

Series: ***The Marks of A True Christian***

## My Peace I Give To You

A Mark of A True Christian Is Possessing The Peace of Christ

**John 14:27**

### Introduction

My prayer this morning is that God would grant you a renewed sense of peace that comes from being in His presence together. I pray that the Lord would pour out His Spirit upon us and fill us with His peace in such a way that our spirits will be renewed and refreshed through the worship of Jesus. This is what the kingdom of God is all about.

### Romans 14:17

*For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and **peace** and joy in the Holy Spirit.*

### Romans 15:13

*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*

“Hope fills the afflicted soul with such inward joy and consolation, that it can laugh while tears are in the eye.”<sup>1</sup>

Being filled with joy and peace by the power of the Holy Spirit results in hope filling up our hearts to overflowing. **Joy and peace and hope are to the soul what air and food and drink are to the body.** Without air and food and drink our bodies will wither and die. Without joy and peace and hope, our souls will shrivel and die.

We are adept at feeding our bodies, (we structure our entire day around mealtimes), but I do not think we are as good at feeding our souls. There are loud physical reminders when our stomachs are empty. The signs of spiritual emptiness are not as easily discerned.

### The Need for Peace

This past week I sensed on several occasions that there are many of us who are in need of peace in our souls. It may be that our bellies are full, but our souls are bordering on empty. Physically we may be strong, but spiritually we are weak, and maybe even exhausted.

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<sup>1</sup> William Gurnall – a 17<sup>th</sup> century Puritan minister.

Our lives are busy. Our days are filled with activity and nights rarely bring rest. There are so many tasks to be done that we can scarcely keep us with our schedules. Our calendars are filled so quickly, that rarely if ever is there time to be quiet in the presence of the Lord.

We are so busy we barely have time to think. So our spirits are groaning and we are so busy we hardly hear the moan. We go about with this nagging sense that something is not quite right, but we just can't put our finger on it. Being busy is not bad. We are called to do good works. But the question this morning is in all of the business of life **are you experiencing the peace of Christ?**

### Why You Need To Hear This

This is important. Peace is important. It is so important that in every one of his thirteen<sup>2</sup> New Testament letters (twice in Ephesians), the apostle Paul within the first few sentences expresses his desire that peace be upon his readers. Fourteen times he wrote, “Grace to you and **peace** from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Paul yearned for peace in every church to whom He wrote. Every letter he wrote had a plea for peace at the top of the list! **We need peace.** We need to experience again the refreshing reality of the promise of Jesus.

### John 14:27

*Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.*

Pray: Jesus, teach us what this means. Let us experience this promise today. Let us know what it means to receive Your peace. Teach us to walk in your peace. If we don't have Your peace this morning, then please give it to us. If there is something in our lives that is preventing us from living in Your peace, then please reveal it to us. Give us Your peace. Bring peace to our hearts through the power of Your Holy Spirit. Through Jesus I pray. Amen.

Jesus spoke these words on the night before his crucifixion. The final words of Jesus are recorded in great detail in the gospel of John. Jesus gives His disciples many sweet and precious promises on that night. John records things that Jesus spoke which no other gospel writer records. This promise before us this morning is one of those promises.

### A Promise Given to His True Disciples

This promise is among the final instructions that Jesus gives to His disciples. He spoke these words to His **eleven true disciples**. After they had shared the Lord's Supper, Judas departed and went out to betray Him by arranging His capture (John 13:27-30). Jesus spoke these words after Judas had gone out. *So this promise was given to His true disciples and not to any who were false.*

Later (17:20) when Jesus prayed to His Father we discover that Jesus did not have only the original eleven in mind, but all disciples who would subsequently believe in Him through their testimony.

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<sup>2</sup> Rom 1:7; 1 Cor 1:3; 2 Cor 1:2; Gal 1:3; Eph 1:2; 6:23; Phil 1:2; Col 1:2; 1 Thes 1:1; 2 Thes 1:2; 1 Tim 1:2; 2 Tim 1:2; Titus 1:4; Phil 1:3 (see also 1 Ptr 1:2; 2 Ptr 1:2; 2 John 1:3).

