Matthew 5:9 (J. K.) 54268

Christian Truth: Volume 29, Peacemakers, The (5:9)

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Matt. 5:9.

When we go in and out among the Lord's people, are they happy and thankful to see us? Or are they relieved when we pass on? What kind of a spirit do we manifest in our dealings with one another?

As the days become more godless, the Christian and the Church are tremendously influenced by the moral state of things "without." But as we consider also the condition of things among the saints of God, we see and hear of strife "within."

It is well then that we appreciate the high esteem in which our Lord holds a peacemaker. "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." Let us note that it is not they who live in peace, or hold their peace, who receive this divine benediction, but they who MAKE PEACE.

This distinction is important, as some who may have a peaceable nature are the least qualified to make peace, and may be unfaithful for the sake of peace. But peacemaking is something else. It is the grace of the Lord Jesus in blessed activity, pouring oil on troubled waters without compromising the holiness of God, or saying, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace"; for there must be truth and purity along with peace.

Every Christian possesses the resource of "the grace that is in Christ Jesus" to be a peacemaker, but all may not draw upon it. It would seem that the quality or measure of grace necessary in a peacemaker depends upon one's own state of soul in the presence of God. He must be breathing the sweet peace of communion with God himself. Can we not say too that he who walks with God must live in the spirit of self-judgment—must judge all that belongs to himself naturally—and thus gain complete control over his own spirit, temper, words and ways? Who can have God's thoughts about matters and situations save those who judge themselves and walk in the light of His presence.

Now what of those who forget their heavenly mission of peacemaking and trouble the saints? Disturbances do arise, and elements of discord are at work when these—rather than ministering peace at every step—display a spirit of faultfinding and contention. Some may in mistaken zeal cause difficulties in the name of truth and righteousness. In some minds a mistake may be magnified into an offense, an inaccuracy of statement into a deliberate falsehood; and miscellaneous things may be together construed as constituting a grave charge against one who is unconscious of his "guilt." Sometimes all may be true up to a certain point—but who has God's thoughts in cases where there is no moral or doctrinal evil, but only apparent inconsistencies which some minds are quick in censuring? Oh, for a peacemaker at such a time! A little patience, a little wisdom, a little love, a little consideration of human infirmity, a little waiting on the Lord may well pour oil on troubled waters. Oh, for a little of that sweet peace brought down by the hand of faith into our difficulties! This would not only be Christ-like, but also save us from many sorrows of heart and bitter tears. "Blessed are the peacemakers."

Those who feel they are not appreciated as they ought to be are another group that disturbs God's people. Out of communion and unhappy in themselves, they get others to sympathize with them. A party spirit is apt to spring up, and sorrow with it. Wounded vanity and jealousy will be found at the root of all such feelings. What could be more sad than for one to be more concerned for his own importance than for the peace of his brethren? But self in some of its many expressions is a prolific source of trouble. Could we but crucify self, and care only for the Lord's glory by walking worthy of that sweet title, "They shall be called the children of God"—all would be peace and love.

He who sows discord, from whatever motive, in place of keeping and making peace, is doing the devil's work (see Pro. 6:19).

It may be that on occasion a Christian causes turmoil in certain places because of faithfulness to Christ; that is quite a different thing. Satan may even stir up many against such because of his wholeheartedness for Christ. Still, he will study to give no offense and to take none. He will keep clear of strife and contention, meekly suffering for Christ's sake, and praying for the careless and unbelieving around him. A little prudence, a little patience and waiting on God may go far to silence the strife of tongues, to calm the ruffled temper, to abate opposition, and to win souls for Christ. May we not say that none of the Christian graces so distinctly reveals God in His people as this peacemaking spirit? "They shall be called the children of God."

Oh, my Christian friends, may our sonship be manifested in declaring that which God is and delights in! He is the great Peacemaker. He delights in the title, "God of peace," which appears seven times in the epistles. He loves peace. Without peace there can be no edification.

Christ "made peace by the blood of His cross," and when His blessed work was finished, He returned to His Father, leaving behind Him the full blessing of peace for His disciples: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you." The peace which He made on the cross, and His own personal peace which He enjoyed with His Father while passing through the sorrows of this world, He leaves as the rich legacy of His love to all who believe in Him.

Oh, my friends, what a legacy—and forever! Such is our portion even now. May we go forth filled and clothed in peace, and all our paths be indeed the paths of peace. May it never be said that we troubled the Lord's people.