

His Peace

John 14:27



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FOCAL Read Together John 14:27 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.

A few weeks ago I was at Parker's Crossroads to see the dedication of the *McPeake Cabin*. This old log cabin was dedicated by members of Rock Hill Baptist and is now on display at the battleground in Parker's Crossroads. The cabin was beautifully restored, and I really enjoyed looking at it. On the same day a number of men and women came from all around and dressed like they would have dressed back during the Civil War. I took a lot of pictures as they fired the old cannons, simulating battle between the North and South. I noticed the clothing, and saw how people dressed in layers of clothing – the women in dresses that brushed the ground, and men in long sleeved shirts and woolen coats. As it was around 90 degrees outside I could only imagine how hot these people were, and how hearty our ancestors were. I noticed the old *washboards and clothes buckets* where women had to scrub and wring their clothes by hand. I looked at the old wood stove that required a lot of preparation by both men and women if anyone was going to eat. Things were primitive – even the old outhouses – according to today's standards. How blessed we are to live in this modern age.

But we're also cursed. Though it no longer takes a family an hour or more to get to Church on Sunday by buggy or wagon, and though we use microwave ovens and cook top stoves, many people find their lives to be filled with *stress*.

A lot of our stress – and accompanying fear - doesn't come from hard work, but by *knowing too much of the wrong thing or not enough of the right thing.*

People watch the Weather Channel on television and worry about the storm coming their way. They watch the news on television and are stressed out over predictions by economists over our supposed failing economy, or are stressed by the rising gasoline prices, or are stressed over what the terrorists are doing somewhere else, or are stressed over We just know WAY too much! Add to this influx of knowledge the supposed experts on television, Internet, or radio who tell you about cancer causing agents in your food or water. Now add to this stress the stress of everyday life: sickness, death in your family, your job, family problems – the list goes on and on.

As a nation we're worrying ourselves to death.

I heard a comedian talking the other day about the gift his father gave his mother on her birthday. He said “Dad gave mom a “mood ring”. Have you ever seen one of those things? It has a stone in the middle of it that changes colors, reflecting the mood of the wearer. When mom's in a good mood her ring turns green. When she's in a bad mood her ring leaves a pink impression on my dad's forehead!” Stress does that. If not handled properly stress makes us do the wrong thing. When **King Saul**

1 Samuel 28:5 ... saw the host of the Philistines, he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled.

Stress took hold of King Saul. He sought the Lord, and when the Lord didn't immediately answer him *stress and fear* rather than faith in God began to control him. He told his servants “**find me a woman who can speak to the dead, one who can help me decide what to do**” (**1 Samuel 28:7**). This bad decision was one of many stress driven decisions that caused the Lord to relieve Saul of his crown. Or consider **King David**, a mighty warrior of God, who because of stress and fear shamed himself before **Achish the King of Gath**. The Bible tells us that:

1 Samuel 21:13 ... {David} changed his behavior before {his enemies}, and feigned himself mad in their hands, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate, and let his spittle fall down upon his beard.

Eli, one of the great judges of Israel, and the teacher of the great **Prophet Samuel**, allowed *stress and fear* to overwhelm him. The Bible says “**his heart trembled for the Ark of God**”. When he heard that the Philistines had taken the Ark of the Lord in the battle the Bible says

1 Samuel 4:18 {Eli} fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck broke, and he died: ...

What a sad end for someone who had **judged Israel for 40 years**. And what of the **Prophet Elijah**? This man stood before **450 prophets of the false god Baal (1 Kings 18:22)** and brought the judgment of God on all of its followers. This same Prophet heard the threat of **Queen Jezebel (1 Kings 19:2)**, and allowed stress to

ring out of him the plaintive cry:

1 Kings 19:4 ... It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers.

Stress and fear cripples, defeats, robs, and kills that which it is allowed to dwell in. What is the solution to fear and stress? Only Jesus.

We must turn to Him for the **peace of God which passeth all understanding (Philippians 4:7)**. We must let His peace **rule in our hearts (Colossians 3:15)**. We must turn to Jesus alone for perfect peace.

