Episode Notes
S9 Ep 8 Peacemaking and Persecution

Being known as a peacemaker is a profound honor in heaven, signifying a threat to evil and earning the proud recognition of God as His son or daughter. We are not supposed to be the cause of conflict. Peacemaking requires a meek, merciful, and pure heart that prioritizes God's glory and the well-being of His people over selfish concerns or earthly prestige. Jesus concludes the Beatitudes by moving from peacemaking to persecution; from reconciling relationships to experiencing rejection and hostility. Blessed are the persecuted for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

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

The sequence from "purity of heart" to "peacemaker" is natural – for those with pure hearts try to walk rightly with everyone else in their lives.

God is the supreme peacemaker!

- 2 Cor. 5:19 – "God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation."

Disciples of Jesus are made to be peacemakers, not causes of conflict.

- "Make every effort to live in peace with everyone" – Rom. 12:18

The reality is that peacemaking requires the divine. God is the author of peace and

Those with meek, merciful and pure hearts are best qualified to be peacemakers

The reason that peacemaking appears on the pathway at this place is that the pure in heart delight in the peace and fellowship of God's people! The pure in heart rise above selfish concerns as they want peace, true unity and the genuine happiness of others. Peacekeeping sets people free.

When you become a peacemaker, you are forfeiting earthly glory in exchange for the honor that comes from God alone. You make a choice regarding what is more important: to be prestigious in the eyes of people here on earth, or be regarded as a son or daughter of God by your Father in heaven.

There is no greater calling or reputation than being known in heaven as a peacemaker.

"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven. For so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (5:10-12)

Jesus now moves from peacemaking to persecution; from reconciling relationships to experiencing rejection and hostility.

The same reward that goes to the "poor in spirit" – theirs is the kingdom of heaven!

The Greek word for “persecuted” means “to follow”. You are persecuted when your enemy follows you. It is like when the Pharisees laid plans to trap Jesus in His words (Mat.22:15).

Jesus says we are blessed if people are so upset with our faith and message that they pursue us. Persecutors are like “stalkers”, always showing up to cause any annoyance they can. Paul opponents – sometimes referred to as Judaizers – followed him wherever he went in order to undermine his message of grace.

This again, is a reminder, that having the Kingdom of Heaven – the indwelling presence of the un-grieved Spirit – is as good as it gets! There is no greater joy – or worth – than having the Holy Spirit be at home in you! It is a taste of heaven below, having a little bit of heaven to go to heaven in.

We will never outgrow persecution – that is, to reach the place where people will applaud you rather than want to punish you.

Jesus said to His disciples, “In this world you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world!” (John 16:33).

Persecuted because “of righteousness”.

- Not because you are objectionable to others, or rave like wild-eyed fanatics, or because they uphold some religious-political cause…no…is because you have faithfully lived the life of Jesus. This is not legalism or moralism…this is persecution because you live like and stand with Jesus and His Kingdom.

Yours is the Kingdom of Heaven

- Inheriting the Kingdom of Heaven! IT DOES NOT GET BETTER THAN THIS!
- If during a trial we honored God, didn’t complain, trusted Him, didn’t try to rush through it or get it over prematurely, the Holy Spirit sometimes testifies of His pleasure with us. God loves to do this for those who have endured a terrible time of testing. He knows how much we can bear, and when the trial is over the devil is commanded to leave us for a season while the angels attend to us (Jesus in Mat. 4:11).
- Those who undergo persecution are often given a very unusual sense of God and His presence. Part of why Jesus says we are “blessed” in the midst of difficulty.

Positioning Your Heart for the Work of the Holy Spirit – Yield & Follow…

Poor in Spirit
Those who Mourn
The Meek
Those who hunger and thirst for righteousness
The Merciful
The Pure in Heart
The Peacemaker
The Persecuted

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