

The Peace of the Sword

Matthew 10:34-42

Introduction

Sometimes, we come across two verses in the **Bible** which seem to contradict each other. We read in **Isaiah 9:6**, *For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.* This is a Messianic prophecy about Jesus. Yet, in our reading today, Jesus says, *“Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I have not come to bring peace, but a sword.”* How do we reconcile these two verses?

True Peace

When we call Jesus the **PRINCE OF PEACE**, we must be sure we understand what true peace is. There are **two** kinds of peace, the peace of **God** and the **world's** peace. True peace is the peace of God.

Created in His image

As we said before, we were created in God's **image** so we could live in fellowship with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It is living in this **fellowship** that we will find true peace. What we may not realize is that this is what the **TEN COMMANDMENTS** are all about. Not just a list of arbitrary rules God pulled out of thin air to make life difficult, they show us how we were **created to live**. If we all followed the **TEN COMMANDMENTS**, we would live in unity and peace.

Unity

Peace comes when there is **unity**. The mantra today is **diversity**. But, if we want to have peace, there are three ways we must be united.

Leadership

There is **one** true God, and if we want peace, we must be following His **leadership**. As He says in the **First Commandment**, *“You shall have no other gods before me.”* Or, as Jesus said in **Matthew 22**, *“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.”*

Purpose

The **FIRST TABLE** of commandments shows us our Leader and the second Table shows us our **purpose**, to *Love our neighbor as ourselves*. Living in fellowship with God means loving our neighbor and living together peaceably.

Worship

The final ingredient in our recipe for peace is a united **worship**. (Read **Revelation 7:9-12**) Here is a picture of true peace. All are united around the throne, worshipping God and the Lamb.

False Peace

The world has its own idea of peace, but it's tainted by sin. The world's concept of peace is more of a “live and let live” attitude. It's best expressed by the term, *whatever*. This is really **tolerance-tolerance** of each other's evil

Hatred of the Truly Good

Where the world has **unity** is in their **hatred** of what is **truly good**. Since, the world is fallen and under the control of the devil, it is violently opposed to God and His plans. As APOLLINARIS says, *since the unbelievers think that peacemaking is their proper duty, they say, "Do not believe it is best under all circumstances to be saved, for you owe it as a duty to be at peace with all." But there are some who are preparing for a battle against our peace, and you should not let their false peace rule. For the only true concord is according to God ... and this above all is peace.* How does God bring this true peace?

The Cure

Peace comes in **truth**. Truth is found in the **Gospel**, the **Word of God**. (Read **Hebrews 4:12**) the Word of God cuts the falseness out of our hearts, to bring peace. As CHRYSOSTOM says, *This is peace: when the cancer is cut away. Only with such radical surgery is it possible for heaven to be reunited with earth. Only in this way does a physician preserve the healthy tissue of the body: the incurable part must be amputated.*

The cross of Christ

The **Cross of Christ** is the operating room. Only when the Word has exposed the cancer of sin can it be excised by the forgiveness of the cross. This is why tolerance never works. It leaves the cancer and calls it healthy tissue.

Means of Grace

God works this surgery through the **MEANS OF GRACE**, **WORD** and **SACRAMENT**. He excises the cancer with the **Sword of His Word** and heals with the balm of **forgiveness** through the body and blood of His Son. This is **THE PEACE OF THE SWORD**.

*May the peace of God,
Which passes all understanding,
Keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.*
