

I. Reconsidering Peace

A. I believe we have greatly underestimated the provision of peace that is available to us through the gospel.

1. When we read, "Peace be with you" or "Grace and peace be multiplied to you" we tend to brush past it as a simple greeting.
2. However, there are several factors that should cause us to reconsider the foundational place that peace is to have in the life of a believer in the kingdom:
 - a. The greeting of peace shows up in seventeen New Testament letters (Rom 1:7, 1 Cor 1:3, 2 Cor 1:2, Gal 1:3, Eph 1:2, Phil 1:2, Col 1:2, 1 Thes 1:1, 2 Thes 1:2, 1 Tim 1:2, 2 Tim 1:2, Tit 1:4, Philemon 1:3, 1 Pet 1:2, 2Pet 1:2, 2 John 1:3, Rev 1:4),
 - b. Jesus is called the Prince of Peace (Isa 9:6).
 - c. The Father is called the God of peace (Rom 15:33, Rom 16:20, 2 Cor 13:11, Phil 4:9, Heb 13:20).
 - d. Life in the kingdom is righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. (Rom 14:17).
 - e. When Jesus came the angels announced, "Glory to God in the highest! Peace on earth and goodwill toward men" (Luke 2:14).
 - f. Of the increase of His government and *peace* there shall be no end (Isa 9:7).
 - g. The gospel is the gospel of peace (Acts 10:36, Rom 10:15).

B. Because we have almost ignored the provision of peace for the believer, we have also greatly underestimated the necessity of peace and the power peace works in a believer's life.

C. Most believers live outside of the power of peace that is available to us through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

D. We have grown accustomed to living in fear, worry, anxiety, angst, distress, nervousness, agitation, and stress without really recognizing it. The world conditions people to react to crisis with fear and worry. There is no offer of peace in the world that can overcome the negative circumstances, so the world frets and fears.

E. To be clear, peace isn't ignoring difficult circumstances so you can be at rest. Peace is a spiritual power that overcomes the reality of the difficult circumstances and brings a believer into the same perspective and temperament of the Holy Spirit.

F. Oftentimes believers give in to worry and fear and allow those things to motivate their actions and plans and call it wisdom. The scriptures are clear; if it is wisdom that comes from heaven it will bring peace (James 3:17).

James 3:17 But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable...

II. The Power of Peace

A. Peace is usually thought of as a calm feeling of tranquility that leaves us relaxed and at ease. While calm and a sense of tranquility may be outcomes of peace, peace is far more powerful than we understand.

B. Peace is the only thing that ends wars. It is the only force that unites people in irreconcilable divisions. Peace is a powerful spiritual force that brings calm into the midst of calamity and tranquility into the place of turbulence.

C. When Jesus was chastened with the scourge before He went to the cross, He was chastened for our peace:

Isaiah 53:5 But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

D. It was through His cross that Jesus brought peace to an infinite division, the breach between God and man, tearing down the enmity between us (Eph 2:14-17).

E. While peace ultimately brings calm, the power of peace is inestimable

III. Jesus Gave us His own Peace, He Himself is our Peace

Eph 2:14 For He Himself is our peace...

A. Jesus Himself is our peace. This means that our peace is not dependent upon any circumstance, but upon the nature of the Son of God. He is always at peace. His very name is peace. Our peace doesn't have to be subject to any other factor than the One who is our peace.

John 14:26-27 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you. 27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

B. Jesus is our peace and also gave us His peace, which we have received by the Holy Spirit who dwells within us.

C. Because of this, He tells us, "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." Notice He tells us not to agree with anxiety and fear but rather to experience His peace, which is far greater than the peace the world gives (i.e. peace that is contingent upon perfect circumstances).

IV. Peace Manifesting in us and Guarding our Minds is subject to:

- A. Our connection with the Holy Spirit (John 14:26-27)
- B. Making our requests known to God (Phil 4:7)

Philippians 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; 7 and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.

1. Notice that he instructs us not to be anxious. I understand there is nuance to people's experiences. But even in anxiety attacks or trauma responses there is a power that can put those things at bay.
2. Instead of allowing anxiety to run its course, he calls us to make our requests known to God with gratitude.
3. He then says that the immediate outcome will be peace. Notice that it's not the immediate answer to our prayers, but rather a peace that will manifest on our lives, guarding our soul. The reason we need immediate peace to guard our soul is because sometimes answers are delayed. It is critical to recognize that peace is the immediate outcome of prayer.

- C. Casting all care upon the Lord (1 Pe 5:7)