## John 17:20

*I do not ask for these only, but also for those who will believe in me through their word.*

So this promise extends to all those who would (in the future) believe in Jesus' name and put their trust in Him. That includes you and me and anyone who will put their faith in Him. And is this not the reason why John recorded this in his gospel, so that those who would come after him would be encouraged and strengthened by this promise?<sup>3</sup>

## This Promise Is Given To All True Disciples

So what Jesus said, He said to those who were His true disciples. And if we today are truly His disciples then He is saying this to us. Since we are in a sermon series entitled *The Marks of A True Christian*, these words catch our attention. This promise of Jesus pertains to one of the marks of a true Christian, which is the peace that Jesus gives.

## Peace I leave with you

Jesus tells His disciples that He is leaving His peace with them. ***The peace of Christ is one of the marks of a true Christian.***

## Jesus Was Leaving

Jesus is leaving them. He is going to be taken away from them. He knows that He is about to be crucified. He is preparing them for His death. But His disciples do not yet understand what is about to happen. Peter asks, "Lord, where are you going?" (13:36). Thomas asks the same question (14:5), "Lord, we do not know where you are going."

## His Last Will & Testament

Jesus was about to die and He was telling those closest to Him what He was leaving them. Essentially what Jesus was doing was verbalizing His last will and testament. When people are about to die they write a will to ensure that what belongs to them is distributed according to their wishes. Jesus is bequeathing peace to them.

## Jesus Did Not Leave What Most Men Leave

Jesus did not leave His children what most men leave their children. He did not leave them houses, cars, and land. "*Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man did not have a place to lay His head*" (Matt 8:20).

He didn't have to worry about them fighting over his costly wardrobe. He did not have to hire a lawyer to ensure equitable distribution of all His goods. He had no earthly estate. He did not have a huge fortune to distribute. He did not leave them stocks and bonds. But He did have something to leave that would be of immense value to His disciples; peace.

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<sup>3</sup> The apostle Paul states that this was indeed the purpose of the entire Old Testament, our instruction and endurance (see Romans 15:4).

When one is facing death often the things that have been of greatest value come to mind. We want to make sure that those whom we love and are leaving will enjoy the things that have been of the greatest benefit to us. We leave to our heirs those things that have brought us the greatest comfort and joy in hope that they too will share in the same experience.

Jesus knew that His death would bring great sorrow to the hearts of His disciple, so He said, “*Peace I leave with you.*” He knew they would benefit from peace during their time of grieving. They would be in need of comfort, so he would leave them with peace.

### **The Definition of Peace**

What is peace? Peace is:

- freedom from disturbance; quiet and tranquility; mental calm; rest.
- freedom from or the cessation of war or violence
- freedom from civil disorder
- freedom from dispute or dissension between individuals or groups

Does this fully define the peace that Jesus was leaving His disciples?

### **My Peace I Give To You**

But what kind of peace would they most need? Jesus went on to tell them that He would leave them a unique kind of peace. “*My peace I give to you.*” He would leave them **His** peace. He wouldn’t leave them any ordinary peace. Peace is good, but Jesus would give them of His very own peace. He would give them the peace that He personally possessed. *We cannot give what we do not own.* Jesus possessed peace and He would give it to His disciples.

### **Constant & Intimate Peace with His Father**

What kind of peace did Jesus have? In the days of His flesh Jesus was sustained by a most intimate peace between Himself and His heavenly Father. Jesus always and only did things that were pleasing to His Father. This resulted in an incredible constant relationship of peace.

#### **John 8:28b – 29**

*...I do nothing on My own authority, but speak just as the Father taught Me. 29 And He who sent Me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do the things that are pleasing to Him.*

Jesus never said anything His Father did not want Him to say so there was never any disappointment or disapproval from His Father. Jesus never desired His own will but always did the will of His Father so there was never strife or discord over who was in control. Jesus never disobeyed His Father so there never was any sin to separate them. He always obeyed His Father so they never argued. They were never at odds with each other. Jesus experienced a constant and intimate relationship of peace with God the Father.

### **Peace And Joy**

The peace that existed between Father and Son resulted in a life of overflowing joy that did not diminish even in the face of death.

