

The Peace of Jesus John 14:27; Colossians 3:15

Long ago a man sought the perfect picture of peace. Not finding one that satisfied, he announced a contest to produce this masterpiece. The challenge stirred the imagination of artists everywhere, and paintings arrived from far and wide. Finally, the great day of revelation arrived. The judges uncovered one peaceful scene after another, while the viewers clapped and cheered. The tensions grew. Only two pictures remained veiled.

As a judge pulled the cover from one, a hush fell over the crowd. A mirror-smooth lake reflected lacy, green birches under the soft blush of the evening sky. Along the grassy shore, a flock of sheep grazed undisturbed. Surely this was the winner.

The man with the vision uncovered the last painting himself, and the crowd gasped in surprise. Could this be peace? A tumultuous waterfall cascaded down a rocky precipice; the crowd could almost feel its cold, penetrating spray. Stormy-gray clouds threatened to explode with lightning, wind, and rain. In the midst of the thundering noises and bitter chill, a spindly tree clung to the rocks at the edge of the falls. One of its branches reached out in front of the torrential waters as if foolishly seeking to experience its full power.

A little bird had built a nest in the elbow of that branch. Content and undisturbed in her stormy surroundings, she rested on her eggs. With her eyes closed and her wings ready to cover her little ones, she manifested peace that transcends all earthly turmoil.

Each of us has at one time or another experienced the tumult of life's storms. They blacken our skies. Its thunder shakes our ground. The blowing winds of trouble push us like a tumble weed. It reminds us of the opening scenes of The Wizard of Oz with Dorothy rushing home before the rapidly approaching tornado. We too, look for cover. Can we find peace in our storms? Jesus says we can, and Scripture is filled with evidence that in the middle of our storm, there is a calming peace for our spirit that has only one source. Jesus not only tells us that He its origin is, but also tells us where it isn't found.

In **John 14:27** we see first that the peace of Jesus is a divine gift.

I. THE PEACE OF JESUS IS A DIVINE GIFT – John 14:27

Buddha wrote, "Peace comes from within". Balance the inner body, according to the rainbow-colored symbols and beliefs of the Chakra, and mankind's inner self finds peace, acceptance, and understanding. Only by finding inner peace can one release the symbolic butterfly of metamorphosis that will go forth and affect change. Heal yourself then, bring that peace to the world.

That sounds to me like a lot of psycho mumbo-jumbo. Let's work backwards from the verse and see first that this peace from Jesus is diametrically opposed to the world.

A. This Peace Is Diametrically Opposed to the World – John 14:27

*You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one
- John Lennon*

Nenad Bach, musician, composer and peace activist believes world peace is possible to achieve in one hour. He wrote an article with that title in 2020. He asks whether Lennon's words are just the lyrics to "a song or wishful thinking? Are they just words or is it prophecy? Is humanity capable of achieving sustainable, everlasting peace?" He believes that such global peace is possible, and now is the time to pursue it. He points to recent history to demonstrate man's effort toward lasting peace.

In 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was signed.

In 1978 the Declaration on the Preparation of Societies for Life and Peace was signed.

In 1984 the Declaration on the Right of Peoples to Peace was signed.

In 1999 the Declaration of Action on a Culture of Peace was signed.

In 2011 the Bruxelles Declaration, "Pledge to

Peace” was signed.

In 2016 the Annex to Declaration on the Right to Peace was signed.

In 2018 the Global Resolution for the Establishment of Infrastructures to Support the Culture of Peace was signed.

When the 1984 declaration was signed in the United Nations Assembly by a vote of 39 to 11 it proclaimed that the peoples of our planet had a sacred right to peace.

Bach states that there have been too many resolutions without any action and that now is the historic time to seize the opportunity for peace. He calls on everyone from hot dog vendors to country presidents, because everyone has a stake in world peace. He also outlines actions that can ensure not only world peace but the survival of global citizens. He dreams of one day soon being able to use half of global military budgets to build infrastructure that can aid the development of third world countries by balancing the gross domestic product to ensure equality, claiming that balance in economics equals peace. He dreams of a day when the World Peace in One Hour Orchestra, with instruments of the world, will perform “Everything is Forever”, “Stand by Me” and close with John Lennon’s “Imagine.”

Imagine there's no heaven

It's easy if you try

No hell below us

Above us only sky

Imagine all the people

Living for today

Imagine there's no countries

It isn't hard to do

Nothing to kill or die for

And no religion too

Imagine all the people

Living life in peace

You may say I'm a dreamer

But I'm not the only one

I hope someday you'll join us

And the world will be as one

Imagine no possessions

I wonder if you can

No need for greed or hunger

A brotherhood of man

Imagine all the people

Sharing all the world

You may say I'm a dreamer

But I'm not the only one

I hope someday you'll join us

And the world will live as one

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Bach concludes his article by saying that “There is no time to waste, and yet, “Time is All We Have” and “love is all we need.”

