

Module : Soul Prosperity**Session 6** : Peacemaking**Focus** : Pursuing Peaceful & Reconciled RelationshipsWord to the World
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In this session we focus on the necessity for sons of God to function as peacemakers. Peace is a product of righteousness (Is. 32:17,18), and where peace is established, more profound expressions of practical righteousness results (James 3:18).

Amidst the complex array of multi-faceted relationships that we have and all the potential hurt to the soul that they can bring, you must be vigilant that your soul remains at rest and peace, for so you position yourself for total life prosperity. You prosper as your soul prospers. Keep your soul in peace by pursuing peace in relationships.

Psalm 55:18 He will **redeem my soul in peace** from the battle *which is* against me, For they are many *who strive with me*.

Peace and Prosperity Associated with the Greater Latter Glory:

Hag. 2:6-9

- 6 For thus says the Lord of hosts, ' Once more in a little while, I am going to shake the heavens and the earth, the sea also and the dry land.
- 7 I will shake all the nations; and they will come with the **wealth of all nations**, and I will fill this **house with glory**,' says the Lord of hosts.
- 8 'The **silver is Mine** and the **gold is Mine**,' declares the Lord of hosts'.
- 9 The **latter glory of this house will be greater than the former**,' says the LORD of hosts, 'and **in this place I will give peace**,' declares the LORD of hosts."

Glory is connected with wealth. The latter glory also indicates great wealth, and in context, this comes within an environment of great peace. Peace is the context in which every dimension of God's glory, including great wealth, will be expressed and contained. [Refer to principles extracted from Psalm 122 in previous sessions]

Three different renderings of Zech.8:12a from three different versions of the Bible suggest that **seeds must be sown within a spatial context of peaceful relationships in order for them to come to maximum harvest**.

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| <u>Zechariah 8:12a</u> | <u>NASB</u> | <i>For there will be peace for the seed:</i> |
| | <u>CEV</u> | <i>your crops are planted in peace;</i> |
| | <u>GW</u> | <i>Seeds will thrive in peacetime.</i> |

Righteousness and peace give rise to a 'peaceful habitation' (Isaiah 32:16,17). Within the environment of peace, seeds of any kind will be productive.

The manner in which Zech. 8:12a is framed in the following versions of the Bible suggests that **peace is the actual seed sown**:

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|-------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| <u>Zechariah 8:12a</u> | <u>ESV</u> | For there shall be a sowing of peace |
| | <u>YLT</u> | Because of the sowing of peace |
| | <u>ASV</u> | For <i>there shall be the seed of peace</i> |

For there to be peaceful relations, peace in terms of attitudes and acts of peacefulness and peaceableness must be sown. Before you have 'peace for the seed', you must sow 'seeds of peace'.

There are at least four levels of peace:

1. **Peace with God** in your personal relationship with Him.

2 Pet 3:14 Therefore, beloved, since you look for these things, be **diligent to be found by Him in peace**, spotless and blameless,

2. **Peace – in your mind and emotions** – wholeness – no bitterness, unforgiveness, anger, resentment, hatred, acrimony, bitterness, etc.

Psalms 55:18 He will **redeem my soul in peace** from the battle *which is* against me, For they are many *who strive* with me.

3. **Peace within yourself in the midst of trial, difficulty or personal crisis.**

Phil 4:6-7 **Be anxious for nothing**, but in everything by **prayer and supplication** with **thanksgiving** let your requests be made known to God. And the **PEACE OF GOD**, which surpasses all comprehension, will **guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus**.

2 Thess 3:16a Now may the Lord of peace **Himself continually grant you peace** in every circumstance.

4. **Functioning as a peacemaker** – actively positioning yourself to be used by God to bring peace between rival factions or people.

He who has mastered inner peace is poised to function as a peacemaker between men.

James 3:18 And those who are **peacemakers** will **plant seeds of peace** and **reap a harvest of righteousness**. (NLT)

James 3:18 And **the SEED whose fruit is RIGHTEOUSNESS** is **SOWN IN PEACE** by those **WHO MAKE PEACE**. (NASB)



Attaining to the four dimensions of peace above demands that one **obediently subscribes completely to the principles of God's Word**, which has much to say on each level. Love for God's Word, which implies a prioritised devotion and obedience to it, results not just in 'peace' but in 'GREAT' peace.

