

## True Peacemakers (Devotional)

In His *Sermon on the Mount* in Matthew 5:9 (NAS), Jesus said, **“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”** As is the case with much of God’s word, this verse is sorely taken out of context to mean what it was never meant to be. Basically, and in essence, many twist it into teaching we are saved by good works. When we seek to vindicate ourselves by holding up our own good works, instead of acknowledging that our justification can only be achieved because of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, the One and only Son of the Living God, our righteousness appears as a filthy rag waving in front of the face of God: **“For all of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; and all of us wither like a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, take us away.”** (Isaiah 64:6 [NAS])

Our righteousness will never and can never earn us salvation, for as the Apostle Paul states, **“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”** (Romans 3:23 [NAS]). And when we sin, we become separated from God, and our reward is death: **“For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”** (Romans 6:23 [NAS])

Take, for example, Mahatma Gandhi. He was a man who dedicated his life towards achieving peace. In fact, he pioneered *satyagraha*, which is the resistance to tyranny through mass civil disobedience, a philosophy which was founded upon *ahimsa*, or total non-violence. He was very successful and instrumental in achieving independence for India from the British Empire. By any definition of the word, Mahatma Gandhi was a peacemaker. One would be hard pressed to find an individual who was more of a peacemaker than was Gandhi. But unless he accepted the Lord’s invitation to come to Him in obedient, saving faith (and by all accounts he never did follow the gospel plan of salvation), then no amount of peaceful intentions by Gandhi made him a son of God. Only those who come to the Lord on His terms will be called His children. When we are baptized into Christ we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit: **“Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”** And it is only those who are led by His Spirit who are the sons of God: **14. For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. 15. For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!” 16. The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, 17. and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him.** (Romans 8:14-17 [NAS]) So what Jesus meant is that those who make peace with God will be privileged and blessed to be called His children. And peace will only be achieved through Jesus: **“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me”** (John 14:6 [NAS]).