

The Purpose for the Prince of Peace

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Preacher: Jerry Holdman

[0 : 0 0] Hey, thank you so much for tuning in today. My name is Ray Sweet. I'm the lead pastor here at First Christian Church of Greensburg, Indiana. And first, I just want to take the opportunity to thank you. If you are a regular watcher of this video broadcast, thank you for doing that.

We pray that God's Word is truly speaking to you in a powerful way. And as always, we want to invite you, if you're close to Greensburg, to please come and join us on a Sunday morning.

There's just something special about being with your brothers and sisters in Christ in a setting where you can worship together. We'd love to have you if you're able to come. Hey, today is a special day at our church, December the 10th, 2023, where our children are going to be doing a Christmas musical.

And that's going to kind of take the sermon time in our Sunday morning services, except at our 8 o'clock traditional service. And we're going to have a pastor who has 50 plus years of experience, who is an awesome man of God.

His name is Pastor Jerry Holdman, and he is going to be preaching a message for us today. I met Jerry years ago when we both were in the same community in Rush County, and we both were preaching at different churches.

[1 : 1 6] We met, we worked together on some things, and I was so impressed by his godly maturity. And now that Jerry has retired from ministry, he is a part of our church family here at First Christian.

And so you are blessed this morning as Pastor Jerry is going to preach all about the Prince of Peace and the peace that Jesus brings this time of year and all year.

And so enjoy. Jerry does a great job, and I'm excited to hear his message about Jesus. My sermon title is entitled, The Purpose for the Prince of Peace.

Since this is the Christmas time, I think it's very appropriate that we study some of the aspects and think of some of the things about Christ, the Christ who was born at that time.

In the book of Isaiah, chapter 9 and verse 6, he says, A child is born, a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulders.

[2 : 2 3] He will be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Prince of Peace. Prince of Peace. I like that. In fact, as I looked up the meanings of the word Prince, I found that there's several things.

For one thing, it means leader, authority, power. And all those would fit the qualities of Jesus, that that is what he is.

He has all power. Now, often in the Bible, peace is mentioned. And the goal of most people is to say, we love peace.

I like peace. We want peace. You know, in the statistics, it's kind of interesting that for 1,350 years of recorded history, in other words, back to about the time of Noah, there's only been 216 years of peace.

[3 : 34] There's been 14,300 wars. 8,000 peace treaties. Over 3.5 billion people killed. And this goes on and on and changes.

Well, the word means different things to most people. And so, this is what we want to understand, is whenever we use the word peace, we're talking about what God wants us to have.

It's a popular idea. In fact, it's a favorite goal. I remember watching some of the Miss Americas, when they interviewed them, they'd say, what would you think, what's your favorite thing for life?

And they'd say, well, my goal is world peace. Everybody wants that. Politicians want it. Civilized people everywhere want peace.

It's a standard dream. And yet, I noticed that this word can be a class as a word with different meanings to different people.

[4 : 40] In fact, I call them weasel words. Because with peace, you know, it's like, I want peace, but my peace is different than your peace.

You want peace, but it's different than mine. In fact, you are one who is not peaceful, but I am. Unless, of course, you start it, and then we'll call it off, and we'll start over with war again.

And so, we called it a ceasefire. And we have heard that word just recently, having a ceasefire, which is nothing more than time to reload and begin all over again.

Now, the angels announced with great fanfare and joy, whenever Jesus was born, there to the shepherds in the hills of Galilee, they said, glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.

Goodwill to men. Peace. So, we're familiar with that word. And at Christmas time, it's very appropriate. Now, we need to realize that there was announced with great fanfare and joy, and the leader had to come to earth, and he's all wrapped up in swaddling clothes, lying in a feeding trough.

[6 : 07] But this took many years of preparation, and the Old Testament covers those years. So, we want to consider this morning the purpose of Jesus as the Prince of Peace from three sides.

First of all, he is the Prince of Peace of God. The Prince of the Peace of God. His ways of peace are far above our ways.

In Romans 5.1, he says, Therefore, since we've been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through Him.

Now, that means that's the only way, folks. The only way we have the peace of God is because of Jesus Christ. Now, we human beings try to find all kinds of ways to find peace.

We have peace councils. There are peace treaties. There are peace handshakes. We have lawyers, and we have threats, and armaments, and all these things. All these physical things fall short.