John 15:11 *These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.*

Even in the face of death Jesus was so full of joy that He desired that His joy should overflow and fill the hearts of His disciples. The greatest and last enemy that any of us will ever face is death. The peace that Jesus possessed was the kind of peace that was life giving. If the peace of Christ was able to sustain Him through death, then surely we should be comforted by His words to us. This promise should be like honey to our souls.

John 17:13 ... *these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves.*

Jesus wanted His disciples to experience fullness of joy. He was so at peace with His Father that even on the eve of His death He was able to speak about joy. Death for Him could not rob Him of His joy. His soul was at peace and so durable was His peace that not even death could overcome it. Though His soul was troubled in the face of death, His peace of soul gave Him endurance that bore through the suffering and carried Him safely into the glory of His Father.

It was this kind of peace that He was giving to His disciples. And this is the kind of peace He offers to us. ***It is this very peace of Christ that marks the true Christian.*** Hear the words of Jesus, ***“My peace I give to you.”***

## Not As the World Gives Do I Give To You

Jesus then contrasts the peace that He gives over against the kind of peace the world gives. The peace of Christ is very different from the peace the world gives. There is a kind of peace that the world gives, but what kind is it?

### Worldly Peace Is Promised Through Possessions

The peace the world promises is bound up in the acquisition of possessions. The world thinks peace is found in possessing lots of stuff. The parable of the rich fool will help us learn that this is not true.

#### Luke 12:13-21

- 13 Someone in the crowd said to him, Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me.  
14 But he said to him, *Man, who made me a judge or arbitrator over you?*  
15 And he said to them, *Take care, and be on your guard against all covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions.*  
16 And he told them a parable, saying, *The land of a rich man produced plentifully,*  
17 *and he thought to himself, What shall I do, for I have nowhere to store my crops?*  
18 *And he said, I will do this: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods.*  
19 *And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.*  
20 *But God said to him, Fool! This night your soul is required of you, and the things you have prepared, whose will they be?*  
21 *So is the one who lays up treasure for himself and is not rich toward God.*

Possessions cannot bring peace to our souls. We go to bed late and rise up early only to eat the bread of anxious toil (Psalm 127:2). That kind of bread does not satisfy our souls. Peace is not found in abundance of possessions. Jesus invites you to a better table.

### **Isaiah 55:1-3**

*Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and he who has no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. 2 Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourself in rich food. 3 Incline you ear, and come to me; hear that your soul may live...*

Jesus invites us to come to Him and drink (John 7:37) and He will **give** us food that endures to eternal life (John 6:27). Jesus says, “*Come to me all who are weary and heavy-laden and I will give you rest for your souls*” (Matt 11:28). This is not the peace the world promises, but it is the kind of peace that Jesus gives away for free.

### **Worldly Peace Ignores Judgment**

The peace the world promises denies the reality of God’s coming judgment. The false prophets of Israel cried, “Peace, peace, when there was no peace” (Jer 6:14; 8:11; Ez 13:10). The sins of Israel had grown so bad that God had decided to destroy the land and not even Moses or Samuel could cause Him to change His mind (Jer 15:1).

The judgment of God is real and all sinners who are not covered by the blood of Jesus will endure His wrath one day. The false prophets of today deny this. “God is a God of love and not judgment,” they say. That is only half true. God is a God of love, but He is also a just God who will judge the world in righteousness by the man Jesus Christ. On that day there will be no peace for those who have loved sin.

### **Isaiah 48:22**

*“There is no peace,” says the Lord, “for the wicked.”*

The peace of Christ does not ignore the coming judgment. Christ Himself bore God’s righteous wrath and therefore only those who are in Jesus can have peace with God. Jesus is the **Prince of Peace** (Is 9:6) and only at His birth came the announcement that peace had come to earth.

### **Worldly Peace Is Temporal**

The peace the world has to offer is only for a moment, but the peace of Christ is eternal. Everything this world has to offer will come to an end. The earth will pass away and all its vain promises with it, but the promises of Jesus will never come to an end. “*Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away*” (Matt 24:35).