Psalm 119:165 Those who love Your law have great peace, And **nothing causes them to stumble**.

Psalm 119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them (KJV)

The great peace, which results from one's love for God's Word, ensures that you are not prone to offense or stumbling. You literally live an offense-free life.

PEACEMAKING: PEACEFUL SEED THAT PRODUCES PEACE

PERFECTION/ MATURITY IN RELATIONSHIPS

In Matthew chapter five, Divine sonship and spiritual perfection is defined in terms relative to one's attitude to an enemy. Your sonship in God and the associated quest for or claim to spiritual maturity must be expressed by your commitment to making peace or by one's peaceful attitude toward an enemy or persecutor.

Matt. 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

The Greek term for 'son' here is 'uihos' (huios) designating a mature, fully grown son and not 'teknon' as used in John 1:12 {"As many as received him, He gave the power to become sons of God"}. Teknon indicates that you are a legally adopted son, based on your reception of Christ. You may be a son of God legally because you have accepted Christ, but your maturity as a son is expressed by your commitment to peace, peaceful relationships and making peace.

Matt 5:43-48

- 43 "You have heard that it was said, 'YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.'
- 44 "But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,
- 45 so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on *the* evil and *the* good, and sends rain on *the* righteous and *the* unrighteous.
- 46 "For if you love those who love you, what reward do you have? Do not even the tax collectors do the same?
- 47 "If you greet only your brothers, what more are you doing *than others*? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?
- 48 "Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Note in verse 48, there is an expectation to be perfect, i.e. mature. Spiritual perfection or maturity in this context is not defined in terms of morality (although it certainly does include it), but in terms of how accurately one relates to enemies. If you can master the biblically correct way to respond to and interact with those who hate you and persecute you, you are well on the way toward spiritual perfection. Spiritual maturity is manifested in how accurately you handle relational tension.

Divine Sonship is most powerfully expressed in terms of the correct divine response to all relationships – brothers, neighbours, enemies and persecutors. Divine perfection for the son of God is defined in terms of accurate relationships which are sustained by the principle of divine love.

Perfection or maturity is also measured by the words of our mouths.

James 3:2 For we all stumble in many ways. If anyone does not stumble in what he says, he is a perfect man, able to bridle the whole body as well

The content and spirit of our conversations – especially those conversations centred around people – all people, but particularly those with whom we experience some relational tension or division, indicates the measure of our spiritual maturity in God. You can readily discern whether a person is committed to peaceful relationships by examining the content and spirit of his conversation. “A man’s words is the measure of the man’s heart” (Thamo Naidoo).

HAVE SALT WITHIN YOURSELF

In Matthew 5:13, Jesus said “**You are the salt of the earth**’. Salt possesses **preservation, purifying, perpetuating and antiseptic qualities**. Salt was also emblematic of **fidelity and friendship** amongst eastern nations. To eat of a person’s “salt” and so to share his hospitality is still regarded thus among the Arabs. (Zodiates)

Mark 9:50 “Salt is good; but if the salt becomes unsalty, with what will you make it salty *again*? Have salt in yourselves, and **be at peace with one another**.”

Note here that the salt characteristic of sons of God is directly related to there being peace between them. Our claim to being the salt of the earth must be evidenced by the presence of peace among us relationally.

Our power to function as the salt of the earth is directly dependent upon our capacity to live peaceably with one another. What causes us to lose our saltiness is tensions, strife and divisions in God-ordained relationships. If there is no peace, there is no salt. Salt symbolically refers to **harmonious covenantal relationships**.

The term ‘**Covenant of Salt**’ bears relevance here.

Num18:19 “**All the offerings** of the holy gifts, which the sons of Israel offer to the Lord, **I have given to you** and your sons and your daughters with you, as **a perpetual allotment**. **IT IS AN EVERLASTING COVENANT OF SALT** before the Lord to you and your descendants with you.”

This term in its usage in the scripture above, was used to highlight the strong covenantal commitment between the people and the High Priest. This was symbolically demonstrated by the giving of first fruits and offerings. If the High Priest was representative of God in Israel's context, then in this context, salt is an **emblem of the covenant between God and His people** (see also 2 Chron. 13:5).

