



CELL GUIDE

TOPIC Blessed are the Peacemakers

SPEAKER Elder Leon Oei

THEME Building the Right Culture

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MESSAGE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

Elder Leon shared that 2024 has been a tumultuous year and in the last century conflicts has risen sharply and we live in a world at war. In Singapore, we are thankful that we have been blessed with peace. In this sermon, Elder Leon examines the verse taken from Beatitudes from the Sermon on the Mount, blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called Sons of God (Mat 5:9).

Context

Jesus taught the beatitudes early in his ministry near the sea of Galilee. He was known to people who didn't know him as Lord and God as a peaceable man. He is representative of God who is Jehovah Shalom (Jdg 6:44) and his peaceable nature in the Jewish culture is reflected in Isaiah 2:4 where it says "they shall beat their swords into ploughshares" (Isaiah 2:4). Jesus is also called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. His most famous teaching is also to turn the other cheek when smite on the right cheek (Math 5:30). God indeed also made peace with everything in heaven on Earth through the blood of Christ in the Cross.

The Peace Paradox

When God called us to be peacemakers and he did not call us to be appeasers. In scripture, God is described in martial terms throughout scriptures as a man of war (Exo 15:3), who will fight for His people (Deu 3:22, Jos 23:3) and is mighty in battle (Ps 24:8). Interestingly, the prophet Joel reverts the imagery of peace with the words "beat your ploughshares into swords" (Joel 3:10). Jesus himself also said that he comes not to bring peace but a sword. Lastly, it is in Revelations that Jesus will return faithful and true with righteousness, and he will judge and wage war.

God is calling us to be principled people who will not compromise on God's law, who are proactive and prudent. He is calling us to lean on the Spirit's guidance to live a life as Christian.

So what is the everyday Christian to do?

We are to make peace with God, ourselves and our enemies.

1) Peace with God

The hunger for peace with God cannot be satisfied by man-made solutions. Spiritual satiation is found when Man realizes that a just God abhors sin in man, yet has compassionately made reconciliation possible through the death of His only son, Jesus as an atonement for Man's sin. Thereafter, Man must also repent and lay down His life in surrender before God to experience peace

with God. The peace which is experienced through simple repentance is maintained through complete and continual surrender. God has offered us terms of peace which we should not reject or take lightly. We should accept his terms of peace and not break our peace agreement with God.

2) Peace with Self

We are sometimes our own harshest critics; we see all our own motivations as opposed to the image that we project. We cannot stand our hypocrisy and are disappointed that we have let ourselves down. We are to remind ourselves that once we have made peace with God, we are to live in the reality of that truth by choosing to be connected to the truth, and that God has made us His sons and daughters when we had turned from sin and returned to Him. We are to remember that we are known and treasured by God of all creation, because God has given His only son to make unworthy people like us into His treasures. We must remember the life of the Apostle Peter who had to learn to forgive himself for denying Christ three times and return to serving Him.

3) Peace with Our Foes

The hardest of all is to have peace with our enemies. In situations, where we are offended, persecuted, and attacked, Jesus, our Lord and Master bids us to forgive. The testimony is that BBTicians are living out the identity as peacemakers, by reaching out to children in war-torn countries. Yet an even greater testimony is when BBTicians reach out also to the perpetrator or the abuser by extending grace and forgiveness. We are never more like God than when we make peace with others. Yes, we are to hate the sin, but not the sinner.

Conclusion

We are to reflect deeply and practically on how to be a peacemaker. We are to be wise and prayerful as we undertake the High Calling of Christ to be peacemakers in a troubled world. We are to navigate with prudence to be successful peacemakers by being pure, peace loving, gentle, accommodating, full of mercy, good fruit, impartial and sincere. So that we can reap a harvest of righteousness.

QUESTIONS

1. Jesus is described as peaceable, yet he also mentions that he comes not to bring peace but a sword. How have you experienced both of these natures?

2. We are to make peace with God, ourselves and our enemies. Of the three, which is the hardest to carry out and why?

3. How does being a peacemaker look like in your daily life?