1. The Normal Christian Life Begins When You Have Peace With God

FOCAL John 14:27 **Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you:**

That which Christ intended for us all is *peace*. Jesus said **“Peace I leave with you, My Peace I give unto you”**. Jesus was preparing to leave His disciples and preparing to go to the Cross for our sins, but before He went He wanted His people to know that **God would be with them**.

The God of all comfort – the Comforter – indwells (lives in) His people.

Jesus said:

CONTEXT John 14:26 **But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.**

Salvation is about *giving yourself away*. Jesus gave Himself away for you, laying down His life on the Cross. You, believing in Him, *give yourself away* to Jesus. And God the Holy Spirit *gives Himself away* by committing His life to yours so that you can have peace.

True peace is a **gift from God**. This peace begins when we realize that we need God just as we need air to live. Jesus left His peace with His disciples, He gave His peace to His disciples – but they had to *choose to give themselves to that peace*. Peace is the birthright of every Christian.

Nearly every time the Apostle Paul wrote to the local Churches He (as God so lead him to do) wrote **“grace to you, AND PEACE from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ”** (see **Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3** for examples). If you are a Christian then you are under **GRACE** or the free gift of God's pardon. If you are a Christian then you are **INDWELT BY THE COMFORTER**, God the Holy Spirit, the God of Peace. If you are a Christian then your normal state should be that of peace. The Scripture says:

Romans 5:1 Therefore **being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:**

Being justified by faith – declared righteous because of the shed blood of Christ – **we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.** Furthermore, God the Comforter lives inside of you, and the natural output or **fruit of the Spirit** is PEACE. We read:

Galatians 5:22-23 But **the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace,** longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance

Peace is what Christ left with us, a **perfect peace.** If I am not at peace then the first question I need to ask myself is *Am I truly saved?* This is a valid question!

Now I certainly do not want to bruise the young Christian with uncertain questionings, but the Bible does tell us to

2 Corinthians 13:5 **Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, ...**

Examine yourselves. If you're a Christian then the natural output of your life should be peace. The **God of Comfort** lives inside of you. You can remember a time in your life when you heard the preacher say:

Romans 10:9, 11 That if thou shalt **confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart**

that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. ... {11} For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

You heard those sweet words. You knew that God loved you with an infinite love, and was calling you from a walk of death and darkness to a walk of life. You heard Jesus whisper sweet words of hope to you, saying, **“If you believe in Me, you will not be ashamed (Romans 9:33). I came to this earth that you might have life, abundant life (John 10:10). You do not need to save yourself. I gave Myself up for you (Ephesians 2:15-17). Every law of God that you broke, every offense that you made, every violation you are guilty of, I paid it all on Calvary's tree. Because of Me, because of My offering, I have made peace between you and God the Father. You are no longer enemies of God, but Sons, children of Abraham, joint heirs with Me. You are born into My Kingdom and, dear family, are given both Grace and Peace.”**

God is delighted to save *whosoever will come unto Him through Christ.* Our Lord loves each and every person on the face of this earth. He is not *out to get* anyone.

Micah 7:18-19 {God wants to} ... **that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger forever, because he delighteth in mercy. {19} He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins**

into the depths of the sea.

Here's the beginning of peace, knowing that I do not have to work my way into God's Heaven. It is, as Jesus has said, **His peace**. He said “**My peace I give unto you**”. Have you received His gift of peace? Have you been **born again**, not by the works of your hands, but by *surrendering into His hands*? If so, you should be at peace.

2. The Normal Christian Gets Peace From Christ While Avoiding That Which Is Not Christ

FOCAL John 14:27 **Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.**

There are *two sources of peace* mentioned in this statement: the Peace of Christ and the peace of the world. The Peace that Christ has given to us is **not as the world giveth**. If your life is in turmoil then you may be trying to draw your peace from the wrong source.

