

Peace Offerings **Matthew 5:1-9**

The 'world spirit' cries for comfort and calls that 'peace.' It seeks the path of least resistance and calls that 'peace.' It avoids confrontation and calls that 'peace.' It accommodates and calls that 'peace.'

Jesus says, in **John 14:27** – 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives...'

Two Peace Offerings in the Scriptures (both were vehicles for absorbing what hindered Peace):

1. The Fellowship Offering – **The Blood of Animals** – Temporary

The Hebrew word for Peace – 'Shalom' meant more than an absence of conflict – it was about things being right, the way they were intended.

The OT Jews longed for this Peace in their suffering and wanderings – and their prophets spoke of a day when everything would be made right.

The 'Fellowship Offering,' literally translated – 'Peace Offering.' The Bible teaches that even the aroma of this offering was pleasing to God – a feast followed.

2. The One True Peace Offering – **The Blood of Jesus** – Final and Lasting

At the heart of the Gospel we find that Jesus is the ultimate Peace Offering.

Ephesians 2:14 – “For he himself is our peace...”

Ephesians 2:17-18 – “He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.”

Jesus came to secure Peace between His Father and sinners. He did this by absorbing the punishment for our sin – He **became** the sacrifice – **He** was the sweet aroma – the offering that would absorb the wrath of God and reconcile God and man – Isaiah called His death, ‘the punishment that brought us peace.’

Colossians 1:19-20 – “For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.”

Amazingly, here Jesus calls us to be the same to the world – and He blesses those who would be so.

Paul – **2 Corinthians 5:18** – “the ministry of reconciliation”

This is our calling.

The peacemakers are called the sons of God because the Son of God is the Prince of Peace, and whenever we put ourselves second for the sake of others, and whenever we sacrifice comfort to make things right, and whenever we face our sin and bear it rather than justify or rationalize or blame or scapegoat, we resemble the One who made Peace for us.

But who can be such Peacemakers? It is those who are at Peace with God.

Romans 5:1 – “Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...”

The Gospel says that if you are to be at Peace you have to flee to the One who has made Peace for you – you must flee to Jesus.

Two Determinations:

- Determine to Make Peace

In order to make Peace, you have to be at Peace, so if you don't know Christ, then run to Him with all your might – with all that you are – run to Him and abandon hope that there is anything in this world that will bring what only Christ offers. And if you are a Christian, then identify where it does not exist in your life and determine to deal with it.

- Determine to be a Peacemaker

Isaiah 52:7 – “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’”

Determine that you will do something for the sake of the Kingdom – something that demonstrates to **you** that you are at Peace with God to the extent that you can rub shoulders with the world in compassion and sacrifice rather than with disgust and condemnation. Determine to prove to yourself every day that nothing you have in this world compares to what you have in Jesus.