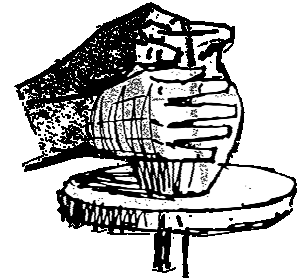


His Workmanship: Westside

*"For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works."
—Ephesians 2:10*



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Isaiah 64:8

Blessed Are The Peacemakers, Beatitudes, Part 8, by John Piper

With each beatitude another nail is driven into a coffin. Inside the coffin lies the corpse of a false understanding of salvation. The false understanding says that a person can be saved without being changed. Or that a person can inherit eternal life even if his attitudes and actions are like the attitudes and actions of unbelievers.

The Cry of the Beatitudes: Get a New Heart. One after the other the beatitudes tell us that the blessings of eternity will be given only to those who have become new creatures. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God. If we don't obtain mercy, we receive judgment. If we don't see God, we are not in heaven. If we aren't called the sons of God, we are outside the family. In other words these are all descriptions of salvation. And it is promised only to the merciful, the pure in heart, and the peacemakers.

Therefore the beatitudes are like long spikes holding down the lid of the coffin on the false teaching which says that if you just believe in Jesus you will go to heaven whether or not you are merciful or pure in heart or a peace-

maker. In fact, from beginning to end the Sermon on the Mount cries out, "Get yourself a new heart! Become a new person! The plague of judgment is at the door!" You recall the words of Mt 5:20: *"Unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."* At the very end of the sermon in 7:26 the Lord calls out over the crowds, *"Every one who hears these words of Mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell; and great was the fall of it."* In other words, a life of disobedience to the beatitudes and to the Sermon on the Mount will not stand in the judgment no matter what we believe!

Not Optional Suggestions but the Path to Heaven. I am convicted that I have not treated this dimension of the beatitudes with as much earnestness and seriousness as I should, and that the care that I have for your eternal good has not shown itself as genuinely as it must. My conscience was pricked in reading an old book by Horatius Bonar to pastors in which he said, *"Our words are feeble, even when sound and true; our looks are careless, even when our words are weighty; and our*

tones betray the apathy which both words and looks disguise," Words to Winners of Souls, p. 55. So I want to impress upon your consciences with all my might and earnestness that in the beatitudes Jesus is not making optional suggestions, and this sermon is not a series of suggestions on how to make the world better. On the contrary, Jesus is describing the pathway to heaven, and this sermon is a message from God to urge you to get on that pathway and stay on that pathway so that you can be called sons of God at the last judgment.

That is what is at stake. If you are on the narrow path which leads to life, this lesson is to help you stay on it. And if you are still in the broad way that leads to destruction, the purpose of this lesson is to direct you to the path of life.

How to Become Sons of God. When Jesus said, *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God,"* He did not tell us how to become a son of God. He simply says that sons of God are in fact peacemakers. People who are peacemakers will be recognized as the sons of God at the judgment, and they will be called what they are and welcomed into their Fa-

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"...The LORD will bless His people with peace." Ps 29:11

ther's house. To see how to become sons of God we can look at Jn 1:12 and Gal 3:26-27. *"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name,"* Jn 1:12. *"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ,"* Gal 3:26-27. In other words, we become sons of God by trusting in Christ for our forgiveness and hope, by receiving Him, by putting Him on in baptism.

Sons of God Have the Character of Their Father. What Jesus was saying in Mt 5:9 is that people who have become sons of God have the character of their heavenly Father. We know from Scripture that our heavenly Father is a "God of peace," Rm 16:20; 1 Thes 5:23; Heb 13:20. We know that heaven is a world of peace, Lk 19:38. And most important of all, we know that God is a peacemaker! *"God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them,"* 2 Cor 5:19. He made peace by the blood of the cross, Col 1:20. In other words, even though by nature we are rebels against God and have committed high treason and are worthy to be eternally court-martialed and hanged by the neck until dead, nevertheless God has sacrificed His own Son and now declares amnesty free and clear to any who will lay down their arms of independence and come home to Him.

God is a peace-loving God, and a peacemaking God. The whole history of redemption, climaxing in the death and resurrection of Jesus, is God's strategy to bring about a just and lasting peace between rebel man and God Himself, and then between man and man. Therefore, God's children are peacemakers, too. They have the character of their Father. What He

loves they love. What He pursues they pursue. You can know His children by whether they are willing to make sacrifices for peace the way God did. By the sovereign work of God's grace rebel human beings are born again, brought from disobedience to faith, and made into children of God. We were born again, after the image of our heavenly Father, 1 Jn 3:9. If He is a peacemaker, then His children, who have His image, will be peacemakers.

The Spirit of God Is the Spirit of Peace. As Paul said, *"Since we are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba! Father!'"* Gal 4:6. Therefore, *"All who are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God,"* Rm 8:14. Being led by the Spirit always includes bearing the fruit of the Spirit—and the fruit of the Spirit is peace! So you see why it must be that the children of God must be peacemakers. It is by the Spirit of God that we are made children of God, and the Spirit of God is the Spirit of peace. If we are not peacemakers, we don't have the Spirit of Christ.