I love the songs of the group called *Casting Crowns*, as their songs are not only pertinent but also strongly Biblical. In a recent song called *Slow Fade* they sing this great truth:

Be careful little eyes what you see
It's the second glance that ties your hands as darkness pulls the strings
Be careful little feet where you go

For it's the little feet behind you that are sure to follow

It's a slow fade when you give yourself away
It's a slow fade when black and white have turned to gray
Thoughts invade, choices are made, a price will be paid
When you give yourself away
People never crumble in a day
It's a slow fade, it's a slow fade ¹

If you are saved you gave yourself to Christ to be saved. You *gave yourself away*, as the song says. If you want to retain the joy and peace of your salvation you must *continue to follow Him Who saved you*. You must do the things that the indwelling God of Comfort tells you to do. When you follow sin and depart from following the One Who gave you His peace then you *make yourselves spiritually sick*. Disturbance and panic is not the birthright of the Christian, but Grace and Peace is. What should I do if I, as a Christian, find myself in a state of spiritual anarchy. I need to ask myself

Am I doing things that Christ would do, or am I doing things that unbelievers and the devil would do? There is a price that will be paid if you do not follow Christ.

You are saved by faith, but even so you are *called out of this world to be like Jesus*. He gave us His peace, but we are to be like Him. Is my life reflecting Christ? Am I *doing good or evil* in my life? The Bible tells us:

Romans 2:9-10 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also

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of the Gentile; {10} But glory, honor, and PEACE, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:

If you have **tribulation and anguish** in your life and none of God's peace in your heart then its possible **you are not following Jesus**. You can follow the world, or you can follow Christ. If you follow the **carnal, the worldly, the fleshly** then you will find nothing but **death**. However if you follow **that which is spiritual** then you will find **life and peace**.

Romans 8:6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

ILLUSTRATE FAITHFULNESS Does this mean that Christians are *never* in stressful situations? Absolutely not! Christians are sometimes thrust into bad situations by circumstances beyond their control. While in Phillipi the Apostle **Paul and Silas** were attacked by an angry mob. The Bible tells us the magistrates:

Acts 16:23 ... laid many stripes upon them,...

beating them brutally, then threw them into a prison, binding their feet together in stocks.

Physically Paul and Silas were miserable – but **spiritually they were at peace**.

How do I know this? Because the Scripture tells us:

Acts 16:25 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them.

They **prayed and sang**, focusing on the Indwelling Christ, the God of all Comfort. God on hearing their obedience sent a great earthquake to destroy the prison – *and yet neither Paul nor Silas moved*. They stayed in their bonds singing and praying, trusting the Lord, and ended up leading the Philippian jailer to Christ.

Compare the life witness of Paul and Silas to the life witness of Solomon.

King Solomon wrote:

Lamentations 1:18-20 The LORD is righteous; for I have rebelled against his commandment: hear, I pray you, all people, and behold my sorrow: my virgins and my young men are gone into captivity. {19} I called for my lovers, but they deceived me: my priests and mine elders gave up the ghost in the city, while they sought their meat to relieve their souls. {20} Behold, O LORD; for I am in distress: my bowels are troubled; mine heart is turned within me; for I have grievously rebelled: abroad the sword bereaveth, at home there is as death.

Paul and Silas were physically in a prison, but spiritually at peace because they *gave themselves to God*. Solomon, on the other hand, was physically in a palace but *spiritually in a prison* because he sought his satisfaction

from the world. Solomon **called for his LOVERS, but they deceived him.** Well of course they did – this is not the Way of Christ. Solomon sought solace in **priests and elders**, but these men died in the famine that struck the Kingdom. Solomon gave himself to the world and the world gave him what it gives best – anguish and a false peace that cannot satisfy.

1 Corinthians 14:33 For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.

God is not the Author of Confusion. He is the Author of Peace. If you are confused, are in turmoil, are in disarray, are not in peace – then turn to Christ fully.

3. The Normal Christian Life Turns From Sin While Turning To The Word of God

FOCAL John 14:27 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.**

Have you, as a Christian, *drifted away from God*? Has the devil offered you the Brooklyn Bridge – and you took him up on it? Have you, like the *Prodigal Son*, wandered away from the Family of God and moved into carnality? If so, then do as God has commanded:

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Confess your sins to Him. Tell God that you've goofed. Don't wallow in the sin, and don't wait. Confess the sin to God, ask that He **cleanse you from all unrighteousness**, and then trust that He has done as He has promised. Speak to the Lord Who gave Himself for you. Recognize where you have slipped away from Him, and ask His forgiveness for your failure. *Turn away from the sin.* This is imperative.