What do you think? Is world peace possible? I don’t want to suggest that we shouldn’t pursue it now, but when we look around the corner or around the globe there is plenty of reason to suggest that you can’t legislate peace. People look for peace in in all the wrong places. They sing songs about it. They take pilgrimages to find it. They pursue it in pleasure or leisure or a myriad of other things and yet it remains elusive. And just when some think they have found it, they find that it is a very unstable, uncertain, and fleeting thing. The peace the world attempts to provide is based solely on circumstances. When those conditions are out of balance, peace is lost.

The prosperity of a nation can produce a time of peace, yet when poverty strikes, that peace erodes. The prophet Micah made that point clear when he wrote: **“Thus says the Lord concerning the prophets who lead my people astray, who cry ‘Peace’ when they have something to eat, but declare war against him who puts nothing into their mouths.” (Micah 3:5)**

Through Jeremiah God said something similar: **“They have healed the wound of My people lightly, saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace.” (Jeremiah 6:14)**

Jesus says that the peace offered by the world is nothing like the peace He offers.

The world’s peace can never satisfy.

The world’s peace can never last.

The world's peace cannot resolve the root issue of man's real need, which resides in the heart. There is only one true source for peace within the heart and around the world and Jesus tells us that the peace He has to offer is a divine gift distributed by Him.

B. This Peace Is Distributed By Jesus

The Malabar giant squirrel is not like any squirrel we see in our back yard. This squirrel can only be found in India.

Sailing stones are a mysterious natural phenomenon found only on dry lakebeds in California and Nevada. These rocks appear to move by themselves leaving trails behind.

Dallol, Ethiopia is the only place on earth where colorful acid pools come from inorganic oxidation.

The golden rocket frog has only been spotted in a single mountainous region of a Guyana rainforest.

The Happy Face Spider is found only in Hawaii.

The Brookesia micra is the world's smallest chameleon and is only found on Nosy Hara, an uninhabited island off Madagascar with an area of 1.23 square miles.

The world says you can find peace in any number of places, but the true peace that we are talking about is only found in one place and that is through Jesus and it is a peace that He gives to us. This peace is an inner tranquility that rises above the storms of life and settles an otherwise anxious heart.

Isaiah 26:3

In His conversation with the disciples before His arrest and crucifixion Jesus told them that in this world they would have trouble. He told them those things so that they could have His peace. He then told them to take heart because He had overcome the world. His victory is the means by which we can experience His peace.

Charles Wesley wrote these encouraging lyrics.

I rest beneath the Almighty's shade,
My griefs expire, my troubles cease;
Thou, Lord, on whom my soul is stayed,

Wilt keep me still in perfect peace.

What storms in life have you faced, what storms in life are you facing, what storms in life will you face? Jesus has given you His peace. The peace He offers rests in the confidence we have of His presence in all our troubles, to know that He will never leave us or forsake us (**Hebrews 13:5**), to know that whatever troubles we are facing, He comforts us and walks through the valley of the shadow of death alongside us (**Psalms 23:4**), to know that He prepares a table for us in the presence of our enemies (**Psalms 23:5**). This gives us peace.

An unknown source has rightly concluded: "Peace that Jesus gives is not the absence of trouble, but is rather the confidence that He is there with you always."

Are you resting today in the shade of peace that only comes from Jesus?

The world bases its peace on resources. It's peace is something you have to work for, whether it's peace through power or through possessions or through popularity or policy. But the peace of Jesus isn't something you work for, it's something He gives, it's something you already possess. This peace isn't in the world, it's in Christ and it's ours when we are abiding in Him. When Jesus met the disciples in the upper room after His resurrection, they were afraid, but Jesus calmed their fearful hearts by telling them to be at peace. When they were tossed on a raging stormy sea, He said peace be still. **Do you believe He can calm your storms?**

Paul encourages the Roman Christians with these words: "**May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in Him.**" (**Romans 15:13**) He ends the chapter this way: "**The God of peace be with you.**" (**Romans 15:33**)

To the Corinthians he states that "**God is not the God of disorder but of peace.**" (**I Cor. 14:33**)

Speaking of Christ, Paul tells the Ephesians that "**He Himself is our peace.**" (**Eph. 2:14**) and then says that "**Christ came to preach peace.**" (**2:17**)

To the Philippians Paul says that when we think on the right things the God of peace will be with us. (**Philippians 4:8-9**)

When we allow things on the news or things that are

us or to us to control our thoughts, we can become anxious. Jesus says there's a better way to overcome a fearful heart, it's through the peace He offers. We cannot know this peace unless and until we are first at peace with God.

