

Wonderful Peace

"For He Himself is our peace..." Ephesians 2:14

I once read that that of all things people desire most in life, it is peace. It was not fame or fortune, or even physical health that most people want. No, it is not any of the things we might suppose. Instead, it is one simple thing - peace. And I believe it! With the world unravelling at a frightening pace, with time-revered structures and foundations crumbling all around us and "cancel culture" at its height, is it any wonder then that there is an overwhelming, universal cry for peace? It is not just within our own borders of the United States that this is occurring, but it is taking place all around the world, simultaneously. When you think about it, I can surely understand why the need for peace tops the list. To have inward calm and genuine peace of mind is truly priceless.

Peace to the Heart

As those who know the Lord Jesus, we acknowledge that He is indeed the Prince of Peace. Whenever you hear of anyone referred to as a "prince" it usually means that they are at the top, the very best. The Lord certainly is that since it is one of His many titles (Isa. 9:6). In the Upper Room on the night that He was betrayed, He bequeathed this peace to His disciples when He said to them, *"Peace, I leave with you, not as the world gives"* (John 14:27). *"Not as the world gives"* – how appropriately worded. The world has its vaunted substitutes for peace, some palliative in one form or another that can only mask the issue for a brief period. But our Peace is *"not as the world gives."* He comes from Glory and is the Source of all blessing, a Person and not an empty promise. He has broken down the middle wall of partition between Jew and Gentile and has abolished the enmity that was between them (Eph. 2:14-15). In context, it is a reference to the formation of the Church, but it also shows that the only way that harmony between people can come about is through Christ. How the nations need to hear this word, instead of taking to the streets to march for their cause. Israel certainly did not realize the things that would make for their peace and neither do most today. The clear answer is given in Scripture: *"For He Himself is our peace."* Psalm 85:8 says it well: *"The Lord speaks peace to His people but let them not return to folly."*

Peace in the Heart

But He is our peace in other ways too. After His resurrection, when the disciples were cowering in a room for fear of the Jews (John 20:19), the Lord came and offered peace to them in the midst of that fear. Later, when they were commissioned by Him - certainly an opportunity for worry to rear its ugly head - He offered the same reassuring words to bring about much-needed comfort and reassurance (John 21:21). When Thomas doubted the Lord's resurrection, he was given the same words, demolishing his doubt. And when the disciples were on the Sea of Galilee in danger of being capsized, He proclaimed, *"Peace be still."* Not long afterwards, an untamable, demon-possessed man was calmed by the presence of Christ and felt that peace come over his soul like never before. Myriads have followed since. The Lord told His disciples during another harrowing experience at sea: *"Be of good cheer, it is I, be not afraid"* (Matt. 14:27). Don't forget that the words *"It is I"* carry a lot of weight. It is a heaven-sent reminder that provides a lot more comfort than any pill dispenser or stocked investment portfolio. He is the only One who can truly open the portals of peace for the anguished soul – yours perhaps, if you are presently going through the valley of the shadow. *"He Himself is our peace."*

Peace from the Heart

But the greatest expression of this truth is that He has changed our eternal destiny forever. We are no longer alienated in our minds by wicked works, but rather have been made near by the blood of Christ. Because we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. Because He is our peace, this is the closest to Hell we will ever be. Ahead of us is the glorious, joyful hope of Heaven – filled with all those who are permanent residents there, whose spirits have been made perfect through the blood of the Lamb and who are enjoying everything we read in Scripture about the land that is fairer than day. Heaven comprises the inheritance that we are guaranteed to receive that will never fade away, made possible by the heart of Him who gave His Son with so great a love.

So, in these days with events occurring every day that could “rock our boat,” remember He Himself is our peace. In the words of the hymn by W. D. Cornell:

What a treasure I have in this wonderful peace, buried deep in the heart of my soul,
So secure that no power can mine it away, while the years of eternity roll!

Peace, peace, wonderful peace, coming down from the Father above!
Sweep over my spirit forever, I pray in fathomless billows of love!