

# The Peace Of Christ



## Sermon Outlines On The Peace Of Christ

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**To God Be The Glory!**

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# **The Peace Of Christ**

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# The Peace Of Christ

## The Prince Of Peace

### INTRODUCTION

1. **Peace:** a word conveying wonderful concepts...
  - a. “a state of harmony, tranquility”
  - b. “the absence of hostility, the absence of mental stress or anxiety”
2. In the Bible, the word peace is used to translate...
  - a. **Shalom** (Hebrew) - completeness, soundness, welfare, peace - **BDB Hebrew Dictionary**
  - b. **Eirene** (Greek) - often refers to the inner tranquility and poise of the Christian whose trust is in God through Christ - **Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Dictionary**

[Peace is a quality and virtue that is sorely needed in the world and church today, for...]

### I. NOT EVERYONE ENJOYS PEACE

#### **A. THE WICKED...**

1. “There is no peace, says the Lord, for the wicked” - **Isa 48:22**
  2. The sins of the wicked separates one from God - **Isa 59:2**
  3. Sinful conduct destroys friendships and familial relationships - **Ga 5:19-21**
  4. Sin prevents true peace of mind - cf. **Isa 57:20-21**
- **The wicked are in dire need for peace**

#### **B. THE TROUBLED DISCIPLE...**

1. Even faithful disciples can become troubled - e.g., Martha, **Lk 10:41**
  2. Disciples lose their peace when they:
    - a. Fail to simplify their priorities - **Lk 10:42**
    - b. Become choked by cares, riches, and pleasures - **Lk 8:14**
    - c. Succumb to the desire to be rich - **1 Ti 6:10-11**
- **The righteous are often in need of peace**

#### **C. THE CONCERNED SERVANT...**

1. Who worries about their brethren, like Paul - **2 Co 2:12-13; 7:5; 11:28-29**
  2. Who becomes distressed with concern, like Epaphroditus - **Ph 2:25-26**
  3. Who sorrows when hearing bad news, like elders - **Ac 20:37-38**
- **Even the most dedicated servants finds themselves in need of peace at times**

[But wherever there is a need for peace, we have good news, for...]

### II. JESUS CAME TO BRING PEACE

#### **A. AS FORETOLD...**

1. By Isaiah, the Messianic prophet - **Isa 9:6**
2. By Zacharias, at the birth of John - **Lk 1:76-79**
3. By the heavenly host, at the birth of Jesus - **Lk 2:8-14**

-- **The Prince of Peace came to bring peace to men of good will!**

**B. AS PROCLAIMED...**

1. By Jesus Himself, to His disciples - **Jn 14:27; 16:33**
  2. By His apostles, as they taught the lost - **Ac 10:36**
- **The Prince of Peace offers peace that the world cannot give!**

[What is that peace? In anticipation of lessons to follow, let's briefly list...]

**III. THE PEACE THAT JESUS OFFERS**

**A. PEACE WITH GOD...**

1. Jesus makes it possible for us to be a peace with God
  2. Consider **Ro 5:1**
- **Without peace with God, no real peace is possible**

**B. PEACE WITH MANKIND...**

1. Jesus breaks down the barriers between mankind
  2. Consider **Ga 3:28**
- **Jesus makes peace between mankind**

**C. PEACE WITH ONESELF...**

1. Jesus offers peace within, unfazed by the world
  2. Consider **Ph 4:6-7**
- **Jesus provides peace that surpasses all understanding**

**D. PEACE WITH FAMILIES...**

1. Jesus provides peace for families seeking love and stability
  2. Consider **Co 3:18-21**
- **Following Jesus' doctrine leads to peace in the family**

**E. PEACE WITH BRETHREN...**

1. Jesus provides peace between brethren
  2. Consider **1 Pe 3:8-12**
- **Following Jesus' doctrine will lead to harmony among brethren**

**F. PEACE WITH CHURCHES...**

1. Jesus offers peace for the ills of denominationalism
  2. Consider **Jn 17:20-23; 1 Co 14:33**
- **Heeding the prayer of Jesus is the cure for denominationalism**

**G. PEACE WITH ENEMIES...**

1. Jesus shows us how to have peace with our enemies
  2. Consider **Mt 5:44; Lk 23:34**
- **Through precept and example, Jesus shows us how to make peace**

**CONCLUSION**

1. In succeeding lessons we will examine more closely such things as ...

- a. Making peace with **God**
  - b. Making peace with **mankind**
  - c. Making peace with **oneself**
  - d. Making peace with **families**
  - e. Making peace with **brethren**
  - f. Making peace with **churches**
  - g. Making peace with **enemies**
2. Do you have such peace? Or has...
- a. **Wicked practices** prevented you from finding peace?
  - b. **Misplaced priorities** robbed you of your peace?
  - c. **Bona fide concerns** filled your heart with anxiety?

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, is willing to give you His peace. As Paul prayed...

