

The Transcendent Peace of Jesus

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 14:27
Preached on: Sunday, April 12, 2015

This morning we are in John's Gospel, chapter 14, verse 27, and I want to speak to you about the transcendent peace of Jesus. Let me read this text to you. We read,

27 Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

I don't think anyone would argue with the fact that the world craves peace. It craves peace in our society both among nations as well as among nations but people also crave peace internally. As we look at recorded history, we see that human beings have been killing each other since Cain slew his brother Abel. In fact, in the last 5 1/2 millennia, it has been estimated that more than 8,000 peace treaties have been broken and more than 14,000 wars have been fought with a combined total of around 4 billion casualties. The very thought of global peace in the 21st century is, frankly, laughable. No serious person could possibly believe that such a thing is attainable. But also personal peace is an elusive goal. Man is always looking for ways to somehow find relief for the stressors in his life, the problems in his life. In fact, the slogan of our current president that got him elected was: Hope and change, and I think if you look around you will see that there hasn't been much peace as a result of any of that. In fact, the country is more divided today than it has been in years, probably not since the Civil War.

I looked up on Google how to find peace with yourself. I found 3,670,000 sites that will give you that answer. A cursive examination of the first and the most popular sites listed indicate is that the answer lies within ourselves. One gave us 4 ways to find it. Another one 10 ways. Another 6 simple steps. Another 5 tips. And on and on it goes. By the way, virtually all of them included meditation and visualization as a key component. The Dalai Lama who is basically God to most Tibetan Buddhists and is well received by Roman Catholics around the world, is supposed to be the world's greatest expert on inner tranquility. He said and I quote, "The ultimate authority must always rest within the individual's own reason and critical analysis." He went on to say, "We can never obtain peace in the outer world until we make peace with ourselves." Well, I would submit to you as I look around the world, that isn't working very well. Oprah Winfrey's New Age guru, Deepak Chopra, offers a retreat that we could go to. It's called "Seduction of Spirit and Seduction of Silence: Our classic meditation in yoga retreat." In the advertisement it says, "This beautiful retreat is about slowing down and tuning into the peace of present moment awareness. Through the practice of primordial sound meditation, 7 spiritual laws of yoga and other timeless tools, you will begin to tap into your hidden inner reserves and potential."

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Well, of course, Satan's deceptions like these have infiltrated the Christian church in many ways. We see it, for example, in the contemplative prayer movement which is really nothing more than passive meditation, a hybrid of Roman Catholic and Eastern mysticism rituals. If you get involved in this, they will teach you how to repeat a few words from Scripture or some names of God or some spiritual phrase in a mystical incantation and then you wait for God to give you some special insight, some guidance but what a person receives is not a word from God but a word from his own emotionally supercharged imagination. If you want to hear from God, read his word.

False teachers promoting counterfeit peace have been around since the days of the false prophet of Israel. Instead of calling them to repentance and warning them of judgment if they failed to repent, they told the people what they wanted to hear, not what they needed to hear. "Everything is fine. There's peace. We're at peace with God. He's at peace with us." And for this reason, God declared that these prophets "healed the brokenness of his people superficially saying 'Peace, Peace,' but there is no peace." We have many false prophets today who offer the same kinds of deceptions, ways of finding peace from within. One of the most prominent ones that is involved in this today is Joel Osteen. He has a book, for example, called "Become A Better You," and there he offers 7 steps for finding peace from the inside out. He tells people: 1. Keep pressing forward. Give your dreams a new beginning. 2. Be positive toward yourself. Learn to like yourself. 3. Develop better relationships. Keep the strife out of your life. 4. Form better habits. Keep yourself happy. 5. Embrace the place where you are. 6. Develop your inner life. 7. Stay passionate about life. Dear friends, I challenge you to feed this kind of frivolous drivel to a person who has just lost a loved one because of their faith in Christ. I challenge you to go to the hospital with me this afternoon and speak with parents whose children are dying and give them this kind of garbage. I challenge you to feed this type of stuff to a person who is sitting with a comatose child in a hospital room. Or a woman who has just lost her husband and now she has to raise her children on her own. Or someone who has just been diagnosed with a terminal illness.

But friends, I do bring you good news this morning: there is such a thing as true inner personal peace that we can experience regardless of circumstances. But you must understand that this is only available to those who have first made peace with God by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. And then when this happens, you quickly learn that this kind of peace does not originate from within ourselves as a result of what we do, but rather it is a supernatural gift from God himself. So rather than turning to the foolish wisdom of men to find peace, let's turn to God himself. Let's hear what the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ has to say.

