



[Matthew 5:9](#)

(9) Blessed *are* the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

New King James Version

Most of us are not at all adept at reconciling warring parties, but that is not the kind of peacemaking [Jesus](#) is concerned about for us now. His idea of peacemaking revolves around the way we live. It was Adam and Eve's *conduct* that shattered the [peace](#) between man and [God](#). Cain's *conduct* broke the peace between him and Abel and him and God. As it is with all of us, conduct makes or breaks the peace!

As mentioned earlier, Paul commands us, "As much *as depends on you*, live peaceably with all men" ([Romans 12:18](#)), an arduous task at times, considering human personalities. The thrust of Paul's exhortation implies that, far from being a simple task, complying with it will call upon our constant vigilance, self-control, and earnest prayer.

Though human nature guarantees that peace-breaking "offenses must come," it is part of Christian duty to ensure that our conduct produces no just cause of complaint against us ([Matthew 18:7](#)). It is first for our own peace that we do so, for it is impossible to be happy while involved in arguments and warfare. Some Christians are more competitive and contentious than others, and they need to beg God doubly for the spiritual strength to restrain their [pride](#) and anger and to calm them. Paul warns, "Be angry, and do not [sin](#)': do not let the sun go down on your wrath" ([Ephesians 4:26](#)). Though pride may be at the base of contention, rising anger within one or the other person in a dispute is frequently the first sign that the peace is about to be broken. Paul's warning is necessary because anger is so difficult to check and equally difficult to let go completely before the peace is broken, and bitter and persistent hatred soon replaces the anger.

Paul quotes the first phrase of this verse from [Psalm 4:4](#), then modifies the second phrase to give it a more immediate and practical application. "Be angry, and do not sin. Meditate within your heart on your bed, and be still. Selah. Offer the sacrifices of

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righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord" ([Psalm 4:4-5](#)). This is exactly the course Jesus follows when taunted and vilified by those whose ire He had aroused. Notice Peter's testimony:

For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps: "Who committed no sin, nor was guile found in His mouth"; who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously. ([I Peter 2:21-23](#))

If we follow Christ's example, the one reviling or threatening soon finds himself without an opponent. God, then, advises us to be passive in the face of contention. In the Kingdom, however, we will likely be a great deal more proactive, just as Christ is now as our High Priest. He will be even more active when He comes as [King of kings](#) to fight against the nations and establish His peace.

Since it is true that "blessed are the [peacemakers](#)," it logically follows that God curses peace-breakers, a fact all who desire to be peacemakers must keep in mind. Contention produces the curse of disunity. When [Adam and Eve](#) sinned, both unity and peace were shattered, and God sentenced them to death. Regardless of the justification, it is impossible for sin to produce either godly peace or unity. It is therefore urgent that we be diligent not merely to guard against the more obvious forms of sin but also bigotry, intemperate zeal, judging, impatience, and a quarrelsome spirit, which provide a basis for Paul's counsel in [Romans 14:19](#).

— John W. Ritenbaugh

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[The Beatitudes, Part 7: Blessed Are the Peacemakers](#)

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