

Every Good Tree

PEACE

Matthew 7:16-20

August 01, 2020

The desire of all humanity is peace. But what kind of peace do we want, exactly?

- No war?
- No quarrels, conflicts, arguments with family, friends, co-workers?
- No civil disturbances or riots – law and order?
- No political in-fighting?
- Calm and tranquility?

Is that all there is to peace? A trouble-free existence where nothing bad ever happens – a “don’t worry, be happy” kind of life?

No.... There is more to it than a simple “no-hassle” life.

The peace woven into God’s original creation has been ruined by sin.

- Internal peace was replaced with guilt and shame = **NO PEACE**.
- Intimate relationship between people was replaced with blame, distrust, jealousy, bigotry, racism..... = **NO PEACE**.
- The mutually beneficial relationship between man and nature was destroyed and all of creation has been groaning ever since {Romans 8:22} = **NO PEACE**.
- The biggest hit to peace was upon the relationship between God and man. Adam and Eve ran and hid from God, whose friendship they had enjoyed just the day before --- love was replaced by fear and we’ve been running ever since = **NO PEACE**.

All aspects of peace have been ruined by sin and restoration is the only solution. Good thing God had a plan - Christ Jesus!

Through Jesus we have **Peace WITH God**:

- **Isaiah 9:6** - For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of **Peace**.
- **Isaiah 53:5** - But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us **peace** was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.
- **Romans 5:1** - Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have **peace** with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,
- **Ephesians 2:13-14** - But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he himself is our **peace**, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,
- **Colossians 1:19-20** - For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making **peace** through his blood, shed on the cross. ²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation—

Jesus is the Bridge that restores peace between us and God.

Here are a few news headlines from this week:

- Virus back with a vengeance in places where it had vanished
- The worst states to be unemployed
- Hospitalizations among kids jumps 23% in Florida
- New threat in Atlantic as Hurricane Douglas nears Hawaii
- Protests continue over fight for racial equality
- Pessimism mounting among SF Bay Area small business owners

Satan is doing everything possible to steal our peace ---- But through Jesus we have the **Peace OF God**.

There once was a King who offered a prize to the artist who painted the best picture of peace. The competition came down to 2 paintings:

- The **1st** was of a calm lake surrounded by towering mountains and blue sky with fluffy white clouds floating by.
- The **2nd** had mountains too - rugged and bare. The sky was angry – lightning danced and rain fell. Down the mountain tumbled a foaming, violent waterfall. Behind the waterfall a tiny bush grew and within its branches a mother bird had built a nest. In the midst of the chaos there sat the mother bird in perfect peace.

The King chose the 2nd painting..... He explained, "***peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble, or hard work. Peace means to be in the midst of all those things and still be calm in your heart. That is the real meaning of peace.***"

- **Isaiah 26:3** - You will keep in perfect **peace** him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you.
- **Psalms 4:8** - I will lie down and sleep in **peace**, for you alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety.
- **Matthew 11:28** - Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find **rest for your souls**.
- **John 14:27 - Peace** I leave with you; my **peace** I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.
- **John 16:33** - I've told you all this so that trusting me, you will be unshakable and assured, deeply at **peace**. In this godless world you will continue to experience difficulties. But take heart! I've conquered the world." {the message bible}
- **Philippians 4:6-8** - Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ And the **peace** of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

That is the **internal peace** that Jesus came to bring. That is what God promises will be our experience if we will choose to walk with Jesus and allow Him to be our Savior and the Lord of our lives.

We are not just to be receivers of God's peace --- through Jesus we are also called to be **VESSELS of God's peace**.

- **Proverbs 12:20** - There is deceit in the hearts of those who plot evil, but joy for those who promote **peace**.
- **Matthew 5:9** - Blessed are the **peacemakers**, for they will be called sons of God.
- **Romans 14:17-19** - For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, **peace** and joy in the Holy Spirit, ¹⁸ because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men. ¹⁹ Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to **peace** and to mutual edification.
- **Ephesians 4:2-3** - Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. ³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of **peace**.
- **Colossians 3:15** - Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to **peace**.
- **Hebrews 12:14** - Make every effort to live in **peace** with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord.

In a world currently out of control, this point is vital ---- You and I are called to take the internal peace we have been given and spread it around. We are to speak peace into other lives --- It is to ooze out of every pore.

God desires that we have real and lasting peace – it cost the life of His Son, after all.

This kind of Peace does not come naturally to us, however, and we have no ability to manufacture it through human effort..... But **PEACE** is meant to be a hallmark of the Christian life – it is not an optional extra.

What is the solution? Allowing the Holy Spirit into our lives to guide and transform them. The Holy Spirit will not automatically operate in the life of a Christian. A transformed life only happens as we surrender to and cooperate with the Holy Spirit.

Choosing the Holy Spirit is an absolute necessity for Victorious Christian living. Why? Because the power of a fruitful life does not lie with the believer, but with the Spirit. Just as an apple tree doesn't think about producing apples – it produces apples because it's an apple tree and because it's connected with the source of life, so it is with a believer. A believer doesn't **TRY** to produce righteous fruit. He produces fruit **BECAUSE** he is a believer and **BECAUSE** he is connected to his source of life --- the Holy Spirit.

- **John 15:1-5** - "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. ² "Every branch in Me that does not bear **fruit**, He takes away; and every *branch* that bears **fruit**, He prunes it, that it may bear more **fruit**. ³ "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. ⁴ "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear **fruit** of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither *can* you, unless you abide in Me. ⁵ "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much **fruit**; for apart from Me you can do nothing.

PEACE is produced by God's work in us --- it's a gift.

- Galatians 5:22-25 - The FRUIT of the Spirit is love, joy, PEACE, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. ²⁴ Now those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. ²⁵ If we live **by** the Spirit, let us also walk **by** the Spirit.

God alone is the source of our PEACE.

PEACE is the evidence that the Holy Spirit is at work in our lives – transforming us into the image of Jesus.

Every Good Tree Produces ---- PEACE

The Lord bless you and keep you;

The Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you;

The Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. {Numbers 6:24-26}

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and *peace* as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
{Romans 15:13}