**PURSUE (The Beatitudes) – Wk 6 – Peace!**

**Our dog Zack – peace was a key word. It stopped him.**

**We are going through Jesus Beatitudes = (Latin beatus) Blessings.**

**They describe a truly God blessed life. A deep state of bliss.**

**The beatitudes are given together - a intentional order:**

**They all build upon each other…**

**Matthew 5:3 Blessed are the (poor) in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 5:4 Blessed are those who (mourn), for they will be comforted. / 5:5 Blessed are the (meek), for they will inherit the earth. / 5:6 Blessed are those who (hunger and thirst) for righteousness, for they will be filled. / 5:7 Blessed are the merciful, (compassion) for they will be shown mercy. / 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, (your will & drive) for they shall see God.**

**\* 1-4 = internal events (broken, humble, submissive pursuit of God)**

**\* 5-9 = external changes (mercy, compassion, wise choices, life giving)**

**Today is one of my favorites– looking forward to this one.**

**Matt 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.**

**Peace deprived - More than anything they wanted peace**

**Their lives were anything but peaceful – It was a life of oppression, manipulation, unreliable politicians, and racial hatred for generations.**

**Zealots - For some, considered heroes - seeking peace they armed themselves and attacked Rome – murders, burning down bldg, riots. They were expecting their messiah to make war on their enemies.**

**Pic - History of Jewish wars with Rome - Attempted revolts for over 200 yrs. Crucifixions, murder, and abuse were common.**

**(40yrs later - war with Rome = millions dead.)**

**With that in mind – Jesus says - Matthew 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.**

**Like them and every generation and every place on earth – we want peace - that is all we really seek for our life and family…**

**But… What is peace?**

**True peace is not found in products – things only bring temp peace**

**True peace is not found in people – relationships, spouse, children**

**True peace is not found in achievements – when this is over - rest**

**True peace is not found in treaties – global agreements.**

**True peace is not found in an absence of conflict – no more arguing**

**We have glimpses of peace: rest after a long day, vacations, playing w/ kids, graduations, being w/ family on a good day, silence - then life rolls on and peace is gone. And the search continues.**

**Jesus friends - would greet each other with – Shalom (peace) – a deep sense of calm and bliss in every area of life. They wanted it so badly – if they only understood it was within their / your grasp.**

* **Peace can only be found in the presence of God.**

**Peace is not in the absence of conflict, but in the presence of God.**

**He is the God of peace (1 Co 14:33) / Jesus is the prince of peace. (Is 9:6)**

**John 16:33 “I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”**

**(John 14:27) You can still have peace in the middle of conflict.**

**(Phil 4:7) There is a peace that is beyond understanding**

**When the world is crazy you can still have the peace – in his presence.**

**David’s desire to be in God’s presence- Psalm 27:4 One thing I ask from the LORD, this only do I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life, (God just to be in your presence – that’s where I am most at rest and in peace.) to gaze on the beauty of the LORD and to seek him in his temple.**

**But now - His presence is not a place you need to travel to.**

**Those who are born again – are now the temple of God – How?**

* **Peace can only be found through the person Jesus Christ.**

**The fully God - fully man – person Jesus Christ is peace.**

**Colossians 1:19 For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, 20 and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.**

**Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified (made right with God) through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**2 Peter 1:2 Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.**

**A tough verse – what does it mean? Luke 12:51** **Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. 52 From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three. 53 They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”**

**Jesus is saying - Lasting peace is not found in relationships.**

**Peace that puts other people above God – is a false peace.**

**Jesus is saying - Love peace, pray for your enemies, tear down barriers, do good, be a great lover, be compassionate - but never at the cost of your allegiance to me. No matter what and who it might affect.**

**Sometimes living for Jesus might bring hostility from others.**

* **Peace must be pursued**

**Psalms 34:12-16 / 1 Peter 3:10 For, “Whoever would love life and see good days (if you want to see blessings? Then…) must keep their tongue from evil and their lips from deceitful speech. (people who seek harmony) 11 They must turn from evil and do good; they must seek peace and pursue it.**

**Being a person of peace is intentional. We make efforts to be agents of God’s peace and hope.**

**12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous and his ears are attentive to their prayer, (peacemakers have confidence their payers are effective) but the face of the Lord is against those who do evil.” (those who work to bring disunity and discord – The Lord will work against you – I don’t want that)**

**Matt 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.**

**Jesus is calling his disciples to be agents of peace. Lit. “peace lovers”**

**How to Bring True Peace to the World (Grads seek and pursue this)**

1. **Peacemakers – focus on the heart**

**Peace is found in the first 6 beatitudes - a state of the heart - when we replace greed, distrust, & hatred with mercy, faith, and compassion.**