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In the passage before us, Jesus is closing this section of his farewell address to his 11 disciples by making an amazing promise, a provision of personal experiential, subjective peace for all who have first made peace with God. Again, this is one that does not depend upon the circumstances of life but actually transcends them, a peace that will sustain these frightened and confused disciples in the days ahead after his departure. So Jesus says, "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful." In order to help you understand this, this transcendent peace of Jesus, I want us to look at this passage under 4 categories. We are going to examine the substance of peace; secondly, the source of peace; thirdly, the semblance of peace; and finally, the spoilers of peace. And I pray that this will minister to your spirit, especially those of you who find yourself right now maybe today confused, your life in turmoil.

So first, let's look at the substance of peace. Jesus says, "Peace I leave with you." Now, how does Jesus define peace? Well, we're going to see that it's a definition very different to the world's definition. According to one Greek lexicon, the Greek word for "peace," eirene, refers to "the tranquil state of a soul assured of his salvation through Christ," and because of this it fears nothing from God and is content with its earthly lot of whatsoever sort that is. I ask you this morning: does this describe your life? Even when your body trembles and when tears run down your face because of some great adversity in your life, do you still enjoy deep down within your soul an uninterrupted calm and contentment? This is the kind of peace that Jesus bequeaths to all who trust in him as Savior and worship him as Lord.

Most people and most languages define peace as the absence of something, not the presence of something. For example, speaking socially, peace is considered to be the absence of conflict and hostility or the freedom from war or civil unrest. Speaking personally, peace is the absence of inner turmoil or the freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions resulting in personal tranquility and harmony in personal relations. But I ask you: how do you escape from all these things? How can you get rid of all these things in order to experience peace? Go on a vacation? How long does that last? What about recreation? Entertainment? How well does that work when your heart is breaking? No wonder so many people turn to alcohol and drugs to find some kind of inner peace and look at the disastrous results of that particular choice. And for some, the only option is suicide.

But the peace God gives is more than the absence of something, it is the presence of God himself. Biblically there are 2 sides to the coin of peace: there is objective peace and subjective peace. You must understand this. Objective peace pertains to our judicial standing before a holy God. From birth by nature, everyone is in rebellion to God. As a

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result, we sin, we become God's enemy. This is obvious. Humanity hates the one true God of the Bible. Humanity loves themselves. They love the world which is the kosmos, this moral order ruled by Satan in rebellion against God. That's why when they hear biblical truth like they're hearing today, they think it's silly, it's foolish, it's ridiculous. So apart from faith in Christ, unsaved man is at war with God and God is at war with him. There is no objective peace. The Apostle Paul says that they "walk in the futility of their mind being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart."

So again, unbelievers will bristle at biblical truth, they are hostile to the Gospel, to the holiness of God, and many of these people attend churches and even call themselves followers of Christ but the actions of their lives do not match the testimony of their lips. They are self-deceived. They have no fear of God. They have no love for his word, no passion to know more of Christ, to experience more of his power in their life, to love him and to serve him. They have no desire to obey him, instead they disobey him. For this reason, Jesus warns in John 3:36, "He who believes in the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

So, again, unbelievers love themselves, not Christ. They love what the world has to offer them so they are at war with God. James 4 tells us that if you are a friend of the world, you're at hostility toward God therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. But when a man comes to Christ in repentant faith, not only are his sins forgiven but he is justified, meaning he is declared righteous based upon the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ and suddenly he is at peace with God. The war is over. Reconciliation has taken place. Those who were once enemies have become sons and daughters of God. This is why in Romans 5:1 the Apostle Paul says, "Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Those who once had a mind set on the flesh, Paul tells us, resulting in death, now have a mind set on the Spirit resulting in life and peace, Romans 8:6.

But apart from the objective peace pertaining to man's judicial standing before a holy God, not only will a person continue to be at war with God and God at war with him, but that person will never experience transcending, lasting peace. This is the subjective peace that Jesus is talking about here. This subjective peace, you could put it, is basically a Spirit-empowered state of tranquility within the soul that has replaced the previous state of turmoil and confusion and doubt and discontentment, fear. You see, once the opposition to God is over and his just wrath has been satisfied in Christ, the Holy Spirit takes up residence within the believer. The Holy Spirit is the Comforter, the one who administers peace and based upon that, a person who is born again begins to experience

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this transcendent peace that is impervious to circumstances. Our body becomes the temple of God and there is perfect peace within that sanctuary of his presence.

