

The promise of His peace

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[0:00] All this I have spoken while with you, but the counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.

Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I do not give you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled. And do not be afraid.

You heard me say I am going away and I am coming back to you. If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

I've told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen, you will believe. I will not speak with you much longer, for the Prince of this world is coming.

He has no hold on me. But the world must learn that I love the Father and that I do exactly what my Father has commanded me. Come now.

[1:04] Let us leave. Amen. The Lord will bless to us the reading of his word. We are looking today at the promise of his peace. Particularly verse 27.

Amen. My peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled.

And do not be afraid. I wonder if you've ever benefited from a will. I've never benefited from a will. I once nearly did.

But I was made an executor of that will. And that meant I couldn't benefit from it. So all my children benefited instead.

Which was great for them. I didn't mind. Father doesn't mind, really, does he? But if you've benefited from a will, I wonder if you've ever been left to anything unusual.

[2:01] And I had a look to see what people had been left. A man named Samuel Bratt held a lifelong grudge against his wife. Who forbade him from smoking cigars.

In his will, he left her 300,000 pounds. On the condition that she smoked five cigars a day. Harry Houdini.

I remember. I'd heard this one before. Harry Houdini left his wife, Bess, a letter containing a secret code. He had promised her that if communication from the afterlife were possible, he would contact her using this code.

So she would know it was him. She then attended 10 seances. But never once got a message. It tells you something.

Or my particular favorite. The German poet Heinrich Henry Hein. Who left his estate to his wife Matilda.

[3:06] On the condition that she remarry. So that, quotes, There will be at least one man to regret my death. She must have been tricky.

Or he must have been fussy. Now Jesus is leaving us something here. He is bequeathing us something. In what one might call his last will and testament before he went to the cross.

He is bequeathing us peace. My peace, he says. I am giving you. It is not like the world gives you.

So you do not need to let your hearts be troubled. Nor be afraid. And if you know John chapter 14, you will know that that is exactly how it starts. Do not let your hearts be troubled.

Trust in God. Trust also in me. So the argument is going full circle. Don't be afraid. Don't be troubled. I am going to give you something that will keep you during this very difficult life.

[4:16] And it is my peace. Because as Jesus says in John's gospel, In this world you will have trouble. That is the nature of the world in which we live.

A world that is, according to Paul in Romans, At enmity toward God. It does not submit to the law of God. Neither indeed can it do so. The world wrestles against God's will.

The world has rejected and rebelled its creator. And so when Christians come along as representative of Jesus, And they, especially as they demonstrate his righteousness and speak of his law, Then the world will oppose them.

If it were the world hates you, Jesus says, Remember that it hated me as well. In this world you will have trouble. And so I'm going away.

And your hearts are sad. Because I'm going away, he said in John 14. But I'm going to come back for you. And I'm going to take you to be with me where I am.

[5 : 26] That where I am you will be also. And remember the disciples said, Well where are you going Lord? We don't know. Jesus said, I'm going to the Father. And Thomas said, Well show us the Father.

We'll be satisfied. What is the way to the Father? I am the way, Jesus said. The truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. So he's going to go away and then he's going to come back for them.

But in the meantime, they're going to be in a world of trouble. But he has a solution. He is sending another of the same. Another like him. Another counselor he calls him.

The paracletos. Which literally means somebody who comes alongside of you to bring you comfort. Now the Holy Spirit does many things in the life of the believer.

Sanctifies the believer. Makes them holy. Makes them more like Jesus. Counsels them. Teaches them all things that Jesus has previously taught. Brings them to mind. All of these things the Holy Spirit does in our life.

[6 : 29] Gifts and enables us. But his chief role is to come alongside us. To let us know that God is present with us.

Through and in the Holy Spirit, Jesus can be with us always. Even to the ends of the earth. Have you ever thought, why did Jesus say to his disciples, it's better for you if I go away? Like, that's hard to believe, isn't it?

If you're a disciple, you could stop and ask Jesus your latest really difficult question and he would be able to answer it.

You could ask him why things happen and he might tell you. You had the reassurance of his presence. If there was a storm in a ship, after all, he could calm the storm. If somebody needed healing, he could heal them.

How can it be better then if you go away? How can it be better? Well, the problem is, if you were on earth with Jesus, you had to wait in a very long queue to see him.

[7 : 29] And sometimes he didn't tell you the answer. Sometimes he even told you you wouldn't understand if he told you. And sometimes he rebuked you for your lack of faith. So being with Jesus wasn't always very comfortable.

And it wasn't practical in that sense. If Jesus was going to be a savior to the whole world and be immediately available to the whole world at one and the same time, he had to go away.

To send to us one like him, another of the same, to be with us always. Not physically, but by his spirit.

