

Not Peace, but a Sword

Matthew 5:9

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

John 14:27

***Peace** I leave with you; my **peace** I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*

John 16:33

*I have said these things to you, that in me you may have **peace**. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."*

It is with puzzlement, perhaps even shock we come to **today's text**:

Matthew 10:34-36:

³⁴ "Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. **I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.** ³⁵ For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. ³⁶ And a person's enemies will be those of his own household.

- A Jesus who declares that he did NOT come to bring peace, but rather a sword creates some difficulty for many Christians.
- "These are the kinds of things", we think, "that make non-Christians refer to us as violent, intolerant and judgmental."
- We do know that Christ came to die on a cross so that we might know peace with God.
- So enemies of God are made to be sons of God through the peace Christ establishes... so what does Jesus mean he didn't come to bring peace?

Big Idea: The peace of Christ was won with a sword.

- The first thing to notice about the text is that Jesus didn't say, "I didn't come to bring peace. PERIOD. He said I did not come to bring peace ON THE EARTH.

Let's go back to a verse we already looked at: ***Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*** (John 14:27)

- The peace Jesus brought isn't the peace of the world, it is a different kind of peace... it is obviously also different than what the disciples had envisioned because Jesus has to reassure them not to fear (who would fear peace?)
- His peace comes at the tip of a sword, it is conquering peace.

- Peace as the world know it is an absence of conflict and to obtain peace you destroy opposition... Christ came to bring peace that loves enemies and creates allies out of opposition.

Three Things the sword does to establish Peace:

1. The sword kills.

- Jesus didn't come to make good people better, or come to patch up or fix our old sinful selves... he came to kill our old selves so that we could be made new.

Matthew 10:39

³⁹ Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

- We need to lose our lives before we can follow Christ... our old self has to die, be killed ... be crucified along with Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. **The old has passed away; behold, the new has come.**

- Some of you might be here today and not have ever thought that you needed to die to who you were and are in order to be a true follower of Christ.
- Why would you? It's a humbling, unnatural thing to admit... but if you are here because you think you'd check out Christianity or try religion to make yourself better... let me tell you, it doesn't work that way. There is nothing in your old self worth salvaging... Christ came to the earth bearing a sword, to kill who you are so that He can make you someone new!

2. The sword divides.

- Given such a strong message: "you need to die to who you are", is it any wonder Jesus tells his disciples this will cause division?

Matthew 10:35-36:

³⁵ For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. ³⁶ And a person's enemies will be those of his own household.

- We know this to be true. We know how divisive Christianity can be... especially when we take up our duty to share the gospel with a dying world!

Luke 12:49-53

⁴⁹ "I came to cast fire on the earth, and would that it were already kindled! ⁵⁰ I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how great is my distress until it is accomplished! ⁵¹ Do

you think that I have come to give peace on earth? No, I tell you, but rather division.⁵² For from now on in one house there will be five divided, three against two and two against three.⁵³ They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

3. The sword creates sides.

Luke 18:36-37

“My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.”³⁷ Then Pilate said to him, “So you are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. **For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world— to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice.**”

NIV: Jesus answered, “You say that I am a king. In fact, the reason I was born and came into the world is to testify to the truth. *Everyone on the side of truth listens to me.*”

- There are sides creating by the cross... by the sword. You are either on the side of truth, or you are held captive by lies.

1 Corinthians 1:18-20

¹⁸ *For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.* ¹⁹ *For it is written,*

“I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart.”

²⁰ *Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?*

- The cross destroys the wisdom of the wise... it is folly to those who are perishing... these are not pleasant things if you are on the other side.
- Do you think destroying the perceived wisdom of the worldly wise will create animosity?
- It is a contentious thing...
- The truth is always in opposition to the lie, and we hold the truth! There are sides and there is a war initiated by the redeeming cross of Christ.

How do we respond to this?

2 Corinthians 10:3-6

³ *For though we walk in the flesh, we are not waging war according to the flesh.* ⁴ *For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds.* ⁵ *We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ,* ⁶ *being ready to punish every disobedience, when your obedience is complete.*

