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“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid” (John 14:27).

Blessed Quietness

Central Truth: Tranquil hearts result from trusting God.

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Topic: Holy Spirit: Fruit Of; Peace.

“The peace that comes from God meets all the wants of the soul, silences the alarms of conscience, is fixed and sure amidst all external changes, and will abide in the hour of death forever.” The unknown person who penned those words long ago caught quite well the truth of Galatians 5:22: *“The fruit of the Spirit is . . . peace.”* Such is the ministry of peace which the Holy Spirit cultivates in the hearts of the faithful disciples of Jesus.

A definition of peace must have two elements: the absence of disturbance plus the presence of tranquility. Your dictionary will define peace as the absence of disturbance or strife. But it will also stipulate the presence of tranquility, which is an undisturbed state of mind. The Bible stresses the fact of harmonious relationships, whether speaking of peace between God and man or between man and man. The Hebrew word *shalom*, translated “peace,” also indicates wholeness.

Contrast the peace of the world and the peace of God. Jesus knew that they were distinct. The peace of this world is temporary, superficial, and dependent on circumstances. The peace of God is eternal, spiritual, and totally independent of circumstances. *“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”* (Romans 5:1).

I. THE GIFT OF PEACE

Jesus said, *“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid”* (John 14:27). Jesus mentioned three distinct elements regarding His gift of peace.

A. Peace is divine in its origin. Jesus promised to leave peace with His disciples. But He added, *“My peace I give unto you.”* He gives us the same peace that He himself enjoys. It is a *“peace with God”* (Romans 5:1) and the *“peace of God”* (Philippians 4:7). We do not experience an increase of our human peace. We receive and enjoy the very peace of God himself. Our peace is His. Glory!

B. Peace is distinct in its nature. Jesus wanted us to understand clearly the unique quality of the peace He gives. He promised to leave peace and give us His peace. Then He added. *“My peace is nothing like the fragile peace which is found in this world, I give you something far better. I give you the peace of God himself, My own perfect peace.”* The peace of Jesus is not disturbed with frettings, doubts, or difficulties. It is perfect. It passes all human understandings. It acts as an umpire in the heart over all the issues of life. What a legacy He bequeathed to His own!

II. THE MINISTRY OF PEACE (Philippians 4:4-9)

What happens in the heart of a person who experiences the peace that Jesus gives? Philippians 4:4-9 indicates seven blessed ministries of peace in the believer.

A. Peace produces joy. *“Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice”* (verse 4). Assurance of union with Christ, the source of peace, produces a gladness and delight of spirit which can be found in no other, relationship. The gospel of Christ is called good news, and wherever it is received there is rejoicing. You will rejoice as the peace of God rules in your life. Yours is a *“joy unspeakable and full of glory”* (I Peter 1:8) when it is the joy of the Lord.

B. Peace produces gentleness. *“Let your moderation be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand”* (verse 5). The *“moderation”* of that verse is gentleness, considerateness, forbearance, and humility. Where the peace of God reigns, the believer will have a reputation for kindness and grace. Everyone will see it. Many will be blessed by it. All those emotions which are opposed to peace will be subdued when God's peace reigns within.

C. Peace produces prayer. *“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God”* (verse 6). Once a person is delivered from the

turmoil of sin into the peace of forgiveness, he desires to talk with Him who delivered him. So prayer is a natural exercise for the Christian. He need not worry about anything since he is invited to pray about everything. He tells God every detail of his needs, asks for divine aid, offers thanks in advance for God's help, and then rests in peace about it. One of the old Christian hymns suggests, "Take your burden to the Lord and leave it there." That's what the praying Christian does, and peace reigns.

D. Peace assures of protection. *"The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus"* (verse 7). Think about that. The peace of God, which is so great that it surpasses all of our ability to comprehend it, will garrison and keep guard over us. It will govern our minds, our emotions, and our wills. Jesus promised that in saying, *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"* (John 14:27). What protects your heart and mind?

E. Peace produces purity. *"Brethren, whatsoever things are true, . . . honest, . . . just, . . . pure, . . . lovely, . . . (or) of good report, . . . think on these things"* (verse 8). Virtue and honor come from that kind of thought life. The Bible says that, as a person thinks in his heart, so he is (Proverbs 23:7). The peace of God inspires pure thoughts which produce pure conduct.

F. Peace produces obedience. *"Those things, which ye have both learned, and received, and heard, and seen in me, do"* (verse 9). We will put into continual practice what we have learned of our Lord. When we have received His peace and it reigns within, we will delight to obey Him who has so graced us. We will not obey the Lord unless we have peace with Him.

G. Peace produces assurance. *"The Lord is at hand . . . ; The God of peace shall be with you"* (verses 5, 9). The presence of God's peace in the believer's heart is proof that God has received him in peace. The peace of God in his heart assures the believer that God continues to abide with him. Assurance is an incentive to peace; peace is a wellspring of assurance. Blessed assurance!

III. THE EXPERIENCE OF PEACE

A. The believer has peace with God and is blessed by the peace of God. Peace with God is salvation; the peace of God is sanctification. Peace with God was established in the conversion experience. The peace of God continues through all of life for the obedient Christian. *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ"*

(Romans 5:1). . . ,

B. The believer has peace with other people. In Christ, he is delivered from envy, fretfulness, worry, jealousy, anger, and all those other unworthy emotions which mar good relationships. The Holy Spirit works in one's life to produce the fruit which is exactly opposite. Each believer lives under the God-given guideline, *“If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men”* (Romans 12:18).

C. The believer has peace in spite of the storm. His is a peace which does not depend on external circumstances but on spiritual relationships. He is like a little bird resting peacefully on its nest beside a thundering waterfall. Death, sickness, financial straits, betrayal by trusted friends, and such calamities may come; but God does not change. So the peace of God continues to rule in the heart in spite of troubles.

D. The believer has peace produced by the Holy Spirit. *“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace”* (Galatians 5:22). It is imperative, therefore, that the believer not grieve, quench, or test the Spirit. It is imperative that he be always filled with the Spirit. As the believer permits the Spirit to control and empower him, the peace of God which passes all comprehension will fill him with the greatest delight.

Be sure that you are at peace with God through faith in Jesus. Then yield to the government of His peace and let it act as an umpire over all that comes into your life. Manifest His peace by attitude and actions, conversation and conduct; then you will be a dynamic witness for Jesus. Memorize Philippians 4:6, 7 as your guideline.

Questions for discussion

1. What are the two elements of peace?
2. How does Romans 5:1 describe the reception of peace?
3. How does Jesus fulfill His promise of John 14:27?
4. In what sense is our peace really God's peace?
5. How does peace produce joy in us?
6. Why does peace make us prayerful?
7. How does peace produce purity in us?
8. What is the peace of God? peace with God?
9. How is peace the fruit of the Holy Spirit?
10. How can you show the peace of God in your life this week?