



# Family Values

## Virtue Realities

### Peace

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*“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.”* So states Jesus in His opening remarks to the Sermon on the Mount. Even though the Beatitudes are subject to differing interpretations, one thing is certain: Jesus cherished people who promoted peace and considered this virtue a family trait. As the Prince of Peace, he expected his followers to advance the cause of peace.

Peace is actually the sign of restored relationships. By nature we are “alienated” from God. Through Christ this wrong relationship is set right. We are reconciled to God and, as the Apostle Paul suggests, have “peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:1). This peace is beyond all human understanding. This peace patches us in to God’s power. This peace reaches out to our brothers and sisters in Christ. As someone reconciled, we become reconcilers, people dedicated to live in harmony with others and to demonstrate what it means to be part of God’s family.

Such peace is the antithesis of war and strife. It links people together in a new and different way. It reflects the values of the Kingdom of God, where wolf and lamb, leopard and kid, cow and bear eat and lie down together. Competition and power struggles are replaced with respect and support. The need to control or dominate gives way to affirmation and encouragement. Family fights among the faithful fade into healthy disagreements. For this reason, we greet one another with peace in our worship services, especially as we gather together for the family meal. This is not an empty ritual but a genuine exchange of God’s power at work within the body of Christ.

Another aspect of this peace is serenity of mind and spirit. In spite of the chaos and uncertainty that surrounds us, God continues to be there for us, to be in relationship with us. We are assured by Jesus’ promise to his disciples: *“Peace I leave with you; my*

*peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”* This peace resides in our hearts and souls. This peace puts our minds at ease.

The following are some ways to practice peace

1. **Pray daily for peace.** World peace. Internal peace. Interpersonal peace. Family peace. Congregational peace.
2. **Be a model of peace to others.** When tempers flair, remain calm. When situations become tense, provide some comic relief.
3. **Take time out to relax.** Listen to soothing music. Concentrate on your breathing. Picture yourself in a peaceful, serene setting.
4. **Plan family peace rituals/events.** Organize a peace picnic with friends and relatives. During family devotions, greet one another with peace. Create a space dedicated to peace in your home.
5. **Speak words of peace,** especially when angry. Soften the intensity and deliberately choose words that have a calming effect, rather than an inflammatory one.
6. **Avoid causing harm,** either physically or emotionally. Take a stand against people who do. Respond to violence with firm, loving resolve.
7. **Provide a peaceful environment for your children.** Monitor the TV shows they watch, movies they see, music they listen to and friends they hang out with. Let them know you care. Make your home a no violence zone.

The peace of the Lord be with you always. Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

Affirmation: I am blessed. I am God’s peacemaker.

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