**28 July 2019**

***Dictionary definition of peace***

Freedom from disturbance, tranquillity. A stress-free state of security.

A state or period in which there is no war (Luke 2: 14).

**Perfect Peace**

Isaiah 26: 3 - 4

You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on you; because he trusts in you.

***Shalom*** *(regarding Abram)*

First time used in the Bible – Genesis 15: 15. *“And you shall go to your father in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age.*

Perfect peace is a cooperative effort between God and us.

Our peace is perfect because it comes from God.

**Keep** – to guard

**Perfect Peace** (Shalom Shalom) – health, prosperity, wellness, wholeness, completeness, soundness, welfare, safety, quietness, tranquillity, contentment.

Note: Psalm 35: 27 - The Lord has pleasure in (delights in, favour) the prosperity (Shalom peace) of His servants.

***John 16: 33***

***In me*** you might have peace. ***In*** ***the world*** you shall havetribulation…

**Mind** – imagination (2 Corinthians 10: 3- 5)

**Stayed** – to prop, to lean upon or take hold. To stand fast or stay.

**Trust** – Be confident or sure.

Why can we trust Him:

* He is an unchanging God (Malachi 3: 6).

***Isaiah 9: 6-7***

Jesus is the Prince of Peace.

* He is not a man that He should lie (Number 23: 19 & Romans: 3 4).
* His word is eternal (Psalm 119: 89).
* He is a covenant-keeping God (Psalm 89: 34).
* We have the witness of the Holy Spirit (John 16: 33).
* Faith pleases Him (Hebrews 11: 6).

Psalm 29: 11

The Lord will give strength unto His people; the Lord will bless His people with peace (peace is a blessing from God).

*There is no peace for the ungodly*.

New testament ***peace***:

Greek word “Arana” – literally means to join.

By implication – prosperity, peace, quietness, rest, set at one again.

To be ***In Christ*** is to be ***In Peace***.

Isaiah 57: 20 - 21(Romans 3: 17).

There is no peace saith my God to the wicked.

Wicked means – Condemned, guilty, ungodly.

* Outward moral attributes don’t make us godly.
* There is no self-righteous boasting in salvation.
* We are not saved on merit, but by the gift of grace.

**Covenant of peace**

Isaiah 54: 10 & 13 - 14

* A covenant is an agreement, an alliance or a pledge.
* Great shall be the peace of your children because they are taught of the Lord.
* Psalm 119: 165 (NLT)

“Those who love Your instructions have ***great peace*** and do not stumble.”

* Great peace – abundant, abounding, full, exceedingly, plenteous.
* John 16: 33 - The Lord Jesus spoke to (taught) His disciples that ‘in Him’ they might have peace.

***Tribulation*** - pressure, burden, persecution, oppression, trouble.

To be of ***good cheer*** is to have courage.

**So, what is peace?**

God’s peace is granted to us when we come to Jesus in faith.

It’s not a feeling but can be expressed through feelings.

***It is a spiritual reality that cannot be explained or reasoned through the mind or sense knowledge.***

Peace is a product of righteousness (or the fruit of righteousness).

***Psalm 37: 37 NLT***

Look at those who are honest and good, for a wonderful future awaits those who love peace.

* Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God (Romans 5: 1).
* And the fruit of righteousness in sown in peace of them that make peace (James 3: 17 – 18 & Hebrews 12: 11).
* Romans 4: 13 (righteousness by faith, not through the law).
* Isaiah 32: 17 (the work of righteousness shall be peace).
* Spiritual uprightness is evidenced by the presence of peace in our lives (Psalm 37: 37 - 40).
* Peace always precedes courage – *because we trust in God* (Isaiah 26: 3).

**How do we attain and maintain peace?**

Peace is part of the covenant we have with God, so it is part of our inheritance.

* You can’t be in peace and have worry and anxiety at the same time.
* One is going to dominate – one will be your master. *Choose peace*.

Isaiah 9: 6 – 7

* He is the Prince of Peace
* There is an endless supply of peace available to the believer in Christ.

Jesus is our peace (Ephesians 2: 12 - 15).

When we abide in Him, we abide in peace, even when we are surrounded by tribulation, conflict, persecution, trouble and distress.

1. Peace is evidence that we are walking in the Spirit.
2. Peace comes from abiding in the Word of God.
3. Peace that Jesus gives flows from a life of prayer.

**Firstly**

Peace is evidence that we are walking in the Spirit (Galatians 5: 16 – 22 NLT).

* For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace (Romans 8: 6 - 8). Flesh cannot please God = *NO PEACE*.

***Galatians 5: 17***

There is conflict between the flesh and the Spirit. That creates turmoil and robs us of peace.

* Turmoil and peace cannot dwell together.
* But we are not in the flesh but in the Spirit (if we are born again).
* Ephesians 4: 1- 3 (unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace).
* John 14: 27 – By God’s grace we must refuse to be troubled or frightened in our circumstance (which could cost us our peace), in obedience to our Lord Jesus Christ.
* Remember, we are working in cooperation with God (John 5: 17 NLT).