We do not earn or merit the privilege to be called sons of God. Instead we owe our new birth to the sovereign grace of God, Jn 1:13. We owe our love of the brethren to the impulses of the new birth, 1 Jn 5:1. We receive the Holy Spirit by the exercise of faith, Gal 3:2. The fruit of this Spirit is peace, Gal 5:22. So those who bear the fruit of peace are the sons of God. Our whole salvation, from beginning to end, is all of grace—therein lies our hope and joy and freedom. But our final salvation is conditional—we must be peacemakers. Therein lies our earnestness and the great seriousness with which we must deal with these beatitudes, and seek the grace of God in our lives. **Continued next week:** What it means to be a peacemaker.

"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You." Isaiah 26:3

There once was a king who offered a prize to the artist who would paint the best picture of peace. Many artists tried and submitted their work. The king looked at all the pictures. There were only two he really liked, and he had to choose between them.

One picture was of a calm lake, perfectly mirroring the peaceful, towering mountains all around it. Overhead was blue sky with fluffy, white clouds. It was the favorite of all who saw it. Truly, they thought, it was the perfect picture of peace.

The other picture had mountains, too, but these were rugged and bare. Above was an angry sky from which rain fell and in which lightning loomed. Down the side of one mountain tumbled a foaming waterfall. A less peaceful picture would be difficult to imagine. But when the king looked closely, he saw beside the waterfall a tiny bush growing in a crack in the rock. In the bush a mother bird had built her nest. There, in the midst of the rush of angry water, sat the mother bird on her nest in perfect peace.

Which picture would you have selected? The king chose the second picture. Do you know why?

"Because," he explained, "peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of all these things and still be calm in your heart. This is the real meaning of peace."

How strange that most of those who are so concerned for peace between nations fail to see the need for peace between themselves and their Creator.



Let your faith be seen in 2014
 "I rejoice to see your good order
 and the steadfastness of your faith
 in Christ."
 —Colossians 2:5

Ways to Sabotage Marriage, *from p. 4*
 negative impact on newlywed levels of marital quality." Debt is never good, so if you can buckle down and pay off the debt as fast as you can, it may be the smartest thing you do for your marriage. Ideally, having this goal will help you grow closer as you look for ways to make it happen. But it won't work if one of you isn't fully on board or starts criticizing the other spouse over every single purchase. Set a realistic goal to pay off your debt in a specific period of time, three years or less. If you are having financial problems, get help immediately. Dustin and his wife, Bethany, paid off \$54,500 in debt early in their marriage. He writes on the EngagedMarriage.com blog: "It takes passion, energy and commitment to pay off a large amount of debt. And it takes a lot of hard work. There's really no substitute for effort if you want to make a major change in your financial future and live a debt-free marriage." Sure, there's a difference between borrowing to buy a house and racking up credit card debt, but the bottom line is that debt will always affect a marriage and financial issues are a top reason couples divorce.

3. Marry an unbeliever. For some, it's an unpopular passage of Scripture. "Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers. For what partnership has righteousness with lawlessness? Or what fellowship has light with darkness?" 2 Cor 6:14. Those may be tough words to swallow, but God included them in His Word for a purpose. How can you be intimately, psychologically, spiritually, physically involved with a man or a

Discipleship Here At Home

woman who does not say 'Jesus is Lord,' a man or a woman who doesn't love your Savior? Marriage is a union between a man and woman at every level of life. Not to have the most fundamental thing in common will sooner or later become apparent, especially after children arrive.

4. Refuse to go through premarital counseling—and refuse help after marriage. Marriage isn't easy. While every couple will walk through rough patches and have to learn some difficult lessons, the wise ones lessen those blows by going through some sort of premarital teaching or counseling. Guided conversation through potential issues helps couples learn how to communicate more intentionally and work through the challenges that will crop up. Once married, find a good mentor couple to continue the work of becoming one.

Incidentally, a refusal of any sort of accountability or someone who says he is a Christian but doesn't belong to a church might signify that the person is a "lone ranger." Often, these people also lack close friendships or mentors. God created us for community, and it would be wise to reconsider joining your life with someone who shuns this basic part of our humanity.

5. Dream of a "soul mate." Don't tell Uncle Rico (of *Napoleon Dynamite*), but it isn't healthy to pine for a soul mate. Longing for a soul mate encourages us to place unrealistic expectations on both ourselves and other people. Dr. Tim Keller has suggested that the bottom line is that all of us marry the wrong person. We're all human, imperfect, and sinful. The key, then, lies in working through the inevitable hardships that you'll encounter by living with an imperfect and sinful human being. It's in the continual sacrificing, listening, forgiving, and loving that husbands and wives *become* soul mates.