So the objective peace of justification produces the subjective peace of God's presence in our life and it's for this reason that the Apostle Paul despite his circumstances, writing even while he was in prison, said, "Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God and the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus." It shall guard your heart and your mind, literally keep watch over your heart.

About a century ago, an American lawyer in Chicago by the name of Horatio Spafford had sent his wife and 4 daughters on a cruise to Europe and on the way back, while they were crossing the Atlantic, that ship collided with a British ship and it sunk in 12 minutes. Only his wife survived. Suddenly he lost 4 daughters but because he was at peace with God, he could experience the peace of God and for this reason he wrote the song that we sang a moment ago, the first verse saying this,

"When peace, like a river, attendeth my way,
When sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou has taught me to say,
It is well, it is well, with my soul."

Now friends, this is not some passive peace that results from the absence of strife or turmoil nor is it some short-lived superficial tranquility that we conjure up through some mystical experience, through contemplative prayer or getting into some yoga pose and practicing primordial sound meditation. Beloved, this is an active peace operating within us by the power of the indwelling Spirit of the living God. This is a peace that is unaffected by circumstances, one that causes us to transcend the inevitable sorrows and conflicts of life. You see, this is a peace that turns cowards into warriors. This is a peace that turns sorrow into joy. This is a peace that causes us to look beyond temporal suffering into eternal glory and rejoice, a peace that would cause the persecuted Apostle Paul to declare that, "I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us."

You may recall that peace is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit in Galatians 5. It's that peace that rules the hearts of mature believers who have as Paul says in Colossians 3, "put on love which is the perfect bond of unity," and as a result of that in verse 15 he says, "the peace of Christ rules in our hearts." It rules in our hearts as we live in unity with the Lord and with his people. In Paul's benediction to the Romans he says in chapter

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15, verse 13, "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." And likewise in the benediction to the Thessalonians in 2 Thessalonians 3 that we read earlier, Paul says, "Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance," meaning whether it's a good circumstance or a bad one.

Folks, this is the personal peace that Jesus enjoyed while he was here on earth even though he was a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. Beloved, this is the peace Jesus experienced on the eve of his crucifixion. Yes, at times his body trembled with anguish as the text says as he awaited the torture that would be his and he would even sweat drops of blood in the garden but you must understand, his soul was at perfect rest. There was a tranquility that permeated the core of his being because he was decisively committed to doing the will of the Father come what may. This is the peace that sustained him during the horrors before and during his time on the cross. Peter said that, "while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously." Folks, this is the peace he wanted to give to his deeply discouraged and troubled disciples and to all of us so he says, "Peace I leave with you." And he knew he would make good on this promise because he was about to send the Holy Spirit who would administer this peace.

That's the substance of peace. Secondly, what is the source of peace? Well, he gives it to us very clearly. He says, "My peace I give to you." The Lord Jesus is the source of peace along with the Father and the Spirit. In fact, Paul's salutations in all of his epistles begin with the statement, "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." Then we know that one of the magnificent ministries of the Holy Spirit is to administer this peace to every believer, once again, a fruit of the Spirit that he causes to grow on the vine of our lives. Moreover, according to Romans 5:5, Paul says, we have a "hope that does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us." In other words, it's the indwelling Holy Spirit that gives us a subjective awareness of God's love for us which causes us to experience that magnificent, unassailable peace deep within our being.

The Greek word translated peace reflects the Hebrew "shalom." It was the custom among the Jews to use this term as a greeting as well as a word of farewell and it even became the primary greeting after the resurrection. For example, when Jesus came and stood in the midst of the disciples after he had been raised from the dead, he said to them, "Peace be with you." Folks, if your life is bereft of peace, if you find yourself in constant turmoil, you're discontent, you're confused, you're anxious, maybe depressed, maybe you're overwhelmed by some sorrow or some stress and strife in your life, you simply must look to Christ in a way perhaps that you never have before. Jesus said in John

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16:33, "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

Beloved, we must have a fixed disposition of trust in the Lord because he is the one that will therefore fill our hearts with peace regardless of the difficulties we face. He will give us direction. He will give us understanding. And this is a peace that the world knows nothing about. Isaiah spoke of this as well when he said of the Lord in Isaiah 26:3, "You Lord will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You because he trusts in You." Is your mind stayed upon him? In other words, does it rest upon him? Are you supported? Are you upheld by his truths and all that he is? Do you have a fixed disposition of trust in the Lord? That's the point. Routinely Paul spoke of the God of peace because, indeed, God alone is the fountainhead that feeds the comforting springs of peace and, beloved, that is a reservoir that will never run dry.