[7 : 12] They bring no lasting peace. They do not bring the peace of God. In Romans 14.17, he says to us, For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

And when it says there, not eating and drinking, I'm just reminded of last Sunday, whenever we had a great Thanksgiving meal together at the church.

It was a wonderful time, but we did a lot of eating there. Well, that's where we were in the kingdom, but that's still not what the kingdom really is. It's more than that.

It's not the mere physical, but even though we have it, we must be following it. In Isaiah 26.3, he talks about having perfect peace, whose mind is steadfast, because he's trusting in you.

And I think one of my favorite scriptures of all is in Philippians chapter 4 and verse 7, where he says, And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

[8 : 33] Think of that. The peace that passes all understanding. We can't conceive of it. We can't have all the complete knowledge of that kind of peace. We can't have that, because it's in Jesus Christ.

It's hard for us to comprehend how that can be true, but that's the kind of peace that Jesus brings to us. Well, we may not understand all the whys and wherefores, but it is the greatest steadying gift that God gives for this life that every person is able to have if they want it.

I think it's ironic. I think it's even shameful that to read, you can read this promise about having this perfect peace, and yet be torn apart with worry and anguish.

And too often that happens to we, even Christians it happens to them, and we have these problems, and we fail to recognize and fail to grasp this perfect peace that's found in Christ.

I think a good example of this was the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul, we know he was called by God. I mean, God called him, emphasized to him, hey, he had a job for him to do, and when he was blinded, and then he had spent three days going over and over in his mind, what happened?

[10 : 04] What's going on here? What have I been doing wrong? Before he came to the point of realizing he needed to do something. He needed to make a complete reversal of what he was doing. He was persecuting Christians instead of making Christians.

And God had different plans for him. And so he had some special education from God, and he became that great Apostle Paul that did so much writing in the Scriptures, and did so much preaching, and starting of churches, and did all of these things.

Oh, it's wonderful. But folks, there's another side of it. He was also a persecuted fugitive. Maybe we wonder, why did God let that happen?

He's doing God's work. Well, he was the hound of anxiety, was always snapping at his heels. He was uncertain of his future.

Fellow preachers even rejoiced that he was in jail. In Philippians, the first chapter, he mentions that. We know that Paul had a thorn in the flesh. We don't know what it was, but it gave him pain.

[11 : 12] It caused him to have real misery. And he said, he prayed, and God said, I'm not going to take it away from you, Paul. That's what you need. Well, he had, besides this, he had bento anguish.

In fact, his list could be a catalog. I want to encourage you to read the book of 2 Corinthians. That's one of the last books that Paul wrote.

And in it, he enumerates many places in there. In fact, there's four lists that he gives of things that he had suffered, all because he was a Christian, and all because he was doing God's work.

What a man. But he still had peace. I mean, there's more up-of-day things we suffer maybe than they did back then, but we have different kinds. But we don't suffer any worse than he did, folks.

In Philippians 4, 7, he speaks of our hearts and minds being guarded by God's peace. And that's a word that's used for soldiers protecting a city.

[12 : 18] And folks, that's the greatest protection that there is. The peace of Jesus Christ. That's for us. God's peace is protecting us from satanic forces invading and to disrupt and ravage and crush us with anxiety.

And so he gives us further encouragement in a great scripture in that 2 Corinthians book, chapter 4, verses 16 through 18. He says, as he enumerates some things that were going wrong with him, he says, Therefore, we do not lose heart, though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.

For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal. Folks, we need to claim God's promise.

That's the promise of God. Secondly, Jesus is the prince of peace from God.

[13 : 37] He's the peace of God and the prince from God. Jesus had a special brand of peace. In John, chapter 14, verse 27, is a very intriguing verse.

Jesus says to his men, to his apostles, and this was happened just before he went out to be crucified. He says, Peace I leave with you.

My peace I give you. I do not give you as the world gives. Let not your heart be troubled. And do not be afraid.

That's a big contrast, folks, from what the world has. The peace from the world is a cruel joke. We live in a time whenever people are trying to get peace.

And it's just happened in the past few months. It's shallow, empty, and definitely temporarily. Well, peace treaties down through history haven't been much, much better.

[14 : 46] They were soon broken. In the Bible, the Jewish nations and the other nations had peace for a while and then they'd be fighting again. Then they'd be fighting each other. They were, the peace didn't last.

And I think something that is a terrible blot on we Americans is that peace with the Indian tribes. Those treaties that they made weren't worth the paper they were written on.