The term 'covenant of salt' largely indicates '**a perpetual ordinance**'. This figurative form of expression was evidently founded on the conservative property of salt, which keeps meat from corruption; and hence it became an **emblem of inviolability and permanence**. It is a common phrase among the oriental people, who consider the eating of salt a pledge of fidelity, binding them in a covenant of friendship. **Thus a 'covenant of salt' became to be considered equivalent to an indissoluble covenant, or inviolable contract.**

Tradition has it that, when two people get married, they would each bring their own bag of salt to the priest, who would empty both bags of salt into his own bag and shake it – thus mixing the two bags, fusing them into one, so that the salt of the man and the woman become so mixed that it would be impossible to separate the salt into the original bags. **In this, there is participation, partnership, preservation, protection, privilege, pledge of covenantal commitment, etc.**

Salt, scripturally, is also indicative of speech that is GRACE-FILLED, designed to exhort and edify the hearers. This quality of speech is devoid of malice, bitterness, scandal, complaint, etc.

Colossians 4:5,6

Conduct yourselves with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of every opportunity. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned, as it were with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.

Ephesians 4:29

Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear.

The challenge again is that the words of our mouths ultimately become the litmus test of our claim to be covenantally joined to our brothers in love and oneness. The person whose words are full of God's grace will not be divisive or schismatic, but serve to foster and preserve God-ordained relationships in purity.

Salt arrests decay and corruption. If we are 'salt people', then we must speak forth words of grace described by Col.4:5 as being 'seasoned with salt'. Note that our words are salt. But salted words issue forth from a salted life. **WE** are the salt of the earth. Thus, it is your life that seasons your words. Many fail to speak words of grace seasoned with salt, because their very lives have lost its saltiness.

REPRESENTATIVE POWER TO RECONCILE:OUR MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION2 Cor 5:14-21

- 14 For the love of Christ compels us, because we judge thus: that if One died for all, then all died;
 15 and He died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.
 16 Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. Even though we have known Christ according to the flesh, yet now we know *Him thus* no longer.
 17 Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.
 18 Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,
 19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.
 20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore *you* on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.
 21 For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Note - God was in Christ reconciling the world back to Himself (verse 19). **God was resident within Christ** reconciling the world back to Himself through Christ. You cannot engage in any form of reconciliation unless you function from the premise that you are **functioning representatively** – in that, **the Christ within you is really that which empowers you to act reconciliatory**.

Verse 20 defines the mentality within which one functions in a reconciliatory fashion, viz. that we are ambassadors of Christ - His exact representatives. Note the phrase "as though God were pleading through us". When you position yourself to reconcile a brother to his estranged brother, or yourself being reconciled to someone you are estranged from, the truth is that God is '**pleading through you**'. It is really not you engaging in the reconciliation, but rather Christ in you reconciling and reconnecting to the Christ within your brother. Therefore, focus not so much on your own ability to 'reconcile', but tap into the power provided by 'Christ in you' – for only He is able to 'reconcile all things to Himself' - see Col. 1:20.

Col 1:19-20

- 19 For it pleased *the Father that* in Him all the fullness should dwell,
 20 and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made **peace through the blood of His cross**.

The Greek understanding of 'reconcile' has much to do with the mindset of an individual:

Reconciled = diallasso = to change thoroughly, that is, (mentally) to conciliate - 'to make different'
 to **change the mind** of anyone, to reconcile
 to renew friendship with one

Living in reconciliation is really a state of mind. To harbour unforgiveness and bitterness against someone is to have a specific mental disposition towards them. If we can alter the thinking of the unforgiving person, we can administrate reconciliation.

The principle of **LOVE and FORGIVENESS** are to be prioritised in those who function as peacemakers. These two issues will be dealt with in a separate modules – consult my website for details. If you cannot forgive someone of a personal issue, how then can you function as God’s representative High Priest in forgiving men their sins, so as to reconnect them to God Himself?

RECONCILED RELATIONSHIPS: A ‘FIRST’ PRINCIPLE

Reconciled relationships are given pre-eminence above everything in the Kingdom of God. Matt 5:24 highlights this. The presentation of financial offerings and employment of spiritual gifts is rendered ineffective if one entertains and accommodates relational strife and tension without any inclination to resolving it.