This is the peace that Jesus offers, "My peace I give to you," and then he says this, "not as the world gives do I give to you." Here we come to number 3: the semblance of peace. This is the false, deceitful peace that the world offers. The world appears to offer peace. It purports to give peace but it delivers just the opposite. Now, let's think of this contrast between the transcendent eternal peace of God versus the inadequate fleeting peace of Satan's world system in rebellion to God. It's fascinating, for example, to learn the history of the logo that is commonly recognized as the peace sign. You've seen it, it's a circle with an upside down broken cross in it. It began in the late 1950s in Great Britain as the logo for the campaign for nuclear disarmament but since then it has become one of the symbols of the occult with lots of anti-Christian meanings and derivations. It is even said to have been used by sorcerers in pagan ceremonies. And under the reign of the Roman Emperor Nero who was one of the most the vile persecutors of Christians and Jews, this symbol was prominently used to represent a broken cross or a broken Jew. I found it interesting that Hitler's 3rd Panzer division also used this same symbol from 1941 to 1945 and it is also found on the tombstones of some of the notorious SS soldiers. Anton LeVay, the founder of the Church of Satan, is said to of had this symbol as the background of his altar. And on it goes. But whatever the truth behind the symbol, to be sure, it hasn't worked. There is no peace in the world nor do those who flaunt that symbol manifest a love for Christ. The Lord said through his prophet Isaiah, "There is no peace for the wicked."

Now think with me about this contrast that Jesus gives between the world's peace and his peace. I would submit to you that the world's peace is like a mirage in the desert. It distracts travelers from their journey with an elusive promise that will never deliver because it's not there. It will just disappoint and destroy. For example, every man and woman who lives, hopes for a better day for their family, they hope for better times and

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most people around the world down through history have worked hard for these better times to come only to discern that every day brings in a whole new set of troubles. Millions pursue the American dream but once they have it, they begin to worry about losing it, even the wealthy eventually discover that many of their dreams are really nightmares. And when a man dies without Christ, isn't it interesting that nothing that he has achieved, nothing that he possesses in life will be of any use for him. In fact, they will be tragic reminders of a rebellious and wasted life as he endures the eternal torments of hell.

Man works hard while he's young. He looks forward to some time of rest and relaxation in his retirement years. He wants a little peace and quiet. But once he gets there he finds that the hounds of trouble are still hot on his trail. He cannot evade them. And what little peace he gained from the world over his life was short lived and really not all that peaceful. In fact, the little peace that he experiences in his retirement years if he's without Christ, is nothing more than the calm before the storm. Ah, but dear friends, the peace that God gives is so radically different. Think about it: though the wages of sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. Unlike the world, what the Lord gives he gives forever. He actually comes and dwells within us and all the believer does for the glory of God is likened to laying up treasures in heaven. And think about it: all the years of our life as a believer, we have the comforting reality of our security in Christ, that objective peace that produces within us the serenity of a subjective peace. In fact, all of our lives as believers we can rejoice with the prophet Jeremiah and say, "The Lord's lovingkindnesses indeed never cease for his compassions never fail." Boy, there is a man that is at peace even though he is lamenting over all the circumstances but he's at peace with God. He says, "They are new every morning. Great is thy faithfulness. The Lord is my portion says my soul, therefore I have hope in Him. The Lord is good to those who wait for Him to the person who seeks Him."

Yes, my friends, the world offers peace but it is not only an illusion, it is a delusion. It is a trap. It is a lure that offers the bait but conceals the hook. It gives nothing more than the fleeting pleasures of happy days. Remember that show? That's all the world has to offer. It gives you the momentary joy of material things. Oh, we're so excited when we get into that new car but 3 or 4 years later we're thinking, "Boy, I'd sure like to get rid of this thing." It offers the temporary relief of escapism but once you leave the theater, the reality of the world is there. Dear friends, don't be fooled, the word of God says, "There is a way which seems right to a man but the end is the way of death."