**James 3:17 - "The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable."**

**The peace Christ speaks of, is not politics, armies, & councils. It can not be bought, traded, or diplomatically agreed upon.**

**True peace in the world begins with peace in an individual.**

**That is why the “pure in heart” are naturally peace makers.**

1. **Peacemakers – are peace preachers (gospel of Jesus - is peace)**

**Romans 10:15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news of peace!” (who proclaim the gospel of peace – Nahum 1:15, Isaiah 52:7)**

**Acts 10:36 You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, (the cross) announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.**

**Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,**

**Peace between God and man - the great war is over - blood was shed. It was violent - Jesus has won – Peace is offered.**

**Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility… (the war is over) 17 He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.**

**Peacemakers then introduce people to the peace maker!**

**2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (we have peace with God) 18 All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: (we are not to take this peace to others) 19 that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. (peace with God) 20 We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, (messengers) as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. 21 God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.**

**We are now messengers of this peace accord to mankind.**

**We cannot remain silent - the world must know.**

**A peacemaker’s heart breaks for the chaos of the world and others.**

**The kingdom of God is where true peace is found. Jesus is the only hope for true peace. We are to be peace preachers. Spread it - promote it – teach it – the world is dying for it!**

1. **Peacemakers - do not “stir the pot”**

**Peacemakers are both vertical (peace w/ God) and horizontal (peace w/ others). They bring solutions not more chaos to conflict.**

**Some people love a good argument – they think its fun. Stir the pot, spice it up - and walk off. Through some gas on a fire. With words, picking sides, exciting hate, feeding our flesh. (can’t believe they said that – you deserve better). Sticking nose where it does not need to be.**

**Peace makers – bring harmony and seek unity.**

**Galatians 5:22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control.**

**Peacemakers don’t pull the weeds of discord and disharmony - but instead sows seeds that cultivates the fruit of the spirit.**

1. **Peacemakers - are not afraid to confront**

**A peacemaker is not a trouble maker – nor a trouble avoider.**

**Peacemakers are not weak, jelly spined, compromising passive people. Like giving a crying baby a pacifier. Just to “keep the peace”**

**Peace makers stand for something great – they stand for truth, righteousness, and peace with bold conviction. (Ma 7:12 Ja 3:17)**

**Peacemakers do not avoid issues or ignore problems. They know they only get worse. But confront problems and seek to solve them. Most the time, risking their own comfort to confront.**

**Matthew 18:15 “If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault, just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. 16 But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ 17 If they still refuse to listen, tell it to the church; and if they refuse to listen even to the church, treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector.**

**Why would they do that? Because they understand that Biblical confrontation brings healing.**

**Peacemakers are not jerks, but they confront w/ grace and patience**

**Show how some confront – comically**

**Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted. (2 Tim 2:24-25 – correct others with gentleness…)**

**It’s all in the attitude – w/ patience and gentleness**

**Peacemakers use words wisely – and listen well (James 1:19)**

1. **Peacemakers - never burns bridges**

**Peacemakers are bold and brave – with humility they confidently pursue and hope for peace – even when peace is not there.**

**Ephesians 4:3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. / Romans 14:19 Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. / Hebrews 12:14 Make every effort to live in peace with everyone and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.**

**But what if they still won’t listen – keep loving them.**

**(Proverbs 25:21-22, Romans 12:20) “If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink… 21 Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good. (Luke 6:35, James 3:17) Keep the bridges open!**

**They seek to make peace wherever possible – They do not take pleasure in division, bitterness, strife, or have a conquer mentality. Their heart is hurt over strife - Seeks to end it.**

**\*\*\* Do you bring peace? Are you a peacemaker?**

**Matt 5:9 Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.**

* **The blessing of this beatitude is a reputation –**

**With God and with others – they will call you children of God.**

**Peace is and expression of our love for others – John 13:35 - By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."**

**1 Peter 2:12 – when we live this kind of life - others see God in us.**

**Matthew 5:16 – when we shine the light of God - others see God in us.**

**(Romans 14:18, 2 Corinthians 8:21, Philippians 2:15)**

**There will be a day when Jesus will return to establish his kingdom forever – peace will forever be established – until then… we are to be his ambassador of peace.**

**Will you be a peace maker? Will you bring Jesus to others?**

**The world is praying for it – asking for it – longing for it!**

**Maybe you need peace. Is there a war going on inside? Is there conflict, anger, frustration… victory in that war begins with surrender.**

**It starts here - John 1:12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God - 13 children born not of natural descent, (nor born into it) nor of human decision (not something you do) or a husband’s will, (not married into it) but born of God. (by the the HS)**

**And then given to his kids - John 14:27 - Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.**

**Jesus speaks to our storms – peace be still! (Mark 4:38-40)**

**Next week - that last and most uncomfortable one of all. When we live and pursue the first 7 – the 8th one will follow.**