### **1 Corinthians 7:31b**

*For the present form of this world is passing away.*

The peace the world has to offer will not last, but the peace that Jesus gives will never fade or pass away.

## Let Not Your Hearts Be Troubled, Neither Let Them Be Afraid

Jesus wanted His disciples to experience this kind of peace in the depths of their hearts. He wanted them to know this peace in the inner most depths of their being. He intended that His words would comfort their troubled hearts and drive out all fear. *“Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”*

### True Peace Found Only In Jesus

So how do we experience this peace of Christ? First, it comes by realizing that true peace of soul can only be found in Jesus. The peace that we yearn for is found only in Him alone and in no other place or in no other person.

John 16:33 *I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart I have overcome the world.*

Jesus was a realist. He was quite aware that “this world lies in the power of the evil one” (1 John 5:19). He could not have stated it more plainly, *“In the world you will have tribulation.”* In the world we find nothing but difficulty, but **in Jesus** we find peace.

Augustine said it this way, “Thou hast created us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee.”<sup>4</sup>

Peace and rest of soul is only found in Jesus.

But how do we appropriate this peace. How does the knowledge of these facts bring comfort to our souls when we are in the stress of our job or in the stress of tension at home or in the pain of difficult family life? As I was praying about an answer to that question, the Lord brought a verse to mind.

### Isaiah 26:3

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

Tranquility of mind comes to the mind whose thoughts are fixed on a personal God and not on a problem. True peace can be found in the middle of tribulation when we direct our thoughts to Him in quiet trust. **A trusting soul is a tranquil soul.** When we truly rest in the unlimited power of God and stop striving in our own limited power, then we are kept in perfect peace.

The Psalmist said it this way,

### Ps 46:10

*Be still and know that I am God.*

This is an invitation to spiritual rest in God’s ability and not our own. It is a call to rest in His power and not our own. It is a call away from our efforts and to His provision.

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<sup>4</sup> *The Confessions of Augustine*, Book 1 chap. 1



## Jesus Calms The Storm

Imagine how the disciples felt that night in the middle of the terrible windstorm (Mark 4:35-40). The waves were crashing over the side of the boat and water was beginning to fill the boat. The waves were raging and completely out of the control of the disciples. More water was coming into the boat faster than they could bail it out.

And where is Jesus? He was **asleep on a cushion**. And they woke him and said, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?”

### Mark 4:39-40

39 And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “**Peace! Be still!**” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. 40 He said to them, “**Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?**” 41 And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even wind and sea obey him?”

Do you believe this? Do you believe that El Nino is under the command of Jesus? Do you believe that He possesses the power to stop storms? He can speak one word and the jet stream stops jetting. He controls the weather. He controls this entire world. Do you believe this?

*The reason we are stressed and about to fall apart is because we really don't trust Him. The reason we are afraid is because we really don't believe that His words are true. The peace of Christ does not remove us from all storms. Yet He comes to us in the middle of the storm and invites our souls to have faith in Him. The storms of life are tests of trust to reveal to us where our faith really is.*

Don't believe the lie that Jesus is asleep at the wheel of your life. In the days of His flesh he needed rest, but He no longer suffers from the weaknesses of the flesh. He who keeps you neither slumbers or sleeps (Psalm 121:4).

**“Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?”**

### Isaiah 26:12

*O LORD, you will ordain peace for us; you have done for us all our works.*

Jesus has done for us all that God required to have peace with Him. His work is finished. He is now seated at the right hand of the Father. The work of our physical bodies is still to continue, but the work required to bring peace to our souls is finished. We have to go to work tomorrow morning, but Jesus has done all the spiritual work that is required by God. *The only requirement left for us is to trust in the work that He has done.*

### John 6:29

*This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom he has sent.*

### Is 30:15

*For thus said the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel,  
In returning and rest you shall be saved;  
in quietness and in trust shall be your strength.*



Return to Him with all your heart. Rest in Him. He has not abandoned you because you are in a storm. Don't let your hearts be troubled or be afraid. He gives peace to His disciples in the middle of the storm. Return to Him. Quietly trust in Him and you will find strength to endure the storm. He holds out peace to us if we will but trust Him to give it to us.