Romans 5:1 tells us that by our faith we are justified, or made right with God. Before we believed in Christ, we were enemies with God. We had violated His law, which separated us from Him, but through faith we now have a right standing with Him having made peace with Him through faith in the shed blood and finished work of Christ on the cross. We now have peace with God through Jesus Christ. Because we are now at peace with God, we can have the peace of God, which Christ offers us through Himself. Paul affirms that in **Colossians 1:19-20** where he states that **“God was pleased...through Him (Christ) to reconcile to Himself all things, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross.”**

Jesus told the disciples in **John 14:1** not to be anxious that He was going away. Why? Because He was giving them His peace. This peace protects the believer from anxiety, doubt, fear, and distress. It helps us triumph over circumstances turning sorrow into joy, fear into boldness and doubt into confidence.

John MacArthur notes: **“Christ’s peace provides believers with a serenity and freedom from worry and anxiety that is unaffected by and triumphs over even the most difficult of circumstances.”** It comes when we realize He has given us this peace and we fix our eyes on Him (**Heb. 12:2**). We don't have to ask for this peace we need only appropriate it.

Jesus distributes His peace to us and because we are in Christ, this peace is developed by the Spirit.

C. This Peace Is Developed By the Spirit

Galatians 5:22

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.”

The development of the fruit of peace happens when we submit to the control and work of the Holy Spirit to grow that character of Christ in us.

I would suggest that if we aren't experiencing the peace of Jesus, then we aren't letting the Holy Spirit do His work.

When I was in physical therapy after my shoulder surgery, each session ended with the therapist manipulating my arm and shoulder. I would lay on the bed and she would cradle my arm in hers and then move it around to stretch it out, to get it to move freely and with greater mobility. Sometimes I would resist, and she would say “Howard! Stop it and let me have your arm.” She wanted me to surrender the full use of my arm to her. That's what the Holy Spirit wants from us. There are times we resist His work and He tells us to let go so He can do His thing. The peace of Jesus is there. Jesus has given it to us. Now let go and let the Spirit move you in such a way that you experience His peace. **Romans 8:6 “The mind of the sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace.”**

Peace can't come from the world. It is only divinely given. You can't get it anywhere else.

Now turn to **Colossians 3:15**. We see in this verse that the peace of Jesus is a demonstrated gift.

II. THE PEACE OF JESUS IS A DEMONSTRATED GIFT – Colossians 3:15a

When we let the Holy Spirit develop the fruit of peace in us, we not only experience peace in our troubles, but we are also examples of that peace to others and seek peace with them. It will be visible. How that possible, you might ask? First, it rules internally.

A. This Peace Rules Internally

The word “rule” comes from the sports field. It means to umpire or preside over the games. If you ever played neighborhood baseball, you know how the game goes when there isn't an umpire. The pitcher pitches and the catcher calls it a strike, but the batter says he's as blind as a bat. The pitch was outside the plate or above the shoulders. If the batter happens to hit the ball and the fielder fields it throwing it to a base, they usually call the runner out, but the runner protests that he beat the throw by a mile. In such cases, you need an umpire, someone who is impartial to the teams to call the game so

that there is fairness.

In this case, Paul is saying that whenever we face trouble, we are to let the peace of Christ umpire our heart so that we don't let other things rob us of the peace we are to otherwise have. Now Paul goes on to say in **verse 16** that the way we let the peace of Christ rule in our heart is if we let the Word of God first dwell in us richly. You have heard me say before as I have heard others say that there are 365 verses that in one way or another, tell us not to be anxious or discouraged or lose heart or be worried. Instead, we are to trust God in all our ways for all our days. If the Word of God is not in us, neither will we be at peace. The two go hand in hand with each other. A result of the peace Jesus gives is joy.

Jeremiah 15:16 “Thy words were found and I did eat them and they were unto me the joy and rejoicing of my soul.”

When we have the peace of Jesus, we experience the joy of Jesus.

How is it that Peter could soundly sleep in prison on the eve of his execution (**Acts 12:6**)? He had the internal peace of Jesus.

How is it that Stephen could be stoned and ask forgiveness for his persecutors (**Acts 6:15; 7:59-60**)? He had the internal peace of Jesus.

How is it that Paul and Silas could be falsely charged, beaten and bound hand and foot in prison and still sing with joy (**Acts 16:23-25**)? They had the internal peace of Jesus.

How is it that Paul could face shipwreck and a myriad of other troubles (**Acts 17:1-15**)? He had the internal peace of Jesus.