Mat 5:21-24

- 21 "You have heard that the ancients were told, 'YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT MURDER' and 'Whoever commits murder shall be liable to the court.'
- 22 "But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be guilty before the court; and whoever says to his brother, 'You good-for-nothing,' shall be guilty before the supreme court; and whoever says, 'You fool,' shall be guilty *enough to go* into the fiery hell.
- 23 "Therefore if you are **presenting your offering** at the altar, and there remember that **your brother has something against you**,
- 24 **leave your offering** there before the altar and go; **first be reconciled to your brother**, and then come and present your offering.

The disposition of being reconciliatory towards one who has hurt you or alienated themselves from you is your decision, and must not be dependent upon the favourable attitude or behavior of the person. You simply posture yourself toward them in a posture of forgiveness, peace and reconciliation. Christ died for us – and so positioned Himself to reconcile us to Himself – WHILE WE WERE YET SINNERS.

Rom 5:1-10

- 1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
- 2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.
- 3 And not only *that*, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance;
- 4 and perseverance, character; and character, hope.
- 5 Now hope does not disappoint, because the **love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us**.
- 6 For when we were still without strength, in **due time Christ died for the ungodly**.
- 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die.
- 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were still sinners, Christ died for us**.
- 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.
- 10 For if when we were enemies we were **reconciled to God** through the death of His Son, much more, **having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life**.

When we were still estranged from God, He instituted a process of reconciliation. From this we learn that the one who seeks to reconcile with the other does not wait for a positive change in the person first, but already actively seeks and positions him/herself in a reconciliatory position and embarks upon reconciliatory behaviour.

To function reconciliatory, you have to regard no man after the flesh – 2 Cor. 5:16. You have to see even the most offensive person, even your enemy, after the Spirit – through the eyes of God. Paul urged Philemon to reconcile with Onesimus. Onesimus was the offending party, but now was changed having found the Lord. Philemon was unaware of this. Sometimes we are unable to reconcile with an offensive brother because we still view him after the flesh, especially after his failure historically.

DEATH is an essential requirement and process for reconciliation.

Col 1:22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body **through death**, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach--

To operate reconciliatory – you have to be dead to self; dead to self justification, dead to personal prejudice, etc.

To those who hated him and made deliberate plans for his destruction, David simply regarded them as brothers and friends in his mind – this kept his heart free from bitterness. Even when his enemies became sick, he fasted and prayed for them.

Psalms 35:27 But I, when they were sick - I wore sackcloth; I afflicted myself with fasting; I prayed with head bowed on my chest. I went about as though I grieved for my friend or my brother; as one who laments his mother, I bowed down in mourning

Eph. 2:11-17

- 11 Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—
- 12 that at that time you were **without Christ**, being **aliens** from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.
- 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once **were far off have been brought near by** the blood of Christ.
- 14 For **He Himself is our peace**, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,
- 15 having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, **so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace,**
- 16 and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body **through the cross**, thereby putting to death the enmity.
- 17 And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.

Verse 11-12: Any kind of alienation is evidence that one or both parties does not function by the principles of Christ governing relationships; note v.12 – you are ‘**aliens**’ when you are ‘without Christ’. Separation and increased distance between brothers is indicative of the absence of the ‘**Christ**’ principle in one or both parties.

Verse 13-14: To function as a peacemaker – you yourself must become the embodiment of peace – (Note: ‘HE HIMSELF is our peace).

Verse 15: If the principle of ‘oneness’ does not strongly reside within you (“create within Himself one new man”), you cannot function redemptively in your bid to reconcile brothers. Christ, our Peace, paid the ultimate price so as to produce ‘one new man’. The end goal of His reconciliatory efforts was oneness in His Body. Those who are reconciliatory fully embrace and function to consolidate the oneness of the Body of Christ.

Col. 1:13-23

- 13 He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed *us* into the kingdom of the Son of His love,
- 14 in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.
- 15 He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation.
- 16 For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him.
- 17 And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist.
- 18 And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.
- 19 For it pleased *the Father* that in Him all the fullness should dwell,
- 20 and by Him to **reconcile all things to Himself**, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross.
- 21 And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled
- 22 in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight-
- 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.

Moses was disqualified to reconcile brothers because he sought to give expression to an innate divine desire to bring deliverance to captive Israel through carnal means and responses to his enemies - represented in the Egyptian he killed for flogging an Israelite. Your attitude to your enemies will determine your eligibility and capacity to unite and reconcile brothers.