***There is no law against the fruits of the Spirit.***

The grace of God will empower us to walk in the Spirit.

* We have the magnificent indwelling presence of God’s Holy Spirit
* Peace is a spiritual force residing on the inside of us.
	+ 1 Corinthians 6: 19 (Temple of the Holy Spirit).
	+ Ephesians 3: 20 (according to the power that works in us).
	+ Meditation apart from the Word of God is a counterfeit peace.
* 1 Kings 18: 26 – 29 – The prophets of Baal were in turmoil trying to please a false God that could not hear or respond.

**Secondly**

***The Word builds faith, faith builds trust and trust brings peace***

Peace comes from abiding in the Word of God. (Psalm 119: 165).

* Proverbs 3: 1 – 2 (length of days, long life and peace shall they add).

***Hebrews 12:11***

The ***chastening*** (disciplinary correction)of the Lord yields the ***peaceable*** fruit of righteousness.

* Wisdom yields peace (Proverbs 3: 16 - 17).
* The most certain way to prevent fear and doubt is to dwell in peace.
* Perfect love and perfect peace both come from the God of love and peace.
* 2 Corinthians 13: 11 – The God of love and peace shall be with you.
* 1 John 4: 18 – Perfect love casts out fear: because fear hath torment.
* 2 Peter 1: 2- ***Grace*** and ***peace*** be multiplied (abound or increase) unto you ***through*** the knowledge of God, ***and*** of Jesus our Lord.
* Romans 15: 13 - Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.
	+ Abound in hope.

***Seek peace*** means to search out, strive after, ask, desire, procure or make a request.

* + Through the power of the Holy Spirit.

***Luke 11: 9***

Ask and it shall be given you, ***seek and ye shall find***; knock, and it shall be open unto you.

* + NLT – Joy and peace because you trust in Him. Then you will overflow with confident hope.
* Perfect peace is a ***grace gift*** and only comes to those motivated to seek it (Psalm 34: 12 – 16). Seek peace and pursue it (1 Peter 3: 10 – 11).
	+ NLT – search for peace and work to maintain it.
* If we look at God’s Word as a means of grace by which we receive *perfect peace*, then the required time, effort and concentration would be gladly given.
* Acts 17: 10 – 12 (the people in Berea searched the scriptures daily. They were more noble (open minded) than those in Thessalonica).

***John 15:5***

Without me you can do nothing.

**Luke 10: 38**

Martha was full of cares, Mary had peace.

Bible examples

***Jesus***

Mark 4: 35 – 41

* Peace always brings rest. We enter His rest by faith.
* Love always cares. We must know and believe the love God has toward us to be in perfect peace.
* When you have peace, you can declare peace (*peace be still)*.
* Fear always robs us of peace (shalom). It contaminates faith and releases torment.
* Words matter if we are going to walk in perfect peace.

***The disciples***

Acts 4: 10 – 20

* With peace comes boldness of faith. *Remember, peace always precedes courage* because we trust in God (Acts 4: 17 – 20).
* Abiding in the word builds boldness of faith – *they had been with Jesus*.
* No longer moved by the dictates of men (Acts 1: 8).

***Paul***

Acts 21: 8 – 14

* Paul was not moved by threat or fear of death. He was willing to die for the name of the Lord.
* Paul knew in whom he believed (2 Timothy 1: 12).

**Thirdly**

A covenant is an agreement, an alliance or a pledge.

The peace that the Lord gives, flows from a life of prayer.

(Philippians 4: 6 – 9).

* If we can ask about everything, then we should be careful for nothing.

***Understanding***

Includes mind, thoughts, feelings, thinking and judging.

* You can’t have anxiety ***and*** peace at the same time. One replaces the other.
* He assures us of peace because He has everything under control.
* We cannot comprehend ‘*the peace of God*” with our own understanding.
* Keep your mind and thoughts fixed on God (guard your heart).
* Remember, we have a covenant of peace (Isaiah 54: 10 & 13 – 14).

John 16: 24

Hitherto have you asked nothing in My name: ***ask***, and you shall receive, that your ***joy may be full*** (cheerfulness, calm delight, gladness).

Proverbs 15: 29

The Lord is far from the wicked, but He hears the prayers of the ***righteous.***

*What is prayer*?

Prayer is communicating with God (with confidence and assurance) – believing and receiving what He has already given to us in Jesus (grace).

* Hebrews 4: 14 – 16 (we’re not going to the cross, but to the throne).
* Prayer is spoken, not thought (Luke 11: 2). “*When you pray,* ***say****.”*

*What prayer is not*

Prayer is not trying to get God’s attention.

Prayer is not trying to get God to do something.

Prayer changes things, not God. He never changes.

Remember, it is God’s job (not ours) to take care of tomorrow (Matthew 6: 34).

Instead of worry, petition God for our needs, then thank Him and confidently rest and work with the assurance that Jehovah Jireh will provide (Genesis 22: 14).

