Notes on Blessed are the peacemakers

John Piper, “Blessed Are the Peacemakers**”**

http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/blessed-are-the-peacemakers

In [James 3:17](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/James%203.17) it says "The wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable." First pure, then peaceable, not the other way around.

[Romans 12:18](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Rom%2012.18) is very important at this point. There Paul says, "If possible, so far as it depends upon you, live peaceably with all." That is the goal of a peacemaker: "If possible, so far as it depends on you . . . " Don't let the rupture in the relationship be your fault.

Ah, but that raises a tough question: Is it your fault when the stand that you take is causing the division? If you have alienated someone and brought down their anger upon your head because you have done or said what is right, have you ceased to be a peacemaker?

Not necessarily. Paul said, "If it is possible . . . live at peace." He thus admits that there will be times that standing for the truth will make it impossible. For example, he says to the Corinthians (in 11:18–19), "I hear that there are divisions among you; and I partly believe it, for there must be factions among you in order that those who are genuine among you may be recognized." Now he would not have said that, if the genuine Christians should have compromised the truth in order to prevent divisions at all cost. It was precisely because some of the Christians were genuine—genuine peacemakers—that some of the divisions existed. (Also see [1 Corinthians 7:15](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/1%20Cor%207.15).)

Jesus said in [Matthew 10:34](https://biblia.com/bible/esv/Matt%2010.34),

Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; and a man's foes will be those of his own household.

In other words, you must love peace and work for peace. You must pray for your enemies, and do good to them, and greet them, and long for the barriers between you to be overcome.

**[MANY CHRISTIANS]** demand that the Ten Commandments be posted in public buildings. … I haven't heard one of them demand that the Sermon on the Mount, the Beatitudes, be posted anywhere. "Blessed are the merciful" in a courtroom? "Blessed are the peacemakers" in the Pentagon?  
*Kurt Vonnegut, "Cold Turkey,"* In These Times

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2007/december/25.54.html>

**[PEACEMAKERS]** are honored insofar as they speak about peace as something already victoriously won that we can celebrate as part of our glorious past or as something that will be won in the other world. They continue to be dishonored insofar as they continue to point out injustice, hypocrisy, and suffering. They are noble when their actions bring to light problems far away from us; they are an odious nuisance when they point out our own sins.  
*Thomas Trzyna,* Blessed Are the Pacifists

Therefore, the spirit of wisdom, when it touches the heart through its sweetness, both tempers the ardor of external desire and . . . creates peace within, so that when the mind is wholly concentrated on interior delight, a person is fully and perfectly reformed in the image of God: as it is written: Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the sons of God (Matt. 5:9).[62] The Sermon on the Mount through the Centuries: From the Early Church to John Paul II

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<https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/On_the_Five_Sevens> *by*[*Hugh of Saint Victor*](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Author:Hugh_of_Saint_Victor)*, translated by*[*Andrew N.J. Dunning*](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Author:Andrew_N.J._Dunning)

I for one believe that in just the same way all the Beatitudes previously made known to us upon this mountain, all those that the divine Word has previously presented, are sacred and holy every one, but that the unentered sanctuary which is now the subject of our study is very truly also a holy of holies. If seeing God had nothing to surpass it in goodness, then surely to become a son of God is beyond all felicity. (Homily 7, on “Blessed are the Peacemakers”, Gregory of Nyssa)

If you make peace, he says, you will be crowned with the reward of adoption as a son. In my opinion the very work for which he promises such a great reward is itself another gift. (Homily 7, Gregory of Nyssa)

Physical effects of rage: The demon of rage however does not produce ineffectual bodily movements. Once the disease has taken hold and the blood round the heart boils over, with the black bile (so they tell us) which comes from the furious disposition spreading throughout the whole body, then all the organs of sense in the head are constricted by the compressed vapours. The eyes [156] protrude beyond the surrounding eye-lids, staring blood- shot and like a snake's so as to hurt. The bowels are tightened with gasping for breath. The veins swell up on the neck. The tongue thickens. The voice becomes involuntarily shrill as the air-passage tightens. The lips get stiff and blackened all round by the diffusion of that chill bile, and are unable to make their natural opening and closing movements, so that they cannot contain the large quantity of spittle in the mouth, but let it shoot out with the words as the violent voice spits foam about. That is when the hands may be seen set in violent motion by the disease, and the feet likewise. It is how- ever no longer random movement of these limbs, as happens in the case of the demon-possessed, but to hurt those who because of the disease are fighting each other; the first targets for those trying to hit each other are the vital organs of perception. If in the course of the fight the mouth should come near the body, the teeth do not remain idle, but arc stuck in like an animal's to whatever they can reach. (Homily 7, Gregory of Nyssa)

Blessed then are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Who are they? - the imitators, of the divine love of people, those who shew in their own lives what belongs to the activity of God. The Benefactor who makes all good, the Lord, totally destroys and turns to nothing whatever is foreign and alien to the good. This is the work he decrees for you, to expel hatred, to resolve con- flict, to get rid of envy, to banish fighting, to destroy hypocrisy, [160] to quench tl1e grudge within which smoulders in the heart, and to replace these with what arises in their stead when their contraries are removed. (Homily 7, Gregory of Nyssa)