Now, if you're a believer and somebody speaks the name of Jesus to you, you get familiar with that name. And so you're glad. Yes, of course, you have a general comfort.

That's really nice. Sometimes you might even feel a little bit afraid because you're not living with Jesus in the way that you should. But haven't you also been in those places where when they speak the name of Jesus to you, your heart is strangely warmed within you.

[8 : 35] As if he was right there in the room. I see thee not, I hear thee not, but thou art off with me. And earth hath ne'er so sweet a spot as where I meet with thee.

Thank God there are times when Jesus is so real to us, as real as the person next to us. And that comes to us through the Holy Spirit of God. And that's why Paul says, if you do not have the Spirit of Christ, you do not belong to Christ.

It is not possible to be a believer in Jesus and not be filled and not have the Holy Spirit's presence. Of course, we always need to be filled and refilled with the Spirit of God.

We must never become complacent. But the presence of Jesus in us will always cause us to seek his presence more. When you love somebody, after all, you don't get complacent about that.

You seek to build the relationship. It is the same with Jesus. So you're going to have trouble in this world, but you're going to have the presence of the omnipresent, omniscient Holy Spirit with you to

empower and enable you always.

[9:45] So you don't need to be afraid. And then he adds this bequest. I will give you peace. Because in this world you will have trouble.

You see, whether you like it or not, if you belong to Jesus, you shine. He is a light of the world. You are lights in the world. And the thing about light shining in darkness is the darkness doesn't always appreciate it.

Which is why sometimes people will call your name or swear at you or be violent toward you just because you are a Christian. They will feel that you're condemning them, even if you don't say anything, and that you're judging them just because of the person you stand for and with.

It is, sadly, an inevitability in this world. People will reject you, Jesus says, because of me. They will reject what you stand for. They will reject your words.

And you will feel you take it personally. Well, what is it? I try to be nice to you. Why are you like this to me? Well, it isn't you. It's Jesus.

[10:50] And so the Holy Spirit gives us peace to say, okay, sometimes you have to accept that you will be rejected because of me.

And sometimes there will be nothing you can do about it. You have to accept it. It is part of the cost of following Jesus. But it's okay. I'll give you peace.

I'll give you peace. And it will be fine. So we will not have comfortable circumstances all of the time. We will not always have good health.

We will not always have financial security. Life will not always be a bed of roses. But we will always have Jesus with us. And his peace is always available for us.

So the source of his peace. Next slide. This is a unique gift given by Jesus. Peace I leave with you.

[11:45] My peace I give to you. Notice he doesn't say, I recommend you have a dose of my peace if you feel like it. He says, you really need it.

And I really give you it. Open your hands and receive it. Open your hands. Open your heart.

Receive my peace. When Jesus came, John says, he dwelt among us.

Literally, he tabernacled among us. He pitched his tent. And he moved around the world. And he revealed himself to people. When he came into their presence, well, whether you liked it or not, he impacted.

And not everybody liked it, of course. But he always impacted. He was the light of the world. He brought his presence into a situation. And situations would never remain the same when he brought his presence in.

Remember the woman who had the issue of blood? If only I could touch the hem of his garments, I would be made well. Power went out from him. When the demons saw him, they were terrified.

[13:00] Send us away. Have mercy on us. The presence and power of Jesus changes circumstances. And Jesus says, I'm coming to give you peace in your very difficult circumstances.

There's a wonderful scripture on the screen. Isaiah 26, verse 3. You, God, will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you.

I love that verse. That was the very first verse I recalled when I was getting on a plane for the first time. I had never been on a plane, and I'm scared of heights.

So being scared of heights and being on a plane doesn't usually go well together. But I was sure God was calling me to go off to Africa.

So I'd got on a plane for the very first time at Heathrow Airport. And as I was going down the way to the plane, make my way to the plane, I'd been talking to a young lady from Liverpool who was originally from Zimbabwe.

[13:59] And she says, are you nervous? And I said, I'm really surprised to say I'm not. And she said, oh, why?

I said, because there's a verse in the Bible that says, and I'd learned it from the old authorized, thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee, for he trusteth in thee. I thought, there you go.

Just declare it. Oh, she said, that's interesting. We ended up sitting next to each other on the plane. And the plane journey was very eventful. We ended up being stuck in Libya for 12 hours.

But it was amazing. I got to share the gospel with her. And then a few weeks later, she wrote to me to say, I became a Christian at Liverpool University.

And that was because God put all those things together. I was afraid until Jesus gave me his peace. And then a situation was transformed.

[15:02] That will keep him in peace. You, God, will keep in perfect peace. The one whose mind is stayed on thee. Look at that word. Perfect peace. Now, there is no word for perfect in the Hebrew there.

It literally reads, you will keep him in peace, peace. So it says it twice. Just so you get the message. You will keep him literally in shalom, shalom.

