

“Real Peace”
December 6, 2020
Ephesians 2:11-18

I. Introduction:

In 1873 Horatio Spafford, a distinguished lawyer in Chicago, and a close friend of D. L. Moody, sent his wife and three daughters to Europe by ship while he remained back in the States, intending to join them later. En route there was a terrible storm and a shipwreck during which their three daughters drowned. Mrs. Spafford made it to safety and wired back saying, “All of our daughters have been lost. Only I have been saved.”

Horatio took the next vessel to Europe. As they came near the place where his daughters drowned, the skipper of the ship pointed to the place where the other ship had gone down. It was there on the deck of the ship that Horatio wrote these stirring words:

When Peace like a river attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billow roll;

Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, “It is well, it is well with my soul.”

Horatio had real peace. Real peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Real peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart. That is the real meaning of peace.

Today begins the second week of Advent, today we focus our attention on the theme of peace. It’s appropriate to talk about peace at Christmas—we are continually being reminded of what the angels said to the shepherds in [Luke 2:14](#), “**Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.**” As the Douglasses read this morning from [Isaiah 9:6](#), Jesus is called the “**Prince of Peace.**” But peace—real peace—seems to be out of reach of everyone. Before this pandemic came on the scene, the world had very little peace. Now with the pandemic, with people concerned and worried about the election and what the president or president-elect will do, with the increase in violence, murders, and riots around the world as well

as in the US, it seems as if peace has totally fled the scene. Peace? It's a nice idea, but certainly not a part of most lives especially during this Christmas season. Where is this real peace we hear about?

And then when we read other verses in God's Word about peace, we all really begin to wonder about peace ourselves. For example, in [Luke 12:51-52](#), Jesus said, "Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division. From now on there will be five in one family divided against each other, three against two and two against three." This doesn't sound like peace at all. Contrary to the expectations of the world, the peace Jesus brought wasn't peace throughout the world or for all mankind. As we read in [Ephesians 2](#), the peace Jesus came to bring was peace between God and man—it is a supernatural peace. [Turn to John 14:27](#). This morning let's look at this supernatural peace—first, what is real peace?

II. Supernatural Peace

A. What is real peace? The Hebrew word for peace is "*SHALOM*." *Shalom* means more than just "peace;" it means wholeness, completeness, health, security, and even prosperity—everything which makes for a person's highest good. Jesus came to bring this kind of peace—shalom peace.

As we read in Ephesians, Jesus came to earth to make it possible to reestablish a relationship with God; to enable mankind to have peace with God. This is shalom peace. [Colossians 1:19 & 20](#) says, "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, i.e. Jesus Christ, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his Jesus' blood, shed on the cross." Because Jesus paid the price for our sins, when we accept His gift of eternal life, our sins are forgiven. No longer are we enemies of God, we have become sons and daughters of God. We have peace with God. Real peace comes from having a right relationship with God.

Ever since the fall of Adam and Eve, mankind has been at war with God. [Romans 8:7](#) says, "The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so." From birth, everyone is against God; [turn to Romans 3:10-18](#). As God said in [Genesis 8:21](#), "Every inclination of man's heart is evil

from his youth.” Humanly speaking—in our own strength, it isn’t possible to have peace between men or between man and God.

But when one becomes a Christian, he not only has peace **with** God, he also has, as **Philippians 4:7** says, “**The peace of God, which transcends all understanding.**” This peace **of** God is capable of protecting believers from doubts, fears, worry, and distress. It is not affected or influenced by outward circumstances. Real peace is independent of circumstances. It’s an inner peace—the spiritual peace of God—God has forgiven the past, provided for the present, and guaranteed the future. Peace is a fundamental part of a Christian’s life. Paul wrote in **Romans 14:17**, “**For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.**” As we allow the Holy Spirit to fill us, we will experience peace—real peace; shalom peace.