Act 7:22-29

- 22 And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.
- 23 "Now when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel.
- 24 And seeing one of *them* suffer wrong, he defended and avenged him who was oppressed, and struck down the Egyptian.
- 25 For he supposed that his brethren would have understood that God would deliver them by his hand, but they did not understand.
- 26 And the next day he appeared to two of them as they were fighting, and ***tried to reconcile them, saying, 'Men, you are brethren; why do you wrong one another?'***

- 27 But he who did his neighbor wrong pushed him away, saying, 'WHO MADE YOU A RULER AND A JUDGE OVER US?
- 28 DO YOU WANT TO KILL ME AS YOU DID THE EGYPTIAN YESTERDAY?'
- 29 Then, at this saying, Moses fled and became a dweller in the land of Midian, where he had two sons.
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SPIRITUAL LEADERS ARE TO BE EXEMPLARY IN THEIR PEACEABLE-NESS

All sons of God are expected to be peaceable – loving peace – non-belligerent – unwarlike – pacific.

Titus 3:1,2 Remind them to be subject to rulers, to authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good deed, to malign no one, to be peaceable, gentle, showing every consideration for all men

Spiritual leaders, elders, bishops or overseers of God's people are to model and fully exemplify the disposition of being PEACEABLE.

1 Tim. 3:2,3 An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, ...

In the exercise of the ministry of reconciliation between brothers, great care and godly wisdom needs to be operative. The wisdom that comes from God is in itself peaceable and has as its objective the sowing of peace.

James 3:17,18 But the **wisdom from above** is first pure, then **peaceable**, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. And the **seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.**

Prov. 11:30 The **fruit of the righteous** is a **tree of life**, And he who is **wise wins souls**

Winning souls need not necessarily refer to someone entering the Kingdom of God for the first time. It also incorporates covering the sin of a brother in love and correcting him with a view to redeeming him – and so save or win the soul of a brother.

James 5:19,20 My brethren, if **any among you strays** from the truth and one turns him back, let him know that he who turns a sinner from the **error of his way** will **save his soul** from death and will **cover a multitude of sins.**

DO NOT WALK WITH SOMEONE THAT IS IRRECONCILABLE

We are expected to pursue peace with ALL MEN.

Heb 12:14 Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.

Rom 12:18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

In as far as you are personally responsible for it, you must strive to live at peace with men. You must not be the cause of division or relational strife, division and tension.

We are to be reconciliatory in character, but we must also be aware of those who are simply irreconcilable and who do not carry an spiritual burden or frustration over their refusal to live at peace with you.

2 Tim. 3:1-5

- 1 But realize this, **that in the last days** difficult times will come.
- 2 **For men will be** lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy,
- 3 **unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips**, without self-control, brutal, haters of good,
- 4 treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,
- 5 holding to a **form of godliness**, although they have denied its power; **Avoid such men as these.**

Irreconcilable = aspondos =

- Truceless: - implacable, truce-breaker.
- without a treaty or covenant
- that cannot be persuaded to enter into a covenant, implacable
- The absolutely irreconcilable person who, being at war, refuses to lay aside his enmity or to listen to terms of reconciliation. Implacable, in a state of war

'Irreconcilable' is also rendered as follows:

- | | |
|---|--|
| • refuse to forgive anyone (ERV) | • unyielding (MKJV) |
| • unforgiving (NIV, NKJV) | • unbending (MSG) |
| • unappeasable (ESV) | • implacable (NRSV) |
| • refusing to make peace with anyone (GW) | • relentless |
| • un-cooperative (ISV) | (admitting of no truce or appeasement) |
| • trucebreakers (KJV) | [AMP] |

Paul clearly instructs us to 'avoid' such people. These kinds of people are simply to be AVOIDED – 2 Tim. 2:5. The NIV says it plainly, - 'Have nothing to do with them'. In this case, your avoidance of them does not indicate your refusal to live in peace with them, but rather quite the opposite, viz. you avoid them to live peaceably with them. Do not walk closely with them or work closely with them in Kingdom assignments, but love them nevertheless, as you are not permitted to hate them.

