

Saturday, December 16, 2023 • Read Matthew 5:9

Questions from the Scripture text: Who else are blessed (v9a)? What shall they be called (v9b)?

Who are the sons of God? Matthew 5:9 prepares us for the morning sermon on the Lord's Day. In this verse of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **the sons of God are those who are in Christ, and who are being made to be like Christ.**

Being called sons of God in this context. God has declared Jesus His beloved Son (cf. 3:17), following immediately upon the heels of Christ saying about His baptism, "thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Jesus identifies Himself with sinners, so that they may be righteous in Him. The baptism that we needed was the pouring out of His Spirit to give light to our minds and life to our hearts that, having had our minds exchanged for new ones, we might be joined to Him by faith.

Sons of God in relating to God and to creation. If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation (cf. 2Co 5:17). God has reconciled us to Himself—made peace with us (cf. 2Co 5:18a). And those with whom God has made peace, He turns into peacemakers, giving them the ministry of reconciliation (cf. 2Co 5:18b). Indeed, God is reconciling the entire cosmos to Himself in Christ (cf. 2Co 5:19a), and when the sons of God are revealed, the creation itself will be set free to enjoy their glorious freedom (cf. Rom 8:19–21). Christians become the best citizens a kingdom can have, the best neighbors a community can have, the best stewards the creation can have. They belong to a new heavens and new earth, but they live according to that creation—really, according to their Creator and Redeemer—even in the world as it currently is.

Sons of God in relating to our neighbors. Christians are saved by a peacemaking God, Who brings them into fellowship with Himself. This means more than just enjoying His company. It means sharing in His life, in His priorities. And our God is a peacemaking God. The Father reconciles us to Himself by the death of His Son (cf. Rom 5:8–9). The Son Himself is our peace—not only making peace between us and God, but even with one another (cf. Eph 2:14–18). Indeed, the Spirit produces peace, even within us, where He has come to dwell (cf. Gal 5:22; Col 3:15).

So, as the Lord's priorities become their own priorities, they come especially to prioritize the conversion of sinners. Though they may not be given the preaching ministry of an apostolic ambassador like Paul (cf. 2Co 5:20–21), yet they seek to participate in God's saving of others. Christians must pray for others' salvation (cf. Rom 10:1) and labor for their salvation, in whatever manner God permits us to participate in His doing so (cf. Rom 11:13–14; 1Cor 9:22; James 5:20). And we reflect our desire for our neighbor to be at peace with God by doing what we righteously can that our neighbor might be at peace with us (cf. Ro 12:18).

Sons of God in relation to the Son of God. Here, the great love of God is shown unto us: that we are already called His children (cf. Jn 1:12–13; 1Jn 3:1–2). But we look forward to completion of the work in which we are made like Christ, body (cf. Rom 8:23) and soul (cf. Rom 8:29–30). On that last day, when our adoptions are completed, and our bodies have been redeemed, we will be fully conformed (pressed into the shape!) of the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the titles by which He will be glorified is as "the Firstborn among many brethren."

We are not yet the peacemakers that we ought to be. But the fact that we are peacemakers at all, and increasingly so, is the earnest money on the fact that Christ will be glad to be glorified as the Firstborn among us.

Sons of God in relation to one another. Now, there is one group upon whom our affections will especially be set, as we are conformed to Christ: the saints! They are bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh. He receives what is done to them as done to Him. They are united to Him. He suffers together with them, and they inherit together with Him. And therefore, we should store our minds with these truths and kindle our hearts with these realities. What peacemaking people we will then be, when it comes to the saints! A couple of passages on believers' peacemaking in their relationships are worth quoting here at length (and would be worth opening and applying, if we were to take more than the ordinary space for these devotionals):

Eph 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

^{5:1} Therefore be imitators of God as dear children. ² And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.

Col 3:12 Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³ bearing with one another, and forgiving one another; if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. ¹⁴ But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. ¹⁵ And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. ¹⁶ Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. ¹⁷ And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

The more we follow all of these things now, the more we come to participate already in that blessing which shall soon be perfect and everlasting: we will be identified as the sons of God, enjoy the blessing of the sons of God... we will be called the sons of God!

How have you been enjoying your peace with God through Christ? What are the particular times at which you intentionally enjoy this peace? What are some other times at which you need to remind yourself of this peace? How has your adoption by God been displayed, recently, in how you interact with creation? With your nation? With your neighbors? With other believers?

Sample prayer: Lord, we thank You for reconciling us to Yourself in Your Son. Grant that by Your Spirit's applying Christ to us, the fruit in our lives would be peace, we ask through Christ, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP23B "The Lord's My Shepherd" or TPH461 "Blessed Are the Sons of God"

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Matthew 5 verse 9. These are God's words. Blessed are the peacemakers. For they shall be called sons. Of god. Remember sends us reading of god's inspired and inherent word. Within the gospel of matthew, this Blessedness have been called god's son as one. That is uniquely christ's. The name into which He commands the apostles to baptize.