B. There is only one source of real peace. Obviously, the only source of real peace is God. This is why real peace cannot be found in the world. Without God, without the Holy Spirit, wars between and within countries will continue; violence between individuals will continue, sexual misconduct will continue; worry in the midst of the pandemic will continue. Without God, regardless of anyone’s “*good intentions*,” there can be no real peace. Oh, for a particular location or people there may be a short time of peace, but even this superficial peace will soon disappear. As someone has written, “*Washington has a large assortment of peace monuments. We build one after each war.*”

The world may cry for peace; countries may even try to legislate peace, but over and over the Bible reminds us that world peace really isn’t possible. In **Isaiah 48:22** we read, “**‘There is no peace,’ says the LORD, ‘for the wicked.’**” In **Romans 3:17** which we read earlier; we saw that “**the way of peace the ungodly do not know.**” People can work hard and be as sincere as possible, but world peace, even personal peace, will elude them. As **Jeremiah 8:15** put it, “**We hoped for peace but no good has come, for a time of healing but there was only terror.**”

The world as a whole will never know peace until Christ returns and establishes His kingdom. Then, as it says in [Isaiah 2:4](#), “He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore.” But until that time, the only way to have peace on earth is to know Jesus as one’s personal Lord and Savior; then and only then can a person have peace **with** God and the peace **of** God.

On the very night that He was going to be betrayed and then soon after that crucified, Jesus, the Prince of Peace, told His disciples, “My peace I give you.” But as we have seen already in so many verses peace really comes from all 3 persons of the Trinity. For example, in [Romans 1:7](#) we read, “Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” In [Galatians 5](#) we are told that the fruit of the Spirit includes peace. For the disciples, the Holy Spirit and the promised peace came at Pentecost. But from then on, whenever a person makes Jesus his Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit comes to live inside him right away and the believer can have peace immediately. This is the source of real peace: the Trinity—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

This is the same peace that allowed Christ to be calm as He was tried first by the Sanhedrin and then by Pilate. In [1 Peter 2:23](#) Peter wrote, “When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly.” [Turn to Heb. 12:2-3](#). If we look to Jesus Christ and, like Him, move in the strength of God the Father and are filled with the Holy Spirit, we, too, will have peace in the midst of any problem or hardship or pandemic.

C. Finally, Christians have a responsibility. Back in [John 14:27](#) we see that we have a part or responsibility in having this peace that leads to “*untroubled hearts and no fear.*” Jesus commanded His disciples (and us), “Do not **let** your hearts be troubled.” In [2 Timothy 2:22](#) Paul told Timothy, “Flee the evil desires of youth, and **pursue** righteousness, faith, love and peace, along with those who call on the Lord out of a pure heart.” We don’t need to be troubled or fearful in the midst of calamity; **but** for this to be the case,

we need to pursue peace. This is our responsibility: Christians are to “pursue peace.” Isaiah 26:3 says, “You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.” If you are to have peace, you must be steadfast or immovable, trusting in God. In Philippians 4:6-7 Paul wrote, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 5:18 says, “Be filled with the Spirit.” As Christians pursue peace, they must walk in God’s ways, and allow the Holy Spirit to fill them, then and only then will they be filled with God’s peace.

No one can create any of the fruit of the Spirit, but we can prevent God from growing them. We may choose to spend time in lots of ways except allowing God to mold us and create all the fruits of the Spirit in us. We allow ourselves to be too busy, and squeeze God out of our lives, and then wonder where God is or why we aren’t seeing more of His power and goodness and peace in our lives. Sometimes, we make deliberate choices that reject God—we refuse to be led by the Spirit. He has called, and we’ve said, “No!” We have known an act was wrong but cheated anyway. Lied anyway. Gossiped anyway. In Paul’s words in Galatians 5:20-21 (NLT), you have given in to “hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, divisions, the feeling that everyone is wrong except those in your own little group, envy, and drunkenness, wild parties, and other kinds of sin.” There will be no inner peace if you are not right with God. If you want to have the peace of God—it must be pursued. You need to let God into your heart and life and allow Him to grow His peace in you as you walk in His ways.

III. Conclusion:

The world bases its peace on its resources *while God’s peace depends on relationships*. The world depends on personal ability, *but the Christian depends on the power of Jesus Christ*. In the world, peace is something you hope for or work for; but never really have. *Christians can have peace—peace is God’s wonderful gift; it is received by faith*. Unsaved people enjoy a type of peace only when there is an absence of trouble; *Christians enjoy peace even in the midst of trouble—trouble like this pandemic—because of the*

presence and the power of the Holy Spirit. Colossians 3:15 says that all a Christian has to do is to open his heart and “let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.” When you open your heart and let the Holy Spirit in, nothing can destroy your peace.

Do you want real peace—peace in the midst of trouble and calamity—then give your heart completely to God. Walk in God’s path, allow the Holy Spirit to fill you then you will have the peace that transcends understanding—the peace that Jesus brought when He was born in a stable in Bethlehem. “For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.” (Luke 2:11 KJV). “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.” (Luke 2:14 NAS)