You are saved by faith, but you are blessed by living in your faith. Turn from sin.

Dr. Charles Stanley wrote in his book *Finding Peace*²:

“I don't make any apology for being narrow minded. I don't think the way the world thinks. I have spent years – yes, decades of my life – working to train my mind to think according to the Word of God. I want my thoughts and actions to line up completely with the Bible, and that's not the way the world thinks. ... I use God's Word as a blueprint for making decisions. I'm sheltered by the Most High God. I experience the fullness of His protection, provision, and preservation. I have a deep and abiding sense that I am loved by Him, and that He is in charge of every detail of my life.”

This is not an aberration, but it is the normal Christian life. When you fall from God, confess your sin and trust Him to forgive you. Move forward, doing as He directs

in His Word and by His Spirit *one day at a time*. If you will do so, then God will bless you as He's blessed so many others.

What are you feeding your heart? Jesus said “**Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid**”. Fear is a choice, the troubled heart is a choice. What are you feeding your heart? The Bible tells us:

Psalms 119:165 Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them. {166} LORD, I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments.

ILLUSTRATE GODS & GENERALS God has given us His Word to grow us, and we must feed it to our hearts. We live in an information rich society. I was watching one of my favorite movies the other day called *Gods and Generals*. I love that movie because it so clearly portrays how important faith was to the great leaders in the Civil War. At one point in the movie we see how *Stonewall Jackson* was shot by his own men when he inadvertently got ahead of his own troop line at night. When the men heard Jackson – along with his escort – coming, they assumed he was the enemy, and shot him repeatedly. A lack of information can kill you.

We feed our hearts on the Internet, on the newspapers, on magazines and on television. Often we feed our hearts too much of the wrong thing. I was reading something the other day when I came across the *Federal Guidelines for Maggots and Trash in Canned Foods*. When I saw that manufacturers are allowed to have up to one maggot

in certain types of canned foods, I immediately stopped reading. Some information I do not need!

But Beloved, you need to feed your hearts the Word of God on a daily basis. You need to *meditate* on the teachings of the Word, and apply its promises to your lives.

You need to **Let not your hearts be troubled – believe in Christ (John 14:1)**. Heed His Word. Pray to Him. Trust Him. Focus on Him.

What does God tell His people?

Isaiah 26:3-4 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee. {4} Trust ye in the LORD forever: for in the LORD JEHOVAH is everlasting strength:

If you are born again by faith in Christ, *read the Father's Word* and *keep your focus on Christ*. Trust that Word as a daily promise to you. Let God be your hiding place. Let God be your ...

Psalms 46:1 ... Refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

4. The Normal Christian Life Puts Trust In God – and Prays!

Jesus Christ does not save His people from sin just to abandon them after He saves them. Feed the Word of

God to your hearts, then *trust God* with all that you have.

ILLUSTRATE Corrie ten Boom learned a number of great truths as she trusted God through the horror we call the Holocaust. You would expect Corrie to be bitter, as lost both her father and her sister **Betsie** in concentration camps.

“Every experience God gives us, every person He puts in our path, is the perfect preparation for a future only He can see. ... When a train goes through a tunnel and it gets dark, you don’t throw away the ticket and jump off. You sit still and trust the engineer. “

Corrie trusted the God Who saved her no matter what was going on around her. She knew that “**worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow; it empties today of its strength**”. If you are saved by faith in Christ, if you are not in active sin but have confessed any failures to God and are *daily* reading and applying His Word – then *trust God*. Do as the Lord says:

Psalms 46:10 **Be still³, and know that I am God: ...**

Know that God hears you.

Psalms 4:3-4 **But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear**

3 H7503, רָפָה, rāphâh, raw-faw', A primitive root; to *slacken* (in many applications, literally or figuratively): - abate, cease, consume, draw [toward evening], fail, (be) faint, be (wax) feeble, forsake, idle, leave, let alone (go, down), (be) slack, stay, be still, be slothful, (be) weak (-en). See H7495.

when I call unto him. {4} Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still⁴. Selah.

Dear friends, quit trying to be God. You cannot do it! Let God be God, and lean on Him. Don't panic. Pray.