Abram initiated the separation between himself and Lot – read Gen. 13 and 14. There was strife between their respective herdsmen. This strife filtered through to Abram and Lot - the strife between their workers became their strife. All the while, Lot displays no intention to deal with the tension. He is content to abide in a context of strife and relational tension. He shows no honour and respect toward Abram as his uncle, brother or potential spiritual father. Lot's name means 'veiled', symbolically indicating an inability to prophetically perceive the grace of God resident within Abram. Abram chose not to walk closely with him. They separate. When Lot is taken captive in a war, Abraham displays remarkable care and love for Lot by sacrificing his entire prophetic destiny, risking life and limb, and successfully rescues him. This is a powerful lesson for us. Even though at times you may not be able to walk closely with a brother, you must still love him unconditionally, and demonstrate great personal sacrifice to ensure his well-being in times when he may be in trouble.

In your bid to maintain peaceful relationships and also continue to be committed to the ministry of reconciliation, realise that those who are irreconcilable cannot be a part of your closest associations and intimate alliances. Paul actually exhorted his son Timothy to follow after peace, WITH THOSE who call on the Lord in purity.

2 Tim 2:22 Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love *and* peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

There are some relationships that will be characterised by the absence of peace simply because of one's commitment to the Lord, or to the values of His Kingdom. Commitment to God, His ways and His will demands that we do not allow sentimental attachment to hinder our resolve to obey Him fully.

MATT 10:34-39

- "34 Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.
- 35 For I came 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 man's enemies will be the members of his household.
- 37 "He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me. He who has found his life will lose it, and he who has lost his life for My sake will find it

Here is scripture that offers hope for one's enemies that seem irreconcilable:

Prov. 16:7 When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him

We still have a responsibility to pray for a change in the heart of those who are irreconcilable. Continue to trust God that one day there would be a repentance of heart and that their eyes would be open to the importance and kingdom priority of reconciled relationships.

ACTIVELY ENHANCING THE PEACE OF YOUR SPIRITUAL FATHER

Sons of God who are peacemakers, actively seek the peace of their spiritual father and also the peace and peaceful relationships in the sons of their father.

1 Chron. 12:18

Then the Spirit came upon Amasai, who was the chief of the thirty, *and he said, "We are yours, O David, And with you, O son of Jesse! **Peace, peace** to you, And **peace to him who helps you**; Indeed, your God helps you!"* Then David received them and made them captains of the band.

Amasai, speaking on behalf of the thirty, pledges a commitment to ensure the double peace of David, their spiritual father in the Lord (note the double emphasis of "Peace, Peace"). Not only are they poised to ensure David's amplified peace, but also the peace of anyone else (their brothers in the Lord) who has also gathered unto David to submit as sons to the mandate of God given to Him as their new King.

The way in which they bring David two-fold peace, is by fostering peace in everyone around David. They are peacemakers. They are committed to the peace of David's other sons. We need this caliber of sons in the house of the Lord, where peacemaking sons encourage the state of peace and harmony relationally in the house and so bring the spiritual father of the house into double peace. Where this situation persists, the spiritual father can focus undistractedly upon executing the mandate of God within and through the house. The governmental strength of this house will be significant – as it was with David.

Those who are intent and inclined to seek the peace of their leader and fellow brothers are eligible for significant and strategic positions or functions – as seen in how David made the thirty 'captains of the band'.

1 Thess. 5:12,13

But we request of you, brethren, that you **appreciate those who diligently labor among you**, and have charge over you in the Lord and give you instruction, and that **you esteem them very highly** in love because of their work. **Live in peace with one another.**

In this verse, brothers are instructed to live at peace with each other within the context of each of them having the proper disposition of appreciation and high esteem for their spiritual leaders who feed them the Word of God. This would naturally include elders who labour in the Word and one's spiritual father. The quality of relationship and rightness of attitude of sons toward their spiritual father/ leaders, bears directly upon their capacity to live in peace. The hidden principle embedded here is that you demonstrate appreciation, esteem and honour for your spiritual father when you live in peace with his other sons.

Study:

- Paul appeals to Philemon to forgive and accept Onesimus – and in doing he will bring refreshment to Paul as their spiritual father (See book of Philemon).
- Paul appealed to the Philippian church to make his joy complete by living in oneness and peace, and specifically begs for Euodia and Syntyche, two women who helped him, to live in harmony. He calls upon someone to literally HELP these women do this – i.e. to act as the peacemaker.

Phil. 2:1-4

- 1 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion,
- 2 **make my joy complete** by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose.
- 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind **regard one another as more important than yourselves;**
- 4 do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

Philip 4:1-2

- 1 Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, in this way stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.
- 2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord.
- 3 Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in *the cause of* the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

Euodia = Success; prosperous journey

Syntyche = Fortunate. Well-met.

