christ, I have witnessed this fellowship answer the call of being peacesharer in our community. Same as all of you, I am proud to be a member of this church body, for we are committed to sharing peace to those who are hurting and suffering.

Just yesterday, many of you participated in our semi-annual ministry (or peace sharing) blitz into our local community called Operation InAsMuch. With over 20 different projects, hundreds of you participated in sharing peace to those with physical, spiritual and emotional needs. As we witnessed in the video, you shared peace in the form of a hot meal to those who are worried over the health of a loved one in the Intensive Care Units of local hospitals. You shared peace to those who needed safe shelter by repairing their home. You shared peace

to those who are homeless by providing a hygiene packet and healthy sustenance for their bodies. You shared peace by working at North Raleigh Ministries or by gleaning potatoes for those who are hungry. You shared peace by cleaning cars for a ministry that provides vehicles to many who can't afford one. Jesus said "Blessed are the peacemakers and peacesharers, for they are called the children of God."

Over the last four years, Trinity, along with several neighboring churches, has made a tremendous impact in our community through a crisis ministry called North Raleigh Ministries. By pooling the financial and human resources together, there have been countless families who have received financial assistance to keep the lights on and to pay the rent. In addition, countless have received food when their shelves were empty at home and counseling when they needed a listening ear. God has provided incredible space for a thrift shop that not only pays for itself but also provides additional funds for the crisis ministry of NRM. Furthermore, God has called our own members like Denise Crumpler, Reta Johnson and Cindy Whittington to provide leadership for the ministry to grow its circle of influence. Jesus said "Blessed are the peacemakers and peacesharers, for they are called the children of God."

In addition to North Raleigh Ministries, you have been a peacesharer by partnering with Wake Interfaith Hospitality Network to house many of the homeless who are looking for a way out. WIHN works with families who have lost their home or apartment to get them back on their feet, providing job training and financial management seminars to keep them from returning back to their current plight. Four weeks out of the year, Trinity hosts a group of families at our church, turning Sunday School classrooms into bedrooms and utilizing the facilities God has blessed us with to help bring about a sense of peace. These families are given the royal treatment and shown the love of Christ through special acts of service. Just a couple of weeks ago, we heard Jenny Wilson's passion and commitment to this peace sharing ministry. Jesus said "Blessed are the peacemakers and peacesharers, for they are called the children of God."

Another area where you have answered the call is

through our partnership with Jobs4Life. This ministry brings together people who need assistance in learning how to be a better employee, and it partners them with local businesses that are committed to giving people a second chance. Students are people from the local community and our congregation who have either lost their job or have underpaying jobs. Many of you have served as coaches and mentors to the students in areas of writing effective resumes, strengthening interview skills, gaining greater understanding of employer expectations and much more. You have witnessed the students graduate from the program and go on to find gainful employment. Many of you have helped to break the systemic cycle of homelessness and poverty, bringing peace to those involved. Jesus said “Blessed are the peacemakers and peacesharers, for they are called the children of God.”

These four ministries are just a few of many you are already doing as peacesharers in our community. It does not even begin to touch the number of ways you are making an impact and helping to share peace among the people in our church and in our community. However, there is more work to be done. There are more hurting and suffering people than ever before. Many of you have positions and opportunities through your jobs to bring peace to the masses. Whether it is through government policies, teaching in public classrooms or helping to find the cure for dreadful diseases, God is calling you to be peacesharers. How are you going to answer the call this morning?

Not only do we as a congregation serve as peace-sharer in our own community, but we also serve as peacesharer throughout out nation. Our middle school, high school and college students are constantly on the move to share peace to those in low-income housing and underprivileged children. Our students and adult leaders have traveled to places like Charleston, SC; Middlesboro, KY; Waukegan, IL; Miami, FL; Lander, WY; and San Francisco, CA to offer peace. Plans are being made to serve as peacesharers in Perry County, AL and

Wapato, WA this summer. Through all of these experiences, our students have served as peacesharers, helping the communities to find peace in their relationship with Christ, within themselves and with one another.

