



Big Idea: Jesus calls us to be peacemakers in a world prone to conflict.

Primary Scripture: Matthew 5:9

Supporting Scripture: Matthew 5:1-11, Ephesians 2:10, Philippians 4:6-7

Hey everyone! My name is [name] and I am so excited to be able to be here today. Before we really dive into God's Word this morning, let's start off with some prayer.

[Pray.]

Alright, I want to start off with a little game. I need everyone to find a partner. Just in your seats, where you are, pick someone next to you. If you are in an odd-numbered row, just make a trio and tell both other people what your answer is. It isn't complicated, and you won't be moving anywhere, you just need to be able to share your answers.

Everyone good? Okay, great. So, this game is very simple, and I'm sure you've played it before. It is called, *Would You Rather*. Now, instead of asking a bunch of random or gross questions like, would you rather: eat five live crickets or share a bed with five live snakes, I'm going to ask you some very easy questions. But just out of curiosity, who would eat the crickets? You guys are gross. Okay, moving on.

So, the first question is, on a tropical island vacation, would you rather: **sit on the beach OR be in the ocean**. Think of your answer and share it with your partner. Okay, now raise your hand if you would rather be on the beach getting your skin fried? How about in the ocean?

Next question: on your vacation to the mountains, would you rather: **be taking in the beauty of the mountains by sitting on the top of the mountains quietly OR be whitewater rafting down the canyons?** Share your answer with your partner again. Now, raise your hand if you would be taking in the view? How about rafting?

Okay, two more questions. Would you rather: **watch the football game at home OR be in row one of the endzones?** Again, share with your partner, and raise your hand if you would be at home? How about in the end zone? How about, you could care less about sports?

Okay last one. Would you rather: **read a book** OR **go to a concert**? Share with your partner and raise your hand if you would rather read a book! How about going to a concert?

[You might want to shorten or lengthen this game depending on your group.]

Did any of you and your partners say the same answer to every single question? That is so crazy! I love how different we all are. So, let me ask you this, did any of you pick the crazy option for all of those questions?

[Edit this as a personal connection point based on your own personality.]

Yeah, you are my people! I love anything that gets my adrenaline pumping. I was just surfing a couple weeks ago, and even though I got ROCKED by some waves, I absolutely loved being out there. My wife can sit on the beach for an entire day and read a book, enjoy the sun, take a nap, or whatever she wants to do. I can last about an entire five minutes before I start to go stir crazy and need to go do something.

So, wherever you are, maybe you are one of the fortunate people that can sit still and relax, or maybe you are like me and need to be active constantly. Either way, both of those sides of the spectrum are good. However, with the direction we are heading today, you are going to see that one side might have to work a little harder to accomplish the goal while the other side will need to show a lot of grace to the other because it might come more naturally to them.

Open your Bibles to the book of Matthew, chapter five. Matthew is the first book in the New Testament if you are having some trouble finding it. If you are at Genesis, you need to go further and if you hit Revelation, you have gone too far.

In Matthew chapter five, we are going to focus on a single verse this morning. We are going to look at verse nine. Before we read it, here is a little context to what is happening. Jesus had just started his Sermon on the Mount. This is the most famous sermon ever preached. It is probably the most memorized, studied, and preached from passage in the Bible. Jesus had been wandering the countryside for a little while, but He has decided that it was time to take His ministry public. So, He sat up on this hillside with hundreds, if not thousands, of people gathered all around Him to hear

Him speak. We don't really know the exact number; the Bible just says that it was a great multitude of people following Him.

In the first part of His message, Jesus said some very counter-cultural things. That means, it would rub people the wrong way OR be very confusing to some. So, He started off by saying,

³ *"Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

⁴ *"Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."*

⁵ *"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."*

⁶ *"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied."*

⁷ *"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."*

⁸ *"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."*

⁹ *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."*

¹⁰ *"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."*

¹¹ *"Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. ¹² Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you." (Matthew 5:1-11 ESV)*

I said today that we are going to focus in on one verse, and that is verse nine. Let's go back and read that again.

⁹ *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." (Matthew 5:1-11 ESV)*

Blessed are the peacemakers. That sounds pretty simple and easy, right? But what does *peace* even mean? Does it mean that we 'find our zen'? Does it mean that we run off into the woods to live in solitude forever and ever and not see a single person for the rest of our lives? Or maybe it means that we take a Thanos approach to everything? You know, Thanos from the Marvel movies? Anyone seen End Game? Thanos is a villain who basically wanted to control the entire universe to get rid of half the people so in his eyes the world would be 'peaceful'. [I'm not a Marvel nerd so if I

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