PRAY FOR healing, protection, help, and comfort here and away

Jim Reingrover—home after hospitalization Fri for kidney stones

Mark Campbell—seizures and blood clots

Giles Free—seizure and black eye from fall; confined at home, no driving for 3 mos

Pat Wilkes—recovering from knee surgery; pain

Brittany Tope's grandmother—dialysis

Ed Fink—prostate cancer; current treatment for brain tumors. Undergoing chemo this month.

Judy Sartin's friends—**Vicky Keyes**, triple negative stage breast cancer; **Summer Jenson**, multiple tumors, cysts on both kidneys

Sue Witherington, Brett's grandmother—breast cancer has returned

Andrea Arvola, Justin Hambrick, and Gary Boyd—spiritual strength

CHRONIC CONDITIONS
Logan Corray; Addison Tope; Christian Harrod; Rocco Jr; Pat Wilkes—asthma

Bill Dennis—heart issues

Autumn Hadders—epilepsy; celiac disease

Danielle Huelsman—vertigo, CV syndrome

Kirk Johnson—worsening MS; needs quick meals to heat up, like soup

Menards—aging; **Lloyd**, diabetes, weak;

Virginia, macular degeneration; high BP

Sandra Perry—neuropathy from diabetes

Cheryl Reames—diverticulitis; fibromyalgia

Nell Free—pacemaker, heart; back pain

Judy Sartin—spinal stenosis; arthritis

Judy and Mike Strand—hepatitis treatment

Lynda Szymanski—COPD, lung weakness

Job concerns Linda Szymanski

Welcome **Andreas Duvall** recently moved here and is rooming with **Mark Reingrover**:

phone 919-818-1997; email fileclerk26@gmail.com

Congratulations **Jordan Corray**

recently received a Bachelor's of Business Management from CSU-Global Online.

Rejoice **Bella Nicole** was born to **Leah LaMonica** and **Tyler Bennett** last week,

5#, 9 oz, 19 inches. All are doing well.

This isn't an exhaustive list of ways singles and couples can sabotage their marriage before it starts, but it covers the things our marriage experts and counselors hear most frequently when talking with people in marital crisis.



Exposing current thoughts & trends

Five Ways to Sabotage Your Marriage Before It Starts, by Jim Daly

Most people don't get married planning to divorce, but the research suggests so much of what they do before they wed sadly leads them to that place. Part of the reason might be that, as a culture, we're often more enamored with the wedding than the actual marriage. One young woman was heart-broken when location she wanted her reception was already booked. When the preacher gently suggested to a couple that their first priority should be the spiritual, the exasperated young woman replied, "I know, but the party is the fun part." This woman is not alone. On our way to marriage many of us inadvertently stumble into habits and situations that will sabotage our futures—and sometimes before we've even met our future spouse! Often, we fail to give marriage the honor it is due, Heb 13:4, the very picture of Christ and His own bride, the church, Eph 5:22-33.

The following list pulls together the collective wisdom of marriage experts. It highlights common things many singles and couples do that undermine their hopes and dreams of a fulfilling, lifelong union. **What NOT to do:**

1. Live together before you marry. Fornication often leads to cohabitation. A few dates turn into overnight visits, and soon it just seems easier to keep some extra clothes and a toothbrush around. They might not be *officially* living together, but they really are. Other couples plan to cohabit before marriage to "test" if their relationship is strong enough, so they enter into cohabitation with marriage in view. Instead of a ring, a boyfriend gives his girlfriend the key to his apartment so they can "try out" the relationship and "see where it heads." It's as if they are auditioning for who is the best person for the part. They see the move as something that will help them prepare for marriage, when the opposite is really true.

Psychologist Glenn Stanton lays out what cohabitation does for marriage—and none of it is good.

- Living together before marriage dramatically boosts the likelihood of divorcing once married.
- Cohabitation significantly increases a woman's chances of being a victim of physical, sexual, and verbal violence from her partner.
- Cohabiting couples are three times more likely to be in poverty than a couple that's married, even if both work full time.

2. Get into debt. Whether you bring in money problems from your single years, or accrue debt together while planning an extravagant wedding, the resulting woes can make a marriage miserable. Not surprisingly, one study that looked at survey data gathered from 1,010 randomly sampled newlywed couples found that entering marriage with consumer debt had "a

continued on p. 3



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DeWayne Howell (303) 973-7283

Preacher

Jim Reingrover (303) 973-5102

info@thechurchingolden.com

Assembly Schedule

Sunday

Bible classes	9:00 am
Morning assembly	10:00 am
Afternoon assembly	1:30 pm

Wednesday

Bible classes	7:30 pm
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Sunday morning

- **adult Bible class**, Lessons from Deuteronomy, "Blessings and Cursings," Larry Campbell

- **Sermon**, "The Fruit of the Spirit is...Peace," Westin Cox

Sunday afternoon

- **Sermon**, "Six Things the Lord Hates," Jeff Wilkes

Wednesday night adult Bible class, Pearls from Proverbs, Jim Reingrover