Is the name of the father, end of the sun and of the holy ghost. On the mount of transfiguration. The lord will say of him, god will say Of him, this. Is my beloved son. And you, of course, remember his baptism just chapter and a half ago. Chapter 3 verse 17 that when he saw the heavens opened and he heard and he saw from the opened heavens the dove descent.

He also heard from The open heavens. This is my beloved son. Uh, and so the peace making peace making god. Has displayed himself. Uh, in his triune character there. Uh, following christ's baptism. When he had come up, Uh, from the water away from Uh, the water. And, Therefore, God has just displayed himself as a piece making father.

To have sent as well pleasing son. To be the one who. Uh brings in the kingdom and brings us into the kingdom. In order to bring us into the kingdom, as we've been hearing, since the beginning of chapter 3, we need to be converted. We need to have Not our opinions changed, but the very character of our mind changed.

Be he converted Um, for the kingdom of heaven as a hand, And now that message on jesus's lips is, especially the gospel, the good news of the kingdom because he comes not baptizing with water, but he is the one who will pour out his holy spirit, and his holy spirit, as the one who gives that conversions of the father.

Has been a piece making father in sending his son, who makes peace. The sun. As the piece making sun who has come to secure our peace. And the spirit, whom he sends out. Her pores out is the piecemaking spirit who gives us that light for our minds and life for our hearts that we may respond rightly To him.

And so, here is Uh, the highest honor. Um, that can be received to be called the sons of god. And this is going to be given, not only the sun who has everlasting eternal creator. But in union with him and the indwelling of god's spirit, It will even be said of redeemed, sinners This is truly amazing and it causes john to say, first john, three behold, what matter of love.

The father showed it to us that we Should be called sons of god, for he has everlasting eternal father. And, That belongs to christ to be the eternally. Begotten, son. And yet it's a great as God's love to us in jesus, That he says of us by adoption. What is rightly said?

Of the lord jesus christ. By right. Uh, by nature like by character. Um, so truly amazing that we would be called Uh, sons of god. And if we are sons of god, Then we are. Peacemakers. Uh, we have Uh, come to peace with the lord. We have been reconciled to god.

This wonderful. Um, The passive imperative. Like, First Corinthians 5:20. The ambassadors of god announced to us, has preachers as evangelists announced to us. Be reconciled to god. Well, it's a command but it's passive because it's command that we can't keep And yet. When we rest in the lord, jesus christ, when we reunited to the Lord Jesus christ, He is the one who is the keeper of All righteousness, including the righteousness of being at peace with god.

You remember when jesus went to john to be baptized with john's baptism Which was a baptism that indicated, who needs repentance and john said, no, no, no. I need to be baptized by you. I need spirit baptism. You don't need to be baptized by me. You don't need water baptism.

And you remember what jesus said? That he should permit this. Because it is proper for thus, Um, We keep. It is proper for us thus to keep all righteousness. So that john's keeping of righteousness comes by what the lord jesus does. And what the lord jesus does in union with us.

The keeping of our righteousness. Is by christ. And therefore in union with him. We have him. And his His keeping of righteousness. So we are called sons of god in union with christ who makes us first of all, peacemakers with himself. Now the peace here is not just a ceasing of hostility.

Both first in the Hebrew word, shalom, in the Old Testament. And then picked up and translated. By the Greek word a rena. Uh, in the new testament piece, includes complete wholeness. Um, Health strength. Uh, Proper. And full. Uh, conformity to god's design for goodness. Uh, in the Uh, in the whole of the creation.

It is exactly the opposite of what we actually see. In the creation. Where the creation is currently bound to corruption and to decay. But a believer who has come to peace with god himself, Loves to manage the creation. Managed a creature. In a way that honors god and images him.

We see that from which we have fell. Uh, we have fallen from the glory of god. Uh, man fallen short of the glory of god. And that means we have fallen from Uh, enjoying god and his glory in all that he has made, but also from Um, employing. All of the creation for the display of.

Uh, and response to The glory of god. And so, the Creation waits for the eager longing for the revealing of the sons of god. Um, When on the day of the resurrection, the sons of god are revealed not just by this gradual change of character. Um, and That goes on through this life, but having been perfected in holiness at the end of this life, They are also revealed by the sudden and complete change.

Of their bodily appearance, we will be resurrected. With glorious bodies like antichrists. Glorious body and it is at that point. That the creation will be set free from its bondage. And enjoy the glorious freedom. Of the children of god to use the language. Of romans 8, 19 to 21.

Now, it's important that we be Resurrect perfected and sold resurrected in body. Before the new creation comes. Because if we were sinners still Or if we were bodyless still We would not properly manage the new creation. Uh, in the image of god. And yet if sunny anyone is in christ, he has already a new creature.

And so, even in this creation, there are benefits that come even to the creatures such as Uh, The lord describes. Coming to the. The trees of the land. Uh, in israel, and israel is righteous and the fields of the land. Uh, when israel keeps proper. Uh, sabbath's according Uh not only to the moral law, the weekly sabbath but the ceremonial calendar.

Um, that the lord gave them. And even the beasts. Uh, benefit from having sabbath keeping masters And not only that, but In terms of how the creation is employed at benefits, much from these, shalom seeking shalom pursuing, Uh, redeemed saints. It. It is a reflection of the goodness of god.