PURSUE AND DON'T NEGLECT THINGS WHICH MAKE FOR PEACE

Rom 14:19 So then we **pursue** the **things which make for peace** and the **building** up of one another.

Where there is an environment of peace, BUILDING up of the saints is easily facilitated.

Here in the Scriptural passage below, is a consequence of not pursuing things which make for peace:

Luke 19:37-44

- 37 As soon as He was approaching, near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of the disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the miracles which they had seen,
- 38 shouting: "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord; Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!"
- 39 Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Him, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples."

- 40 But Jesus answered, "I tell you, if these become silent, the stones will cry out!"
 41 When He approached Jerusalem, He saw the city and wept over it,
 42 saying, "**If you had known in this day, even you, the things which make for peace! But now they have been hidden from your eyes.**"
 43 For the days will come upon you when your enemies will throw up a barricade against you, and surround you and hem you in on every side,
 44 and they will level you to the ground and your children within you, and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not recognize the time of your visitation.

The 'visitation' implies an inspection or investigation to assess something. God is visiting us, inspecting and investigating whether or not we are committed to peace and the things that make for peace. This visitation reflected through the set of teachings presently coming to us also comes with the grace to walk obediently in the things God makes known to us. Prophetically, this passage of scripture comes as a note of warning in that when the things or principles that make for or result in peace are made known to you, and you walk in disobedience to them, then the end result can only be destruction.

1 Cor. 10:23 All things are lawful, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful, **but not all things edify.**

Isaiah 48:17,18 (ESV)

- 17 Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel: "I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you in the way you should go.
 18 Oh that you had **paid attention to my commandments!** Then **your peace would have been like a river, and your righteousness like the waves of the sea.**

PEACE PRECEDES INCREASE

Act 9:31 So the church throughout all Judea and **Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase.**

The description of the church in the verse above comes after the conversion of Saul of Tarsus, who became Paul, the Apostle. This represents a radical transformation in the agenda within him from one who was the greatest persecutor of the church to one who became the greatest proponent of the church. He himself also consistently escapes many attempts of the Jews to kill him – read the entire chapter nine of Acts. Then we see the results in verse 31.

The church's peace will result when the element of internal persecution ceases. Saul represented an element of internal assault – persecuting and destroying the church because of spiritual blindness. There are many who function this way in the present church. This hinders progress and development. But God is about to silence the voice and efforts of the persecuting dynamic within His Body. This is persecution of brother against brother. When peaceful relations persist, the latter part of verse 31

naturally will prevail, viz. The church will be BUILT UP, GO ON IN THE FEAR THE LORD, GO ON IN THE COMFORT OF THE HOLY GHOST, and INCREASE.

Psalm 34:14 Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it.

THE BOND OF PEACE IS LOVE

Love and Peace is the bond that glues the spirit of oneness amongst the family of God. The bond of peace within God's house is actually love.



Eph. 4:3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the **bond of peace**.

Col. 3:12-15

- 12 So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, **put on** a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience;
- 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.
- 14 Beyond all these things **put on love**, which is **the perfect bond of unity**.
- 15 Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.



Eph. 6:23 **Peace** be to the brethren, and **love with faith**, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Cor. 13:11 Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, **live in peace**; and the **God of love and peace** will be with you.

BLESSED ARE THE PEACEMAKERS!

Matt. 5:9 "Blessed are the **peacemakers**, for they shall be called **sons of God**."

Blessed = makarios = fortunate, well-off, prosperous, possessing the favor of God, that state of being marked by fullness from God.

Peacemakers are the embodiment of the Kingdom of Heaven and are thus blessed. We are already blessed with all heavenly blessings in Christ (Eph.1:3), but our obedient behavior activates these. Divine favour and prosperity are promised to those who pursue peace and peacemaking. Abraham exhibited

this: he was blessed to be a blessing (Gen.12:2) and demonstrated his commitment to peace, peacemaking and love in his sacrificial actions in rescuing Lot, his brother (Gen.14). May the fullness of God's favour be our portion as we function lovingly as peacemakers on the earth. You are BLESSED! You are well-off! You are prosperous! You are favoured of God! You have the fullness of God!

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