Our adults have also have been busy traveling to places like Gulfport, MS; Rattlesnake Ridge, KY; New Mexico, and West Virginia to name just a few. These ministry groups have gutted out flooded homes, reroofed houses, put up drywall, installed insulation and so much more. Many more have led backyard Bible clubs, sorted clothes and given out meals to people who were seeking peace. Jesus said “Blessed are the peacemakers and peacesharers, for they are called children of God.


Though we have traveled to many places to share peace with those who are hurting, we know there is much more to do in our nation. There is more work to be done. There is more peace to be shared. How is God asking you to be a peacemaker in our nation? Jesus said “Blessed are the peacemakers and peacesharers, for they will be called children of God.”

We are also called to be peacesharers around the world. Many of you have been to different parts of our world to share peace with those who were hurting. You have gone to places likes Indonesia, Honduras, Dominican Republic, Cuba, Ukraine, and Puerto Rico to be the hands and feet of Christ, sharing peace.

However, globally, great injustices are reported everyday. On the website of International Justice Mission, an agency leading the charge against the world’s injustices, you can find these horrible facts:

Today, millions of lives around the world are in the grip of injustice.

More children, women and men are held in slavery right now than over the course of the entire trans-Atlantic slave trade: Millions toil in bondage, their work and even



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their bodies the property of an owner.

Trafficking in humans generates profits in excess of 12 billion dollars a year for those who, by force and deception, sell human lives into slavery and sexual bondage. More than 2 million children are trapped in forced prostitution. The AIDS pandemic continues to rage, and the oppression of trafficking victims in the global sex trade contributes to the disease's spread.

In many countries around the world, pedophiles find that they can sexually violate children with impunity. And though police should be protectors, in many nations, their presence is a source of insecurity for the poor. Suspects can be held interminably before trials, imprisoned for crimes they did not commit.

The land rights of women are violated on a massive scale worldwide, but with particular ferocity in Africa, leaving widows and other women in vulnerable positions unable to care for themselves or their children. Around the world, women suffer the double indignity of rape and seeing their perpetrators face no consequences for crimes of sexual violence.

Often lacking access to their own justice systems and unable to protect themselves or their families from those more powerful, it is overwhelmingly the poor who bear the burden of these abuses.¹

How can the world experience peace amidst of chaos such as this? The problem seems too large to solve. However, organizations like International Justice Mission takes on the duty of peacemaking one person at a time. This non-profit organization is "a human rights agency that secures justice for victims of slavery, sexual exploitation and other forms of violent oppression. IJM lawyers, investigators and aftercare professionals work with local governments to ensure victim rescue, to prosecute

perpetrators and to strengthen the community and civic factors that promote functioning public justice systems. IJM's justice professionals work in their communities in 12 countries in Asia, Africa and Latin America to secure tangible and sustainable protection of national laws through local court systems."² IJM is a peacemaking agency which is finding success around the world.

Maybe IJM seems a little too farfetched. Maybe you don't feel like you can make that kind of difference globally. I believe we can learn from a young man from Ashburn, VA who has now become the youngest modern-day abolitionist. Zach Hunter was moved by stories of women and children being held in slavery for unfair child labor or forced prostitution. Therefore, to help raise awareness and money, at the age of 14, he began a campaign called Loose Change to Loosen Chains (LC2LC). Hunter read in *Real Simple* magazine that there are over 10.5 billion dollars in loose change laying around in US households. At his small Christian school, he began a campaign to collect loose change for this special cause. The campaign has spread throughout the nation and even around the world. It has raised millions of dollars to fight modern day slavery. This typical 14-year old middle school student was an atypical conduit for God to launch a new peacemaking mission in this world! No problem is too big for our God and he is calling us to be agents of change, bringing peace to all the world!

We are Christ's ambassadors of reconciliation and peace. God is making his appeal through us. Do you truly believe that God is mighty to save? Are you willing to be a peacemaker and a peacesharer? Our community is counting on us. Our nation is counting on us. Our world is counting on us. Jesus said "Blessed are the peacemakers and peacesharers, for they are called the children of God." ✨

¹<http://www.ijm.org/ourwork/injusticetoday>

²<http://www.ijm.org/whoweare>

