



# Prince of Heaven

#AgentsOfPeace



### Matthew 5:9

**“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.”**

The Sermon on the Mount does not waste words. Jesus is purposeful about how He communicates each beatitude - these truths laden with grace, power and poignancy. We cannot take for granted the intentionality with which He spoke each word, and thus it is worth taking a second and third look at Matthew 5:9 and glimpsing the insight He is giving us into the nature of peace as the Lord defines it: an active concept. Very notably Jesus does not say “blessed are the peace keepers”, but “blessed are the peace *makers*”.

In Louisville, Kentucky on March 29th 1956, the day before he faced trial, Martin Luther King preached a sermon about peace in which he examines and turns over another place in which Jesus spoke of it:

*“In a very profound passage which has been often misunderstood, Jesus utters this: He says, “Think not that I am come to bring peace. I come not to bring peace but a sword.” Certainly, He is not saying that He comes not to bring peace in the higher sense. What He is saying is: “I come not to bring this peace of escapism, this peace that fails to confront the real issues of life, the peace that makes for stagnant complacency.” Then He says, “I come to bring a sword” - not a physical sword. Whenever I come, a conflict is precipitated between the old and the new, between justice and injustice, between the forces of light and the forces of darkness. I come to declare war over injustice. I come to declare war on evil. Peace is not merely the absence of some negative force—war, tension, confusion, but it is the presence of some positive force – justice, goodwill, the power of the kingdom of God.”*

And there, it seems, we come to the crux of things. Peace not as simply an absence of conflict but the presence of justice, even as we ourselves face trials of many kinds.

God the Father gave us the ultimate example of this when He “presented” justice by sending Christ His Son - as an infant in the staggering humility of an animal pen, no less - to “make” peace, to graciously and sacrificially give broken, war-torn humanity the chance to reconcile with their Maker.

We as the Church, the recipients of this peace, now carry the outrageous and holy responsibility of propagating this kind of peace in our broken world. Peace that is active, justice that is presented, the Kingdom of God in our midst.

By Brooke Ligertwood

#### CONNECTION & ACTION

1. What in your life do you need to be a peace *maker* for?
2. What does a “war on injustice” look like?
3. How do we as the Church, propagate this peace in our local communities and world?

Use #AgentsOfPeace to join the conversation online!

#### PRAYER POINTS

- That Peace & justice would be “presented” in churches
- The ongoing work of Preemptive Love Coalition in Iraq & Syria
- For courage to be peace makers at home, in our communities and globally

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