*“Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way.” - 2 Th 3:16*

# The Peace Of Christ

## Making Peace With God

### INTRODUCTION

1. Previously, we defined **peace** as...
  - a. “a state of harmony, tranquility”
  - b. “the absence of hostility, the absence of mental stress or anxiety”
2. In the Bible, the word peace is used to translate...
  - a. **Shalom** (Hebrew) - completeness, soundness, welfare, peace - **BDB Hebrew Dictionary**
  - b. **Eirene** (Greek) - often refers to the inner tranquility and poise of the Christian whose trust is in God through Christ - **Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Dictionary**
3. We made the following observations...
  - a. Not everyone enjoys peace
  - b. Jesus came to bring peace
  - c. The peace that Jesus offers entails many things

[We now examine more closely the peace Jesus offers, beginning with “**Making Peace With God**”...]

### I. THE NEED FOR PEACE WITH GOD

#### **A. HE IS THE GOD OF PEACE...**

1. God is often identified as “the God of peace” - e.g., **Ro 15:33**
  2. He is the source of true peace - cf. **Ro 15:13; 1 Co 1:3**
  3. It is His peace that can guard our hearts - **Ph 4:7**
- **To know God is to truly know peace!**

#### **B. SIN ALIENATES MAN FROM GOD...**

1. Sin separates man from God so that He will not hear - **Isa 59:1-2**; cf. **1 Pe 3:12**
  2. God will not let the wicked enjoy peace - e.g., **Isa 57:19-21**
  3. “There may be the appearance of joy, and there may be temporary prosperity. But there is no abiding, substantial, permanent happiness...” - **Barnes**
- **Without God, there can be no true peace!**

[As often stated: “**No God, no peace; know God, know peace**”. For sinners alienated from the God of peace...]

### II. JESUS MAKES PEACE WITH GOD POSSIBLE

#### **A. THROUGH JUSTIFICATION...**

1. Justified by faith, we have peace with God - **Ro 5:1**
2. Justification means “not guilty”, and this comes through grace and redemption - **Ro 3:24**
3. Redemption comes through Jesus’ blood, as a propitiation for sin - **Ro 3:25**; cf. **1 Jn 4:10**
4. Thus God becomes the justifier of the one who has faith in Christ - **Ro 3:26**
5. Such faith in Christ is an obedient faith - **Ro 1:5**; cf. **He 5:9**

-- **Justification through faith in Christ leads to peace with God!**

**B. THROUGH RECONCILIATION...**

1. Remember, sin separates man from God - **Isa 59:2**
  2. But God reconciles man back to Himself through Jesus Christ - **2 Co 5:18**
  3. Indeed, the apostles were given a ministry of reconciliation - **2 Co 5:18-19**
  4. As ambassadors of Christ, they implore us to be reconciled to God - **2 Co 5:20**
- **When one obeys the gospel of Christ, they are reconciled to God!**

[Through justification by faith in Christ, we are reconciled with the God of peace! What kind of peace does God offer those who have been reconciled with Him...?]

**III. THE PEACE OF GOD**

**A. DESCRIBED...**

1. God offers perfect peace - **Isa 26:3**
  2. He offers peace like a river - **Isa 48:18**
  3. He is willing to fill us with peace - **Ro 15:13**
  4. He is willing to give us peace always, in every way - **2 Th 3:16**
- **Wonderful is the peace that only God can provide!**

**B. ENJOYED...**

1. By those whose minds are stayed on Him, who trust in Him - **Isa 26:3**; cf. **Co 3:1-2**
  2. By those who heed His commandments - **Isa 48:18**
  3. By those who believe - **Ro 15:13**
  4. By those who let it rule in their hearts - **Co 3:15**
- **Those who believe and obey are the true recipients the peace of God!**

**CONCLUSION**

1. Have you obeyed the gospel of Jesus Christ...?
  - a. Believe in Jesus as the Son of God who died for your sins! - **Jn 8:24**
  - b. Repent of your sins, choosing to live for God! - **Ac 17:30**
  - c. Confess your faith in Jesus as Lord! - **Ro 10:9-10**
  - d. Be baptized into Christ for the remission of sins! - **Mk 16:16; Ac 2:38; 22:16; Ga 3:27**
  - e. Remain faithful to Jesus! - **Mt 28:19-10; Re 2:10**
2. You will be justified by faith, reconciled to God...
  - a. You will be at peace with God! - **Ro 5:2**
  - b. His peace can now rule in your hearts! - **Co 3:15**

Look to the gospel of Jesus Christ if you want peace with the God of peace...!