Proverbs 3:5-6 **Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. {6} In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.**

Trust, lean, & acknowledge and God will direct. When a trial comes your way, examine your life to see if you are in sin or not. If sin has not led you to where you are then *trust God*. **Lean not to thy own understanding. Acknowledge God in the trial – and He will guide you as He has promised.**

ILLUSTRATE Years ago I was amused to see people buying something called a “Pet Rock”. You've got to be kidding! A *rock* for a pet! Yet the Pet Rock was – for a time – a sensation. People could talk to it, share with it, cast their burdens on it, and yet never had to either feed it or clean up after it. In reality a Pet Rock is foolish – as foolish as any false god **that has mouths, but cannot speak; and having eyes it cannot see; having ears, it cannot hear; and having noses, it cannot smell** (Psalm

4 H1826, דָּמָם, dāmam, daw-mam', A primitive root (compare H1724, H1820); to *be dumb*; by implication to be astonished, to *stop*; also to *perish*: - cease, be cut down (off), forbear, hold peace, quiet self, rest, be silent, keep (put to) silence, be (stand), still, tarry, wait.

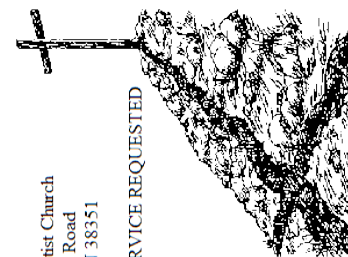
115:5-8). The Bible tells us that **the Lord is our Rock, our Deliverer, and our Fortress (Psalm 18:2, 6).** He is faithful. It is He that we are to

1 Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

ILLUSTRATE & CLOSE I saw a cute commercial the other day while I was at the hospital. Two fishermen were in the woods, and one man was rubbing a big fish all over himself. He said **“I’ve found out that fish oils keep mosquitoes away”**. His friend looked at him and said, **“Yeah, but what about the bears?”**

While you lean to your own understanding, while you seek to live life your own way, you may periodically find solutions to your problems outside of a right relationship with God. But the question always remains: **What about the bears?** What about your eternity – are you going to Heaven when you pass from this life. What about your children – will they spend eternity in heaven or hell because of your teaching. What about diseases, the loss of your job, the dark seasons of life that suck the life out of us all. **What about the bears?** Beloved, you need to turn to Him Who loves you and be saved. You need to give yourself to Jesus and live according to His direction. Only then will you find blessing in this life – and beyond.

May God touch your hearts with His Word.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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1. The Normal Christian Life Begins When You Have Peace With God

John 14:27; John 14:26; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Romans 5:1; Galatians 5:22-23; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Romans 10:9; Romans 9:33; John 10:10; Ephesians 2:15-17; Micah 7:18-19

2. The Normal Christian Gets Peace From Christ While Avoiding That Which Is Not Christ

John 14:27; Romans 2:9-10; Romans 8:6; Acts 16:23; Acts 16:25; Lamentations 1:18-20; 1 Corinthians 14:33

Be careful little eyes what you see
It's the second glance that ties your hands as darkness pulls the strings
Be careful little feet where you go
For it's the little feet behind you that are sure to follow

It's a slow fade when you give yourself away

It's a slow fade when black and white have turned to gray
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People never crumble in a day
It's a slow fade, it's a slow fade ⁵

3. The Normal Christian Life Turns From Sin While Turning To The Word of God

John 14:27; 1 John 1:9; Psalms 119:165; John 14:1; Isaiah 26:3-4; Psalms 46:1

“I don't make any apology for being narrow minded. I don't think the way the world thinks. I have spent years – yes, decades of my life – working to train my mind to think according to the Word of God. I want my thoughts and actions to line up completely with the Bible, and that's not the way the world thinks. ... I use God's Word as a blueprint for making decisions. I'm sheltered by the Most High God. I experience the fullness of His protection, provision, and preservation. I have a deep and abiding sense that I am loved by Him, and that He is in charge of every detail of my life.” (Dr. Charles Stanley, *Finding Peace*)

4. The Normal Christian Life Puts Trust In God – and Prays!

Psalms 46:10; Psalms 4:3-4; Proverbs 3:5-6; Psalm 115:5-8; Psalm 18:2, 6; 1 Peter 5:7
