



Saint James AME Church
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Rev. Ronald L. Slaughter, Senior Pastor

Women's Bible Study

Rev. Janelle Y. Greene, Minister to Women
First Lady Kyla Slaughter, Women's Ministry Advisor
Tuesdays at 6:30 PM

June 27, 2017

Sis. Tracie Morrison & Dr. Tracy Ottey, Facilitators

Subject: Making Peace

Scripture: Matthew 5:9; Ephesians 2:11-22

Matthew 5:9 New King James Version (NKJV)

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

Matthew 5:9 The Message (MSG)

⁹ "You're blessed when you can show people how to cooperate instead of compete or fight. That's when you discover who you really are, and your place in God's family.

Ephesians 2:11-22 New International Version (NIV)

Jew and Gentile Reconciled Through Christ

¹¹ Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (which is done in the body by human hands) —
¹² remember that at that time you were

separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶ and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him

we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

¹⁹Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, ²⁰built on the foundation of the

apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²²And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Background

Each Beatitude tells us how to be blessed by God. Peacemaking is divine work for peace means reconciliation, and God is the author of peace and reconciliation. True peace and true forgiveness are costly treasures. Every Christian, according to Jesus, is meant to be a peacemaker both in the community and in the church. (Stott, 1998)

Jews and Gentiles separated themselves from one another. Jews considered all non-Jews spiritually unclean. Jews and Gentiles alike could be guilty of spiritual pride – Jews for thinking their faith and tradition elevated them above everyone else, Gentiles for trusting in their achievements, power or position. Christ died to abolish that whole system of Jewish law. Christ fused all believers to become one in himself. Neither group could be saved by good deeds, knowledge or sincerity, both needed salvation through Christ. God's household is not a building but a group of people. We are citizens of God's kingdom and members of his household.

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Discussion Questions:

1. What are some characteristics of a person who is a peacemaker?
2. What are some of the costs of being a peacemaker? Rewards?
3. Read Ephesians 2:14. What "barriers" exist in the church? In what ways have modern Christians resurrected the "dividing wall of hostility"?

Making Connections

4. **Read Ephesians 2:13-17.** How did Christ reconcile the conflict between the Jews and Gentiles? What steps must Christians take to rectify the conflict in the modern church?

Personal Reflection:

Read: Matthew 5:9

Reflect: Jesus prayed for the oneness of his people.

Respond: Consider each of the parts of your life listed below. Where do you see the need for reconciliation, what steps will you take to be a peacemaker in those situations?

<u>Category</u>	<u>Need for Reconciliation</u>	<u>Steps to Peace</u>
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Relationships

Family

Church

Community

World