

John 14:27 Peace! Easter 6 May 26, 2019

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God's peace is yours not through anything you've done, but according to His mercy in Christ Jesus. As the most troubling day of the disciples began, Jesus offered a most remarkable peace in John 14:27. These are your words. Dear Lord, help us to receive your gift of peace through Jesus' truth. Your Word...

Dear Christian Friends,

When we hear the word "peace" we may think of countries in which we wish to see peace such as in Iran or North Korea. We also think areas of the country where there has been flooding or tornadoes and many people in those areas have no peace right now. So, we pray for peace among nations and for peace for people in areas of disaster. But, there is much more to God's concept of peace than just the end of war or of a flood. Today we will consider when Jesus offered:

Peace!

First, Jesus offers a unique peace. He said, "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives*" (v.27). On the eve of the most violent day of Jesus' life and the most heart-wrenching day for his disciples, Jesus offered them peace. This was not a contradiction of promise and reality. Jesus' peace is not the same as the world's peace. All people want an outward form of peace without pain or struggle, with no financial problems, and nothing to be anxious about. But Jesus' peace doesn't depend on harmony between countries or calm in families. It isn't as fragile as the next temper flare-up of parents or children. It isn't disturbed when things don't go as planned. Even Jesus' arrest, trial, and crucifixion couldn't take away His peace. Rather, Him He formed peace through it.

Some people try to find peace through sleep, amusement, or by an abuse of a drug; but it doesn't last long before problems return. Others think they have peace as long as there is no tragedy, accidents, or disasters. This type of peace can be less stressful, but it is temporary!

When it came to peace, Jesus didn't seek it by running away from trouble. He didn't live to find a kind of selfish peace. He lived to do His Father's will. In doing God's will, He not only found peace, He made peace. He won by while constantly being threatened by people and by temptations of the devil. For example: Jesus boldly proclaimed to a hometown crowd that He was God's Son from heaven. They promptly tried to throw Him over a cliff. But, that didn't stop Jesus from speaking the truth.

Above all, Jesus reminded His disciples that it was His peace He was giving to them. How could He own peace? The peace Jesus described was a covenant of peace. In the Old Testament, when a covenant was made there was usually the sacrifice of an animal or the exchange of a gift to confirm the agreement. Jesus offered His sinless life on the cross to establish God's agreement of peace. At Jesus' death, He gave His peace to the world. God's peace with people is tied to Christ, not only in His death. But it was guaranteed by His resurrection. Jesus said, "*Because I live, you also shall live.*" (John 11:27). Jesus reestablished the peace that God had with people before sin was in the world.

In John 14 Jesus, who would die on the cross the next day, kept assuring His followers that despite a lack of peace in the world, God's peace would be established through Him. Jesus said, "*I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world*" (John 16:33). Jesus' death gives us certain peace.

We have had many wars in our nation's short history. It's important on Memorial Day to remember the soldiers who gave up their lives to keep our nation free. Truly we should be thankful to all who fight battles or protect our streets from crime to give us peace. But, as much as they risk their lives, it's only temporary. In Jesus' case, it was a permanent peace with God that He won by His innocent life.

Second, Jesus' peace is ours through faith. In our world people would be willing to pay a large sum of money to gain peace. Our nation is paying billions of dollars to maintain troops in various parts of the world so people of our nation can travel, trade, and live in relative peace. We pay a police force so we have peace of mind, knowing that if there is a problem, we can call them to help us. The peace that Jesus won for us offers so much more! We don't need to buy it! Jesus paid for it with His life so that it is free for us.

We can't accept God's peace with our own thinking. It doesn't make sense to think about a peace with no cost that doesn't make life on earth any safer! But, the Holy Spirit has convinced us of its eternal value. Paul wrote, *"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith..."* (Romans 5:1-2). As long as we trust in Jesus to save us from our sins, peace between God and us is certain!

Since we are at peace with God, we should make every effort to live in His peace. How did that work for Jesus' disciples after He died? They were in shock at His death. They were horribly sad and they feared for their own lives. Even after Jesus initially rose from death, it still was challenging to make His peace their own. Jesus told His disciples, *"Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid"* (v.27). There will be many things in life which will stir up our emotions or make us afraid, such as loss of income, loss of health, loss of friends or relatives, or not having a feeling of security. But, please note that Jesus did not tell us to look inside to find peace. We have the promises of His Word of peace in which we trust to be true.

The Bible states of God, *"You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you"* (Isaiah 26:3). The more we trust, even in the midst of a storm, the more we will be at peace. What about when we lack peace because of our sinful thoughts, words or actions? We should be sorry for them, but at the same time recognize that *"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners..."* (1 Timothy 1:15) And if we don't feel peace or forgiveness, then simply believe God's Word. He will have the final say on the Last Day, not our feelings. John wrote, *"If our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and He knows all things"* (1 John 3:20). Paul also wrote, *"The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"* (Philippians 4:13).

Since we have peace with God, we should make every effort to live in peace, especially with other Christians. Our prayer for others is that their faith in Christ may be strengthened so that they are certain of having peace with God. His peace doesn't give us job security. It doesn't protect us from accidents. It doesn't keep some Christians from going to war or dying. But, God's peace in Christ assures us that we have a home in heaven that will never fade, spoil, or perish. We have all that we need to get there in Christ our Savior. Once in heaven, we will have perfect peace with God forever! Amen.