And world wars. Oh, we had things happening with those things too to bring out ideas of peace. Peace in our time, as he even said.

And then there's all lesser ones that are this present day. There's a peace that goes on and then it doesn't, it's gone. It's everything from lying, power-made dictators to peace at any price, foolish people who don't know any better.

We have to realize, folks, that the peace that comes from God, from Jesus, we must not be troubled by it because he goes a step farther.

[15 : 54] He says, since peace is from God, he assures it to us in all circumstances. Don't be troubled. Don't be afraid.

His peace does not depend on outward circumstances or events that are continually unstable. And this is a lot of what we have in this life, isn't it?

Events that are unstable. There's accidents that happen. We can't control many of those that happen to us. And so we worry about that.

We have sicknesses. We have diseases. We have tragedies. There's storms. There's personal. And there's family struggles. And we have to get through with that somehow.

Well, people have been crippled by accidents. I mean, Johnny Erickson is someone who stands out as an example of me, to me, of how she was having a great life, but then she was paralyzed, paralyzed, and she's been able to overcome that paralyzed situation and rewrite books and be a great witness and a great testimony in how she looks forward to being in heaven where she'll be able to walk and run.

[17 : 12] But folks, we have to realize this. We have to face many undesirable times in life, yet God promised peace. His promises of peace are still there.

He wants us to have that. There's no sorrow, no danger, no suffering that can steal it from you. The past, the present, the future, they're all in His hands.

God is not surprised about anything that happens. So we need to read and claim what I call the more than conquerors scripture.

It's in Romans 8, 18 through 39. And I won't read that, but I'm going to pick out a few phrases that are in those verses. He says, our present sufferings are not worth being compared with the glory, the glory that we'll have with the Lord.

He says, hope and wait patiently. A couple things we have to do. He says, God is working all things together for the good. God. Oh, how that verse is such a precious verse.

[18 : 19] We don't want to know how He does it, but God does. Sometimes the worst disasters can be turned around to be something that is very good. And I like this one.

This is a rhetorical question that he asks. He says, if God is for us, who can be against us? Who? Oh, boy.

To ask that question is to answer it. He says, Jesus Christ is at the right hand of God interceding for us. He's our intercessor. He goes to the Father in heaven for us and pleads His blood is sufficient for us.

Well, then in verse 35, he lists seven disasters that happen. Then in verses 38 through 39, he lists ten precarious things that we deal with in life.

I want to encourage you to read those for yourself. This is a very powerful scripture, folks, to be an overcomer because he's our overcoming leader. And in John 6, 33, he mentioned John 6, I mean, yeah, John 16, rather.

[19 : 42] He says, I have told you these things so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world.

Now, in John chapter 16, Jesus was approaching His crucifixion. He knew it was coming. This was the last time He was going to have any extended conversations with His apostles.

And He wanted to make them ready for it. And so He gives them words to encourage them. He says in John 16, 20, You will weep and mourn and grieve, but your grief will turn to joy.

And in verse 22, He says, I will see you again. No one will take away your joy. And verse 24, Ask and you will receive and your joy will be complete. complete. And then I like that one in verse 33, I've already mentioned that, but I've told you these things, that in you, me, you might have peace.

In this world, you will have trouble. But take heart. But take heart. But take heart.

[20 : 54] I have overcome the world. And then He went out and was nailed to a cross and killed. But the story doesn't end there, does it?

He resurrected. Yes. The overcoming took three days, but He did it. And so He gives us that great context to realize we don't have to be concerned about all of the troubles and the anxieties that we go through.

Yes, we want to face them. We want to do the best. God has purposes for those. They are to help us just like He did for Paul's thorn in the flesh. But, we can go on.

And so this brings us to my final point. He's the Prince of Peace with God. With God. It's not based on nice feelings. It's not based on a wishful hope for pie in the sky by and by.

is simply realizing that I am a lost sinner. My sinful condition is there.

[22 : 04] And in Romans 3.23, He names it right on the button, puts the nail right on the head when He says, For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. You know all, don't you?

Yeah, that's everybody. But then He has another scripture there in Romans 6.23, where He says, For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Oh, folks, you talk about promises, you talk about encouraging things that God we have so that we can have peace with God. God has done the impossible.

He provides the plan. He provides the blood. He provides the grace. He provides the mercy. He provides the instruction.

He provides everything that we need to have that forgiveness and have that eternal life that makes it, that gives us that peace with God.