And if you've ever watched The Chosen, if you watch The Chosen, you'll notice they greet each other like that. Shalom, shalom. Yeah? It's like saying, I want God's peace, but I really want it for you.

I want it so that your life overflows with it. And shalom means good health, well-being, prosperity, physical well-being, mental well-being, emotional well-being.

All of God's peace to envelop you. God will keep you in shalom, shalom. God will keep you in shalom.

[16:31] What am I going to do if the doctor tells me I have an incurable illness? What am I going to do if I need to live with a debilitating illness? What am I going to do if this doesn't happen or that won't change or this person doesn't change their mind about me?

How am I going to have enough money to get by on? What if my marriage is going wrong? And we can worry and fret about all of these things. And the prescription of Isaiah is this.

Stay your mind on God. And then you will have peace. Stay your mind on him. Trust in him.

Hold fast to him. Now is it easy? No, it's not. Will it be a battle? Yes, it will. But haven't you discovered that worrying and fretting about things don't do much good?

They just lead to worry and fret. And then you pray or others pray for you and then you feel his peace flooding in and you can cope.

[17:35] Jesus is the prince of peace. Psalm 29 verse 11 says, The Lord gives strength to his people.

The Lord blesses his people with peace. Now hear that. The Lord does that. So when Jesus says to his disciples, My peace I give to you. He's making a great claim.

Another great claim. That God who is tabernacling among us, That same God says, I will bless you with peace. It is a claim of deity.

When Christ says, I will give you peace, He speaks with all the authority of God. And therefore you can rely on it. For God never lies.

Test him. Is your heart troubled today? Are you full of questions and anxieties and fears? Are you worried about the future?

[18:37] Are you worried about what might come next? Then say, Jesus, You promised me peace. Please give me peace now. To lift me from this fear. And this trouble.

And this uncertainty. Now you know, Some of you know, If you know me, That I love history. And Jesus says, The peace I give you is not as the world gives.

And when I thought of this, I thought of Nicholas Ridley. Now Nicholas Ridley was a privileged man Because he was born in the northeast. He was from God's own county, Northumberland.

And if you know Newcastle, You know Ridley is a kind of popular name in the northeast. Well, Nicholas Ridley was a bishop. And he was originally from Tyndale. But he went down eventually to Cambridge and studied there.

And when he went to study there, He came into contact with reformers. This was back in the 16th century. Into reformers. Protestant reformers who were preaching the gospel At the time when Henry was king.

[19:41] And it was very dangerous. Eventually he became bishop of London and Winchester. But then Henry died, Was replaced with his son Edward VI. Who died quite young.

And Nicholas Ridley was on the wrong side of history. He supported Lady Jane Grey in her attempt to become queen. For she was a Protestant. And he wanted a Protestant succession.

For his support of Lady Jane Grey and the Protestant Reformation, He was condemned to death to be burned at the stake. Imagine that. And he was burned at the stake at Broad Street in Oxford.

Along with his close friend, Bishop Hugh Latimer. On the night before he was burned to death, It is recorded that he was especially cheerful.

Bidding the mayor's wife accompany him to his marriage in the morning. Imagine that. Tomorrow I am going to be married. Aren't you going to be burned at the stake?

[20 : 45] No, I am going to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And declining the offer of his brother-in-law, George Shipside, To spend the night with him On the ground that he intended To sleep soundly.

And he did. And then he went to the funeral pyre Where he was to be burned with his friend Latimer And they were tied to stakes.

And Latimer shouted out to him as they lit the fire. Be of good comfort and play the man, Master Ridley. We shall this day light such a candle by God's grace In England, as I trust shall never be put out.

You will keep him in perfect peace His mind has stayed upon you For he trusts in you. Do you know that Nicholas Ridley Burned for an hour before he died? Because Latimer went quickly But prophetically, he said Be of good cheer and play the man.

He suffered for an hour before he died. Now the world didn't give a peace like that. The world can't give a peace like that.

[22 : 02] Such courage that faces death In the knowledge that this is not my dying. This is the doorway to my living. This is my entry to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

And we're going to sing a hymn. The hymn was written by a father Who sent his four daughters across the ocean With his wife And he would join them later in Scotland And on the way The daughters of Horatio's great gates spaffered Drowned at sea when the ship went down And his wife telegraphed to say Saved alone And as he traveled himself across the sea And was told by the captain That they were now in the spot Where his daughters had died Where the ship had gone down He wrote a hymn And in that hymn he said Though Satan should buffet Though trials should come Let this blessed assurance console That Christ has regarded my helpless estate And has shed his own blood for my soul It is well It is well It is well With my soul