How is it you can face your troubles? You must have the internal peace of Jesus. Nothing else will suffice.

Matthew 11:28-29 “Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

I Peter 5:7 “Cast all your cares in Him, for He cares for you.”

Philippians 4:6-7 “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with

thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God which passes all understanding will keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

The peace Jesus has to give is beyond our comprehension. It will guard our minds from those anxious thoughts that want to rob us of peace. It will settle our hearts and minds and set up a garrison so that the darts of doubt and worry can't penetrate our minds.

Arthur Pierson writes “There is a part of the sea known as “the cushion of the sea.” It lies beneath the surface that is agitated by storms and churned by the wind. It is so deep that it is a part of the sea that is never stirred. When the ocean floor in these deep places is dredged of the remains of plant or animal life, it reveals evidence of having remained completely undisturbed for hundreds, if not thousands of years.

The peace of God is an internal calm like the cushion of the sea. It lies so deeply within the human heart that no external difficulty or disturbance can reach it. And anyone who enters the presence of God becomes partaker of that undisturbed and undisturbable calm.”

Harriet Beecher Stowe poetically puts it this way:

When winds are raging o'er the upper ocean,
And waves are tossed wild with an angry roar,
It's said, far down beneath the wild commotion,
That peaceful stillness reigns forevermore.

Far, far beneath, noise of tempests falls silent,
And silver waves lie ever peacefully,
And no storm, however fierce or violent,
Disturbs the Sabbath of that deeper sea.

So to the heart that knows Your love, O Father,
There is a temple sacred evermore,
And all life's angry voices causing bother
Die in hushed silence at its peaceful door.

Far, far away, the roars of strife fall silent,
And loving thoughts rise ever peacefully,
And no storm, however fierce or violent,
Disturbs the soul that dwells, O Lord, in Thee.

Is the peace of Christ ruling your heart? When this peace rules internally, this peace will rule interpersonally.

I Peter 3:8-11**B. This Peace Rules Interpersonally**

We can assume that Paul is referring to this peace being experienced individually, but in the context of the chapter he is talking about how we are to get along in the body of Christ. In **verses 5-11** he talks about sins that we are to put off which in their action are against others. Then in **verses 12-14** he talks about godly attributes that we are to put on. These attributes are how we relate to others. The bedrock of peace with others is the love and unity we work for. Let me underscore that unless we have the peace with God, we cannot know the peace of God which comes from obedience to His will and ways and if we have neither of them we won't be at peace with others. Scripture shows us the link between righteousness and peace.

For example:

Psalm 85:10 “Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other.”

Isaiah 32:17 “The fruit of righteousness will be peace; the effect of righteousness will be quietness and confidence forever.”

Let me give you some related verses that tell us that while we have the peace of Christ in us because He has given it to us, it is also our responsibility to take His peace and pursue peace and unity with others.

Mark 9:50 “Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with each other.”

Romans 12:18 “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.”

II Corinthians 13:11 “Finally, brothers, good-by. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.”

Ephesians 4:3 “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.”

I Thessalonians 5:13 “Live in peace with each other.”

Hebrews 12:14 “Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy.”

James 3:18 “Peacemakers who sow in peace raise a harvest of righteousness.”

Peace with others is our responsibility, but again, it won't happen if we aren't at peace with God or know the peace of God. What that means is that this peace rules intentionally.

C. This Peace Rules Intentionally

Romans 14:19 “Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.”

Paul says in **Colossians 3:15** that we are “called to peace” because as believers we are all part of the same body. Peace is not something that comes naturally, and neither is it something that just happens. It is a choice we make to yield to the Spirit, and it takes work on our part to pursue and achieve it. To pursue this kind of Christ centered peace with others, we must be intentional about it. It will take effort and remember that once you get there, it will continue to take work to keep it because any little thing can disrupt it. We must be at peace if we are to demonstrate peace. If we abide by the great commandment to love God first and love others with the same love we love God, then we will strive for peace with others that brings unity.

The peace of Jesus is a divine gift.

The peace of Jesus is a demonstrated gift.

There is one final thought from **Colossians 3:15** that I want to make, and I hope is obvious.

The peace of Jesus is a delighted gift.

III. THE PEACE OF JESUS IS A DELIGHTED GIFT – Colossians 3:15b**A. It Is Thankful**

A heart at peace with God through Christ is a thankful heart.

A heart that is filled with thankfulness is a heart that is at peace both within himself and without with others. No matter what storms may come our way, we can rest in the peace of Jesus, settled deep in a peace that we can't understand, but one that will guard us from being anxious. Let the Spirit of Christ have control so He can develop His peace in you. Such peace gives us a thankful heart.

Let me close with this verse: “**Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means.**” **II Thessalonians 3:16**