[23 : 13] and it makes it so all sinners, and I'm talking to sinners today, all of us are. We've all sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

And we still have temptations and we still stumble and we trip and we fall, but we have to realize that God is with us, guiding us and lifting us up. He forgives us and He reconciles us and He saves us and He wants us to have that peace that only He can give.

Peace with Him. Well, it's very simple how He says it. Each sinner has to come to the realization He has a decision to make. That means you have to have faith in God.

You must have repent of your sins. You must confess Jesus Christ as the Son of God. You must be baptized for the mission of your sins. and you must be living the faithful life over and over.

This is emphasized in the Scriptures, in the letters, in the book of Acts. This is how people did that back in the first century. That's what they were told to do and they did.

[24 : 25] The gift of the Holy Spirit brings real peace of God knowing that you have stepped from the road of eternal death to the path of everlasting life.

That's the privilege. that's the privilege that we have. And you know, I think an illustration of this is the parable of the prodigal son. It pictures the blessing of peace.

You're familiar with that, I'm sure, but in Luke 15, 12 through 32, the younger son wanted his inheritance right now. So he says, Dad, give me my inheritance now. I don't want to wait until you die.

I want to wait now. When you croak, it's going to be too late. I want it now. And his father gave it to him. And it says he departed. He went to a far country and he wasted it all.

It probably didn't take him very long. And people are always there ready to help you waste what you have, you know. But he wasted it on riotous living, it says.

[25 : 29] And he wound up in the hog pen. What an insult for a Jewish boy to be feeding hogs and wishing he'd have as much food as the pigs eat.

But that was his condition. But then the scripture says he came to himself. He came to his senses. He realized, hey, what am I doing here?

I don't belong here. And he started thinking about home. And he decided, I'm going to go back. I'm going to go back. And I'm going to tell my father, I'm not worthy to be your son.

Just make me a hired server around the place. That'll be all I want. That's all I need. But the father saw him coming and ran to meet him. Ran to meet him and embraced him and hugged him and kissed him and said, oh son, so good to have you back.

And he said, we're going to have a big party. And they had a big celebration. Now the other brother, this is the negative part of it. He was kind of jealous. I hope he got over it.

[26 : 34] The Bible doesn't say. But they had this thing for this wandering son who had gone away and he had gone down to the depths. He had been in the bottom of the barrel, but now he was coming out.

And it just reminds me so much of what the father said of his compassion. He said, this my son was dead. Dead, but now he's alive. He was lost, but now he's found.

Oh folks, that's peace with God. That's peace with God that's available for everyone. Now unfortunately for the normal non-Christian, it's normal for them to have war inside their soul.

That's normal. If you're not a Christian, unrest, insecurity, doubting, all kinds of fears.

I know Jesus himself said whenever he was talking about the latter days, he said, men's hearts are going to be failing them for fear. Boy, you talk about a prophecy.

[27 : 43] We have fears by the barrel today. We have tons of fears, fears of all kinds. It paralyzes people and they have, do not have that peace.

But Jesus brings it. He wants you to have it. If you're a child of God, he wants you to focus on these scriptures. Some of these I share with you today. That you will have that peace.

Every person wants to have the peace of God that love comes from and lives within your heart. And I want to say this. If you are serious about peace, it begins with you.

With you. You have that opportunity. You have that opportunity to make your life right with God. Maybe you need to be baptized.

Maybe you need to repent. Maybe you need to live the confession of Jesus Christ. And maybe you need to have that faith to trust Him.

[28 : 48] Well, if you're serious, it starts with you. You must give the right answer to one question. Where am I going to spend eternity if I am going to die right now?

Folks, it's a very simple question. Where will you spend eternity? You can answer that question and you can solve that question today.

And so, we will be having our time of our invitation for you. Thank you. Well, thank you, Pastor Jerry, for that message all about the Prince of Peace who every one of us need in our life.

And as far as that invitation goes, we want you to know here at FCC that we would love to be here to talk with you if you have questions about your faith or you want to talk about that most important question, where am I going to spend eternity?

We would love to talk about Jesus and what it looks like to give your life to Him. And so, you can reach out to us in a couple different ways. Our phone number here at First Christian Church of Greensburg, Indiana is 812-663-8488 or you can email me at ray at FCCGreensburg.com Hey, thank you so much for tuning in today.

[30 : 15] We pray that you were blessed by this message. God bless you and have a great week.