

## Blessed are the Peacemakers

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

Jesus now touches on a "touchy" subject. Think about it. When is the last time society as a whole pushed anything regarding peace making? I mean REALLY, TRULY pushing peace making, not just giving lip service to the nice thought of peace. It doesn't happen too often!

Society in Jesus' day was very much divided. There were the various warring parties within Judaism: the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes. There were undoubtedly various leaders of these movements at political "war" with each other. Then, of course, outside of Judaism, the Roman world was filled with political adversaries who did horrible things to each other (and the people at large) in order to maintain their power, including assassinations, civil wars, destruction of property, blaming other groups for things THEY had actually done, etc.

Thus, when Jesus says, "Blessed are the PEACEMAKERS," this would have been something completely contrary to the popular mindset of the day ... .. And it is completely contrary to the mindset of TODAY as well!

Our nation is divided almost exactly in two. According to [gallup.com](https://news.gallup.com/poll/15370/party-affiliation.aspx), as of January of 2020, the two major political parties in America are at an even split of national support at 27% each (<https://news.gallup.com/poll/15370/party-affiliation.aspx>). That leaves about 45% of Americans identifying as politically independent (with 1% undetermined due to margin of error). If that is the case (independents far outnumbering both sides), then why does the political pendulum seem to constantly swing back and forth between the two parties like clockwork? Why such gridlock?

The answer is that our nation has been lulled into a very sharp partisan divide that is seemingly unshakeable. And the fruits of this are everywhere. Followers of both sides frequently post disfigured artist-rendered caricatures making fun of their political rivals. We hear and see words demonizing one another constantly. We observe intense name calling. And as November fast approaches, it seems to only get worse. Cue Romans 13:1 & 2: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall **receive to themselves damnation**" (Emphasis mine, TCG). Tell me, is it worth receiving damnation to your soul to post a funny meme or caricature of an elected political rival?

Jesus didn't come to change the world through politics. He came to radically change the world through the gospel. If we are not careful, we can forget about "the main thing," and let politics become our God. Then we end up forgetting about Jesus' warning that a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand (Luke 11:17).

Jesus' blessing in Matthew 5:9 is for those who can see past all of the divisive rhetoric. Christians by all means must be the ones who are willing to try to reach across all aisles and work for the greater good of this nation. Even more importantly, Christians must also realize that the countless religious divisions that have taken place through the centuries have greatly harmed the cause of Christ and are

completely contrary to His will (John 17:20ff; 1 Cor. 1:10ff; Eph. 4:1ff). We need to be seeking PEACE. But there is only ONE way that true peace can be accomplished, and that is in the cross!

We must care more about our political rivals' SOULS than their politics (If we can win their souls, then their politics WILL change)! We must also care about the souls of all the misguided people who are wrapped up in the sins of denominationalism. We need to pray that we can be agents of restoration — restoring God's TRUE kingdom, HIS church; restoring law and order and human decency (in politics and everything else in life); and restoring PEACE — the world desperately needs it!