It's interesting as we look at the word of God, the world's misguided pursuit of peace without Christ is going to be the very thing that Satan uses to lure unbelievers into his trap in the coming days. Just 2 days earlier from the passage that we are reading, Jesus

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warned his disciples about this in his Olivet Discourse where Jesus predicted, you will recall, the destruction of the temple. The disciples were confused, they were longing for their Messiah to establish the kingdom and so they asked Jesus to tell them when will be the final end. They said, "What will be the sign of your coming and of the end of the age?" And in Matthew 24:4, "And Jesus answered and said to them, 'See to it that no one misleads you.'" "Here's my answer to your question. Here's what is going to be like before I come, 'See to it that no one misleads you.' For many will come in My name, saying, 'I am the Christ,' and will mislead many." "I am the promised Messiah. I will bring peace. I will bring in a kingdom. I will bring in utopia." How many times have we heard political leaders tell us that? So he says basically, "Before I return in glory, many false Messiahs will come, false deliverers, promising to bring in their version of a kingdom, promising world peace, promising utopia, promising a new world order."

Jesus elaborates on this in Revelation 6:2 where he describes how these false Messiahs will usher in an unprecedented season of world peace but that will be temporary and it will set the stage for the arrival of the antichrist whom the world will hail as their king and he will conquer the world without shedding any blood, at least at first. From the very beginning of the pre-kingdom judgments, that is the tribulation, the world will finally enjoy what it's always wanted, peace. But Jesus went on to say how short lived it would be. That peace would be followed up with unimaginable warfare. He went on to say in Matthew 24:6, "You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end. For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom." Nation there can also be translated race, races will fight amongst each other. Paul elaborates on this in 1 Thessalonians 5:3, "While they are saying, 'Peace and safety!' then destruction will come upon them suddenly like birth pains upon a woman with child, and they shall not escape."

In Daniel 9, we learn that the antichrist is going to make a 7 year peace treaty with Israel at the very beginning of the 7 years of tribulation also known as Daniel's 70th week; these are the time of the pre-kingdom judgments just before the Lord returns. But we learn that he will violate that covenant in just 3 1/2 years and cause great abomination against the Jewish religion as he desecrates the temple and so forth. But God will permit the antichrist to persecute the people of Israel and all of the people of the world who dare to oppose him and this will last for 3 1/2 years. This is sometimes known as the Great Tribulation. Then at the end of the tribulation, the Lord Jesus Christ will return in all of his fury as he pours out judgment upon the nations of the world and he will destroy the antichrist and all who aligned themselves with him in the New World order that he promoted. Then they will realize that all of that was just a sham, there was only a semblance of peace but it will be too late.

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We see the stage being set for these events today as the world craves peace. I looked up and found 140 world peace organizations. In the news we hear how our current president is negotiating with Iran, the number 1 state sponsor of global terrorism, trying to broker a deal to prevent them from having a nuclear weapon. Given the satanic Islamic ideology that nation has and the fact that while they're negotiating, supreme leaders are leading their people, chanting, "Death to America and Israel!" I would submit to you that the chance of them brokering some type of lasting peace in that region is nonexistent, not to mention it's inconsistent with prophecy. It's interesting that Iran is one of the nations listed in the prophecies of Ezekiel 38 and 39. God tells us that he will put hooks in their jaws, he will bring them along with the Russians and other Islamic countries down on the northern mountains of Israel and he will slay them on the mountains of Israel that the people of the world will know that he is the Lord, the God of Israel. In the days of Jeremiah, Israel believed the false prophets who promised the peace of a new order but again as Jeremiah warned, there would be no peace only judgment and it's interesting that now Jesus promises the same thing just before he returns.

Dear friends, please hear the word of the Lord: there will be no peace, lasting peace on earth until the Lord Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace comes in all of his glory to judge the nations and establish his kingdom. Isaiah speaks of this, for example, in chapter 2, verse 4. He says, "He will judge between the nations and rebuke many people. They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." You see, when the Lord Jesus Christ establishes his kingdom, he will reign upon the world and they will finally experience true peace including his people Israel. In Isaiah 32:18 we read what the Lord says at this time, "My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation and secure dwellings and in quiet resting places."

So my friends, knowing all of this and knowing the desperate need of his disciples in the coming days after his departure and knowing our needs, Jesus says, "Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful." We conclude then with: the spoilers of peace. Let me give them to you very briefly, 2 words: doubt and disobedience. If you don't have peace in your life right now, look at where you are doubting God and look at where you are disobeying him.

