

A SERIES OF DEVOTIONS BASED UPON THE LETTER OF JAMES

PEACEMAKERS

James 3:18 “Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.”

The word “peacemaker” is found only twice in the Bible. The first occurrence is in Jesus’ Sermon on the Mount and is one of the beatitudes, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” (Matthew 5:9) James 3:18 is the only other place where this word is used in the Bible.

In the Greek culture, a peacemaker was a special ambassador, sent by the emperor or king to negotiate a peace treaty either to prevent or to end a war. God sent His Son Jesus to earth to make peace between Himself and sinful human beings, “For in Him (Jesus) all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross.” (Underlining is my emphasis)

James, in the context of the first three chapters of his letter, has been addressing what Christian behavior should look like. Almost everything he has written ultimately is an exhortation to you and all who are believers in Christ to be vigilant regarding your thoughts, words and actions that they are guided by God’s holy word and the Spirit of God rather than your sinful nature or those in the world you live. James 3:18 can be thought of as an exclamation mark. God has placed you and all Christians in this world to proclaim the Gospel to family, friend and foe in order that God’s peace in and through Christ Jesus will come into their lives.

St. Paul, in Romans 12:14-21, has an extensive description of living your life as a Christian peacemaker, “Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. (My emphasis) Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him

something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Prayer: Thank you Heavenly Father for sending Jesus to bring me peace with You through the shedding of His blood on the cross. In turn, guide and lead me in my life to manifest this peace and be your servant to spread it to the world in which I live. In Jesus’ name. Amen.

Grant peace, we pray, in mercy, Lord; Peace in our time, O send us!
For there is none on earth but You, None other to defend us.
You only, Lord, can fight for us. Amen.
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