

Day 37
Peace Breakers and Peace Fakers!

Matthew 5:9 (TLB) Happy are those who strive for peace—they shall be called the sons of God.

Working towards peace and for peace is the assignment that we have been given by Jesus. We are to be actively engaged in bringing His peace wherever we go. There are, however, two crucial elements of peace that must be discussed and thought about. **For us who follow the way of the cross, the way of our Lord Jesus, we cannot disregard these two attitudes or behaviors. We might find them in us or see them in others. Nevertheless, we must allow the Holy Spirit to cleanse us from both.**

The first is really the most dangerous kind. I will term it simply: “peace breakers”! Or those who cause division. In Galatians, Paul gives us a list of behaviors that are contrary to kingdom living. There are those things which we might see as obviously wrong, but the list has some surprises: *“The wrong things the sinful self does are clear: being sexually unfaithful, not being pure, taking part in sexual sins, 20 worshiping gods, doing witchcraft, hating, making trouble, being jealous, being angry, being selfish, making people angry with each other, causing divisions among people, 21 feeling envy, being drunk, having wild and wasteful parties, and doing other things like these. I warn you now as I warned you before: Those who do these things will not inherit God’s kingdom.” (Galatians 5:19-21 NCV)*

Did you catch that? Making trouble, being jealous, being angry, being selfish, making people angry with each other, and causing divisions among people. The human heart truly is deceptive and defective. Somewhere, somehow it has happened that we, even we who call ourselves the people of God, have allowed these kinds of behaviors to go unchecked. We are very quick to point out sexual sin. We will never think to be part of witchcraft or worshipping false gods or getting drunk and losing self control. We should avoid these things. **Yet, getting angry and staying angry seems to be no big deal. Pointing fingers at other believers and gossiping behind their backs, seems to be acceptable.** Declaring one church better than another, because we had some kind of difference, and leaving without communicating in truth and love, seems to be par for the course. Feeding people’s anger and choosing sides by showing favoritism for one over another. “Hey, everybody does that!” According to the Holy Spirit Who inspired the writing of Paul to the Galatians, it does not seem that God takes these kinds of things as lightly as we do. Paul says, *“I warn you now as I warned you before: Those who do these things will not inherit God’s kingdom.”*

This is a warning, if we practice this kind of behavior, it is a telltale sign that we are missing God’s kingdom completely. How can we be peacemakers when we are the cause of divisiveness in Christ’s Body? A divisive person only has his or her own interest in mind. They serve their own personal agenda and go around sowing division amongst God’s people. *“And now I make one more appeal, my dear brothers and sisters. Watch out for people who cause divisions and upset people’s faith by teaching things contrary to what you have been taught. Stay away from them. 18 Such people are not serving Christ our Lord; they are serving their own personal interests. By smooth talk and glowing words they deceive innocent people. 19 But everyone knows that you are obedient to the Lord. This makes me very happy. I want you to be wise in doing right and to stay innocent of any wrong. 20 The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. May the grace of our Lord Jesus be with you.” (Romans 16:17-20 NLT)*

You cannot serve Christ and your own personal interests. Watch out for people who like to talk about other people. Watch out for people with the newest revelation that God only showed them. I have no doubt that God reveals things to people, but that is why He places us in the Body, especially a local congregation with a healthy community, where our words can be evaluated and tested by those in authority. **Be careful with words like, “God showed me” and “God told me.”** Then the next words out of people’s mouths are things that break the unity and fellowship of the local church. *“This church is not deep enough.” “This church is full of compromise.” Or simply questioning anything and everything, including the leader’s motives.* According to the Proverb writer, one of the seven things that is detestable to the Lord, is a person that creates discord amongst family and friends. **(Proverbs 6:19)**