Jesus says, "Let not your heart be troubled nor let it be fearful." He gave this command in verse 1 of chapter 14 and you will recall that this was followed by a divine remedy that we should apply in the midst even of our tears. We should have: 1. A soul-anchoring faith in the person and the work of Christ; and 2. A soul-thrilling anticipation of the glory of heaven. Said differently, believers who are at peace with God will not experience that peace of God unless they live consistently with who they are in Christ. We must

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appropriate the promises that God has given us including his promise of this peace. When our life is filled with confusion and suffering, we must trust in his goodness, his sovereignty, his faithfulness, his provisions, knowing that he is at work in us. He is up to something for our good and for his glory and when we do this, God fills us with all joy and peace in believing, Romans 15:13. Let me tell you that again: he fills us with all joy and peace in believing. Let me make it real practical: if you find yourself fretting over the past or if you are anxious and confused and discontent about the present, if you're worried about the future, you are ultimately doubting God and therefore dishonoring him and forfeiting the peace that he longs to give you. Instead, as we read earlier, we are to be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let our requests be made known to God and then the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension will guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

The Apostle Paul experienced this peace himself, in fact, he said of himself in Philippians 4:11, "I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am." Boy, that's a hard lesson for us to learn, isn't it? He says, "I know how to get along with humble means and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need." Beloved, the bottom line is this: confidence in all that God is and all that God promises will keep your heart from being troubled. If you don't have that confidence, you're not going to have that peace.

But not only does doubt spoil our peace but also disobedience and this can be sins of omission as well as commission. In Psalm 119:165 we read, "Those who love Your law have great peace, And nothing causes them to stumble." Said differently, those who do not love the word of God and do not apply it to their life will not have peace and they will stumble. In fact, stumbling will be the characteristic of their life along with discontentment and turmoil and strife and frustration. In Ephesians 5:18 we are commanded to be filled with the Spirit. This is a command for believers to live continually under the influence of the indwelling Spirit by letting his word control them. It includes things like pursuing purity in our life. By confessing all known sin. Dying to ourselves. Submitting to God's will and word. And depending upon his power in all things. It's the idea of living in the presence, the conscious presence, of the Lord Jesus Christ and letting his mind through his word dominate our every thought and our every deed. This is the same command as to walk by the Spirit in Galatians 5 and when we do, we're told that we will not carry out the desires of the flesh and later on, it tells us that you will manifest the fruits of the Spirit, the first 3 being: love, joy and peace.

In Colossians 3:15, Paul exhorts us to, "Let the peace of Christ rule," literally referee or umpire, "rule in your hearts," so we've got to constantly be asking ourselves: is my heart

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The Transcendent Peace of Jesus

By David Harrell

Bible Text: John 14:27
Preached on: Sunday, April 12, 2015

attitude, are my life choices pleasing to the Lord? Is what I'm doing maintaining or disrupting the peace that I can enjoy with him and with other people? Do I have a clear conscience before the Lord? If the answer is yes, there will be peace. If the answer is no, you have grieved the Spirit, you have quenched the Spirit, and you will not have any peace, in fact, as a believer, you will be miserable. You will experience guilt and confusion and misery of all sorts. Your life will be filled with stress and turmoil. It can even affect your health.

So folks, I close with this question: what about you? Are you at peace with God because you have asked him to forgive you of your sins and grant you the righteousness of Christ so that that war can be over? If not, I plead with you to look to Christ today and be saved. But if you belong to Christ but you still find yourself in turmoil, you're filled with anxiety and doubt and discontentment, maybe you've gotten a little bit sour and sullen even whiny, folks, if that is you, you must examine your heart and ask yourself: where do I doubt his goodness and his grace and where am I being disobedient to his word and to his will?

I would leave you with the remedy given by the great Puritan, Thomas Watson, regarding sin. He says, "If you would have peace, make war with sin. If you would have peace with God, break the league with sin, give battle to sin for it is a most just war." Well, I pray that each of us who belong to Christ by grace through faith will enjoy fully the peace that he longs for us to enjoy so that with our brother, even in the midst of dire circumstances, we can say, "It is well with my soul."

Father, thank you for these eternal truths. May they bear much fruit in our heart to the praise of your glory. I ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

We pray you've been edified by this presentation. You have been listening to Pastor, Bible Teacher and Author, Dr. David Harrell. For more information or for other messages from Dr. Harrell, please visit the Olive Tree Christian Resources website at otcr.org.

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