King Jehoshaphat applied this principle

2 Chronicles 20: 1 – 30 (NLT)

* He was terrified by the news and begged the Lord for guidance.
* He ordered a fast – gets our spirit quiet before God.
* He reminded the people of the power, might and majesty of the one true God.
* As all the men of Judah stood before the Lord with their little ones, wives and children, the Lord responded.

***2 Chron 20:21***

Give thanks to the Lord; His faithful love endures forever.

* Don’t be afraid or discouraged by natural circumstances.
* God will fight your battle for you.
* Worship and praise before the victory. That’s the way of faith in God.
* Believe, praise and succeed.
* Result - v30 (So Jehoshaphat’s kingdom was at peace, for his God had given him peace on every sideis gGod

***With prayer comes praise – because we trust in Him***.

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**The Gospel of peace**

Romans 10: 15

How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring ***glad tidings of good things*** (*NLT – how beautiful are the feet of messengers who bring good news*).

Isaiah 52: 7 (The good news must publish ‘peace with God’).

Ephesians 6: 15

And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

* Shod means to bind under one’s feet like shoes or sandals.
* Always be prepared (1 Peter 3: 13 - 16 NLT).

2 Timothy 4:1 – 4

* Paul was urging Timothy to preach the gospel whether conditions were favourable or unfavourable.
* To be ***instant*** is to be at hand or to be ready or present.
* Paul was warning of a time when people would not endure sound doctrine (reject the truth) and chase after myths. They will seek out false teachers who will tell them whatever they want to hear.

What is the gospel?

***Acts 20: 24***

Paul received a ministry to testify the gospel of the grace of God.

* It is the power of God for salvation (Romans 1: 16 & 1 Cor 1: 18).
* The gospel of Christ is the gospel of grace (Galatians 1: 6 – 8).
* It is the way of peace (Luke 1: 76 – 79 John the Baptist).
* Luke 19: 41 – 44 (NLT). The way of peace was hidden because they did not know the time of His visitation.
* There is peace with God through Jesus Christ (Acts 10: 34 - 36 NLT).
	+ 2 Corinthians 5: 17 – 20 (NLT). God is making His plea through us – “***Come back to God***.”

***The war is over. It’s peace time.***

* + Reconcile means to return to favour with or to receive one into favour.
	+ God was declaring it in advance, calling those things which be not as though they were (Luke 2: 13 - 14).
* Romans 14: 17 – peace and joy comes from a place of righteousness. That’s the kingdom of God.

The gospel is hidden to them that are lost

2 Corinthians 4: 3 – 4

Blinded their perception or thought.

* The god of this word has blinded the ***minds*** of them that believe not.
* But the gospel is light to illuminate their understanding.
* With understanding of God’s love and grace comes peace.

Mark 4: 34

* Faith will make you ***whole*** (Sozo). That’s the gospel of peace.

***Whole*** (Sozo) means – to save, deliver or protect, heal, preserve, do well or make whole.

**God’s perfect peace or the world’s counterfeit**

Jesus did not come to bring peace on the earth

World (*Kosmos*) this entire world system

Matthew 10: 34 - 36

Luke 12: 51- 53

God’s peace is different from the world’s peace.

John 14: 27

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: ***not as the world gives***, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”

The peace offered by the world is an empty promise and can only bring temporary comfort. God’s peace is a permanent peace offered by the only one who can be trusted to keep His Word. ***“Peace I leave with you.”***

The world’s peace is counterfeit.

* It’s delivered through the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. Adam and Eve traded perfect peace for a counterfeit.
* The counterfeit always brings guilt, shame and condemnation (Genesis 3: 1 – 7). What they had was God’s perfection, but they believed a lie.

The world’s peace is fleeting and changes with circumstances.

* Two realities – (1) people are desperate for peace (2) they think that changing their circumstances will bring it to them. ***It won’t***.

***Circumstances are always changing.***

***God’s word doesn’t.***

* Provision, relationships, opinions of men / acceptance or the world’s narrative of the day which gains popularity and voice.
* ***Peace is an inside job.***
* Jesus’ solution is not an outward change of circumstances, but an inward change of the heart (John 16: 33).
* Matthew 11: 28 – 30 – ***Rest*** means to take ease, refresh, to keep quiet or calm. ***Yoke*** means to join by a coupling.

If any doctrine makes provision for the flesh, it’s not of God. That’s the true litmus test.

The world’s peace relies on the power of self.

Psalm 103: 1-2

David blessed the Lord with his soul.

* Luke 12: 16 – 21
* He was saying to his soul – no need to trust God.
* Take thine ***ease*** is the same word ***rest***.

The world’s peace is built on the weak foundation of compromise.

* Exodus 34: 12 – 14 (NLT)
* Deuteronomy 7: 2 - 3
* 2 Corinthians 6: 14

The world’s peace ignores the root of the problem, which is sin

* Separation from God and therefore His peace.
* Ephesians 2: 12 (strangers from the covenant of peace).
* Colossians 1: 20 (Peace is made through the blood of Christ).
* Only a recreated human spirit can attain and maintain peace.

***God’s peace is permanent and secure. It is built on the secure foundation of His Word. It is never subject to the natural but governed by the supernatural. That’s “Perfect Peace”.***