In the creation, wherever saints. Reflect the goodness of their redeemer. As they manage a creation. So sons of god. Not only in relating to god to whom we are. Uh, reconciled God reconciling the cosmos to himself. He says In that context and second corinthians 5, if we're going back, Um, recorded i think from verse 20, but back into verse 17, 18 19.

Of that passage. Then also sons of god. Then relating to our neighbors. Uh, we know. That believers are to follow as says the Romans 12, if at all possible. As far as it depends upon you. Live with live at peace with everyone. Well, there is a extent to which it doesn't depend upon us at all.

Because we are enabled to create peace. And the first great thing. Uh, that can be done to live at peace with our neighbor. Is to always be ready to give them an answer. For the hope that is within us and to do. Whatever we can to have us our hearts desire and prayer to god for them.

That they might be saved as paul says of the israelites and Romans 10 verse 1. But then later, He says that he seeks to magnify his own ministry, even though. His ministry does not initially. Um, leads to the conversion of many Jews, because he's a Uh, minister to the gentiles.

But, He does the part that god has given him in his part in Of god's plan. Uh, with all his heart and hoping that others will be saved. Well, we may not be Called to the ministry of preaching, the work, the word. Uh, to quote unquote. Do the work of an evangelist as Timothy is commanded.

But we are to be wise and how we speak to outsiders. We are to have as our hearts desire and prayer to god for them. That they would be saved. We are to do. As well. And as god honoringly as began every part of what god has given us to do, And hopes that god will use it in part of his plan.

Uh, to save some to save others. And so, the lord gives us many opportunities. And we are to take them. For the salvation for the conversion of others. This is the the first great way. To live at peace with our neighbor and of course, Um, We do and desire.

To do. As little as possible to give offense. To our neighbor. And so we are sons of god and relation to god. And releasing the creation and relation to the neighbor. And in relation, To our brother.

Once someone is converted, they are in christ and they have been reconciled to god in christ, ephesians 2 tells us That when two people are reconciled to the same god and the same christ, they are also. Reconciled to one another. That the lord jesus has come and he's preached.

Peace to us through which he brought us ourselves into peace with god. He also gives us peace. Between ourselves and each other. And so, a big part of the christian life. As living according to the character of the lord. Jesus. Ephesians 4 verse 30. Tells us not to grieve the holy spirit of god, but instead, To let be put away from us all bitterness.

So we're refused to be better, we take As little offense as possible and we Um, We let the offense go immediately. Put away from us. All wrath, all anger, all clamor And evil speaking. So, We don't make a big deal of or conflict about Uh, what others in the church do to us be kind to one another And this is not just a kindness of the hand, but tender heart, it.

And not just when the other one seems to be doing well towards us but especially when they're doing ill towards us forgiving one another justice god in christ. Forgive you. Be imitators of god as dear children. Walk in love as christ is loved us. And so, you see this?

Sonship adoption imitation of god conformity to christ. That is the basis of having peaceful relationships. With one another. It is a proper. Properly experienced sonship towards god and it properly expressed. Such towards god. That makes us this sort of peace. Keeping people. Again, colossians 3. Therefore as the elect of god, holy and beloved put on Tender mercies kindness.

Humility meekness. Long suffering bearing with one another. Forgiving one, another, if anyone has a complaint Against another. So you have and that doesn't mean a false complaint, that means a legitimate complaint. And yet bearing and forbearing, bearing and forgiving. Even as christ forgave you. So you also must do Above all these things, put on love.

Which is the bond of perfection and let the peace of god. Rule in your hearts. To which also you are called In one body. And be thankful. So, the piece of god, Ruling in our hearts. The fact that we have peace with god through jesus christ and god is for us and nothing can ultimately Uh, turn out to be for our harm, almost to turn out to be for our good.

Bringing every thought every situation, every feeling, every response. To. The gate. Where the peace of god acts as arbiter acts as ruler. And that is what enables us to be patient and forgiving with others. Because we see everything through the lens of god, intending everything for our good. And that is what enables us.

To be. So, humble, and gentle, and forgiving and patient. It is an indication that we are sons of god. And that we are coming at last. On the last to be owned. Before men and angels before heaven and earth. As the children of god to be vindicated. And so conformed to christ in the last day, That he will.

Uh, not despised to be called the firstborn. Among many brethren. He is rightfully called. The only begotten son of god. But he will not despise in the last day to be called instead. Not instead in addition. The firstborn among many brethren. Because of the completeness of the conformity that he will have worked in us.

By his spirit. So, in A household in a life. Where there are many opportunities to be a conflict. To insist upon. Your honor and your due. To hold a grudge and be better. You have instead many opportunities. To show that you are the children of god. By having the peace of christ, the peace of god rule.

In your hearts. And to be beat peacemakers. With one another. Blessed are the peacemakers. For they shall be called sons of god. Man, let's pray. Our gracious gardener heavenly father, we thank you for This. Portion of your holy scripture. We ask that your spirit would write it upon our hearts.

That we would come into. More enjoyment of and expression of our sonship in christ. And his name. We ask it. Amen.