I find it profound that in the context that Paul talks about those who cause division, he finishes with the God of peace crushing Satan underneath the feet of those who do not fall for the division or even get involved with it. **Who do you think is behind the division that is being sown in our spiritual community? You guessed right! (Satan)** So stay obedient to the Lord and don’t become a peace breaker and you will have the wisdom to do what is right and be innocent before the Lord. Then your Heavenly Father, the God of peace, will crush Satan underneath your feet. Did you notice, not His feet, but your feet! **You see, you cannot walk in peace and sow discord, neither can you sow division and crush the enemy. Only peacemakers can overcome the spirit of division.**

Just like the New Testament church, we have to be diligent and discerning in our approach to dealing with division. We cannot become divisive in dealing with peace breakers. After all, we are called to peace, with everyone. **We cannot become peace fakers or peace keepers.** We are not called to pretend to have peace or fake as if nothing is going on. True peace can only be built on truth. If truth is not the foundation of our relationships, we will never have trust. **“Stop lying to each other; tell the truth, for we are parts of each other and when we lie to each other we are hurting ourselves. 26 If you are angry, don’t sin by nursing your grudge. Don’t let the sun go down with you still angry—get over it quickly; 27 for when you are angry, you give a mighty foothold to the devil.” (Ephesians 4:25-27 TLB)**

Peace faking is avoiding the problem and appeasing the other person even though we know they are in error. If people hate to be corrected, it is a sure way of revealing immaturity and pride. We all need to be corrected from time to time. It helps us grow and change. If we have the permission to speak into someone’s life, we must do so with honesty and grace. We do not allow anger to develop into a grudge and open a door for the enemy. **Peace fakers and peace keepers are people who think that pretend peace is true peace. They will try to avoid conflict at any cost and think that is true peace.** They prefer peace over truth, over healthy relationships, and over what’s right. Peace fakers see “peace” as the absence of any kind of argument or disagreement. **They will do whatever they can to avoid conflict, confrontation, even at the cost of not experiencing true community. They would rather settle for a counterfeit peace based on avoiding reality, than doing the difficult work of peace, by confronting truthfully and acting decisively.** Peace fakers know there’s a problem, but will not say anything, with the hope that, someday or somehow, things will get better because they didn’t disturb the peace. What they lack to see is that sometimes the only path to true peace is to confront what needs to be confronted and to not allow divisiveness to rule the day. **Sometimes the only path to peace is to confront the peace breakers.**

We have to be loving, but also firm, to protect the unity of the bond of peace. As Paul encourages Titus to do: **“After a first and second warning, have nothing more to do with a divisive person who refuses**

to be corrected. 11 For you know that such a one is entwined with his sin and stands self-condemned.” (Titus 3:10-11 TPT)

Are you a peace breaker? Then I lovingly encourage you to repent. Are you a peace faker? Then I lovingly encourage you to confront with grace. We do not break the peace or keep the peace, we work and strive for peace. Because we are our Father’s sons and He the God of peace will soon crush Satan underneath our feet...

Reflection and Prayer:

- **Read and reflect on this letter from Paul to Titus. What can we learn from what Paul writes to Titus? Take your time and prayerfully read and ask the Holy Spirit to give you the insight you need.**
- ***“Remind the believers to submit to the government and its officers. They should be obedient, always ready to do what is good. 2 They must not slander anyone and must avoid quarreling. Instead, they should be gentle and show true humility to everyone. 3 Once we, too, were foolish and disobedient. We were misled and became slaves to many lusts and pleasures. Our lives were full of evil and envy, and we hated each other. 4 But—When God our Savior revealed his kindness and love, 5 he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. 6 He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. 7 Because of his grace he made us right in his sight and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life. 8 This is a trustworthy saying, and I want you to insist on these teachings so that all who trust in God will devote themselves to doing good. These teachings are good and beneficial for everyone. 9 Do not get involved in foolish discussions about spiritual pedigrees or in quarrels and fights about obedience to Jewish laws. These things are useless and a waste of time. 10 If people are causing divisions among you, give a first and second warning. After that, have nothing more to do with them. 11 For people like that have turned away from the truth, and their own sins condemn them.” (Titus 3:1-11 NLT)***