That's peace That's not as the world gives And that is a peace That is available to us today The promise of his peace Secondly the protection of his peace To guard our hearts against trouble and fear Jesus says I'm going to give you this peace So don't let your hearts be troubled Don't let it be afraid Can you ever imagine Jesus Being frantic and panicked You just can't Can you He was A man of great calm He had What my Favorite teacher Dallas Willard called A non-anxious presence You knew when he was in the room He brought a stillness And a serenity When people panicked around him When they tried to rush him To do things that he didn't want to do When they tried to drive him on And make him go in a direction That he did not want to go He politely refused And separated himself To spend time with his father And pray When things troubled him When challenges came his way He committed it to his father in heaven And even when he was afraid He said If it is possible Lord take this cup from me But not what I will What you will In October we go into our vision month Our motto text is That as followers and disciples of Jesus Christ It is our objective To be with Jesus Become like Jesus And do as Jesus would do In becoming like Jesus I desperately need his peace In order that I too might learn To be a non-anxious presence In this world of trouble And he offers it to me

As an antidote To all of the troubles And all of the conflicts That I might face Come to me all you who labor And are hairy laden And I will give you rest Take my yoke upon you And learn from me And I've told you this before The point of the yoke Is the two oxen Can walk side by side In alignment Not one falling behind But together they can walk Jesus says I'm going to put my yoke upon you So you can walk side by side with me Through this trouble Just like I told you the other week The disciples in the storm Peter coming out To walk with Jesus on the water If you want to walk on the water You've got to get out of the boat And you've got to walk with Jesus Peace I leave with you Next slide My peace My perfect peace I give you Not as the world gives Do I give to you Do not let your hearts be troubled

[26 : 20] Nor let it be afraid Let my perfect peace Calm you In every circumstance And give you courage And strength For every challenge That's the amplified version of it Let my perfect peace Calm you In every circumstance And give you courage And strength For every challenge What does Paul say In Philippians 4 6 and 7 Do not be anxious About anything Don't be anxious He doesn't say you won't be But he says when you are Don't be There's a difference Your natural instinct Will be to be anxious But the Holy Spirit says Don't do that That's negative Do not be anxious about anything But in everything Here's the answer to anxiety In everything By prayer and

supplication With thanksgiving Make your request to God And then what will happen

The peace of God Which passes all understanding That means You can't explain it But it's nice Will keep your heart And your mind In Christ Jesus Whatever divides Or distracts your mind Whatever draws you Into trouble Whatever draws you Into fear Put that aside And pray As Jill Briscoe said We can worry Or we can worship We can worry Or we can worship Try it The next time you're worried Sing a song of prayers Thank God For his presence Pray one of the promises Of God And you will see That your anxiety Will begin to lift Warren Weasby once put it Sow a thought Reap an action Sow an action Reap a habit

Sow a habit Reap a character Sow a character Reap a destiny And if we sow The habit of praying When we're worried And fearful We will begin to get The habit of praying And as we get The habit of praying We will discover That we worry less And we pray more Thank God For the practical nature Of his word So peace It's a unique gift It's given by Jesus But like any gift It must be received It must be received With hands open It must be received By faith There's a story told True story Of a peace child This is a story Of the Savi people In New Guinea And the story Of two missionaries Don and Carol Richardson Who went to

Papua New Guinea At a time When the Sauris And all the tribes Around them Were what we call Headhunters Cannibals The problem was As they preached The gospel to them They tried to show them The loveliness of Jesus But they found That the Sauris Quite like Judas Instead Because they Hadn't realized That in the Sauri culture To deceive And to lie And to betray Were seen as good things But to just Lay your life down Seemed weak And so they were At war Fighting And Don Richardson At one point Was so Frustrated God why have you Brought me here These people Are never going To change They don't care About love They don't care About the sacrifice Of your son They just have No idea They love the things You hate And they hate The things you love How can we ever Reach them But then at one Critical point

When there was war Between two of the tribes One of the Sauri Leaders Because there had been So much killing And so much violence One of the Sauri leaders Ran to his own hut Took out his own Little child And ran toward The chief of the other tribe With his child To offer his child To the other chief So that there might be peace His child would become A peace child And in exchange The chief of the other tribe Took his child And gave him to the Sauri chief And they said to each other As long as our children live There will be no war Between us As long as the peace child Lives There can be no war And Don Richardson

[31 : 24] Thanked God for the key For preaching the gospel For he told them Of God's peace child Jesus Who laid down his life So that war may end And that war in tribes Could have peace And that only happened In the 1950s And the change In the place As cannibals In great numbers Trusted Jesus For their salvation And that place Became one of the most Christian places In the world Because of God's peace child My peace I give to you Jesus says If your heart is fearful If you're afraid If you wonder how you're going to cope with life Jesus says I give you my peace Open your hands And receive the peace child Amen Amen

Thank you