*“The LORD will give strength to His people; The LORD will bless His people with peace.” - Psa 29:11*

*“The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace.”  
- Num 6:24-26*

# The Peace Of Christ

## Making Peace With Mankind

### INTRODUCTION

1. We began this series by defining peace as...
  - a. “a state of harmony, tranquility”
  - b. “the absence of hostility, the absence of mental stress or anxiety”
  - c. In the NT, often referring to the inner tranquility and poise of the Christian whose trust is in God through Christ - **Nelson’s New Illustrated Bible Dictionary**
2. Our first lesson introduced Jesus as “**The Prince Of Peace**”, in which we stressed...
  - a. Not everyone enjoys peace
  - b. Jesus came to bring peace
  - c. The peace that Jesus offers entails many things
3. Our second lesson then discussed “**Making Peace With God**”...
  - a. How sin alienates man from the God of peace
  - b. How Jesus offers peace with God through justification and reconciliation
  - c. How peace with God can be enjoyed through obedience to the gospel of Christ

[As “**The Prince Of Peace**”, Jesus offers more than just peace with God. He also offers the only real solution for “**Making Peace With Mankind**”. To understand how, let’s first consider...]

### I. THE NEED FOR PEACE AMONG MANKIND

#### **A. WE LIVE IN WORLD OF DIVERSITY...**

1. **Racial** differences (e.g., white, African-American, Asian)
2. **Ethnic** differences (e.g., Hispanic, Oriental)
3. **Political** differences (e.g., conservative, liberal, moderate)
4. **Economic** differences (e.g., poor, wealthy)
5. **Lifestyle** differences (e.g., simple, extravagant)
6. **Gender** differences (e.g., male, female)
- **Amazingly diverse is the world in which we live**

#### **B. DIVERSITY OFTEN LEADS TO HOSTILITY...**

1. Racial differences can lead to **racism**
2. Ethnic differences can lead to **prejudice**
3. Political differences can lead to **wars**
4. Economic differences can lead to **envy**
5. Lifestyle differences can lead to **arrogance**
6. Gender differences can lead to **harassment**
- **Such diversity often contributes to the lack of peace**

[Peace between mankind is greatly needed. But Jesus did not die just to help man make peace with **God**, but that there might also be peace between **mankind**...]



## II. JESUS DIED TO MAKE PEACE FOR MANKIND

### **A. BEFORE HIS DEATH, THERE WAS DIVISION...**

1. Between Jews and Gentiles (non-Jews)
2. The nation of Israel was God's elect people - cf. **Deu 10:15; 14:2**
3. The Gentiles did not enjoy the blessings of Israel - **Ep 2:11-12**  
-- **While temporary and foreordained by God, there was division nonetheless**

### **B. JESUS DIED TO END DIVISION...**

1. To bring Gentiles near, through His blood (His death on the cross) - **Ep 2:13**
2. To make peace, breaking down the dividing wall (the Law) - **Ep 2:14-15**; cf. **Co 2:14-17**
3. To reconcile both Jews and Gentiles to God as one new man - **Ep 2:16-18**  
-- **Jesus died not only to reconcile man to God, but man to man!**

[Because of His death on the cross, real peace between mankind is now possible.]

## III. THE PEACE JESUS OFFERS MANKIND

### **A. WHERE DISTINCTIONS PALE...**

1. There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female - **Ga 3:28**
2. Salvation is available to all through Christ - **Ga 3:28b-29**; cf. **Ac 15:11**
3. We can all be fellow-citizens, God's family, God's building - **Ep 2:19-22**
4. This does not preclude differences in various roles - cf. **Co 3:11,18-19,22**; **1 Co 14:34-37**  
-- **Jesus makes it possible for all to be citizens of the kingdom of God!**

### **B. WHERE ACCEPTANCE ABOUNDS...**

1. We receive those weak in faith, and bear their infirmities - **Ro 14:1; 15:1**
2. We seek to worship God with one mind and one voice - **Ro 15:5-6**
3. We receive one another, as Christ received us! - **Ro 15:7**  
-- **Jesus makes it possible for us to serve and praise God together!**

## CONCLUSION

1. Again, Jesus died to break down divisions...
  - a. The division between God and man, **making peace with God**
  - b. The division between man and man, **making peace for mankind**
2. What distinctions exist are diminished...
  - a. No matter our earthly citizenship, we are **fellow citizens** - **Ep 2:19; Ph 3:20**
  - b. Men and women may have different roles, yet can be **fellow workers** - **Ph 4:3**
  - c. Husbands and wives have different responsibilities, yet are **fellow heirs** - **1 Pe 3:7**
  - d. We are all **one in Christ!** - **Ga 3:28**

Just as Jesus is the only one who can truly make peace with **God**, so He is the only one who can truly make peace for **mankind**...!

*“To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” - Lk 1:79*

# The Peace Of Christ

## Making Peace With Oneself

### INTRODUCTION

1. We have seen that the peace Christ offers involves...
  - a. Peace with **God**
  - b. Peace with **mankind**
2. Jesus also offers **peace with oneself**, or **peace of mind**...
  - a. Defined as: the absence of mental stress or anxiety
  - b. Also: serenity, calm, quiet, comfort of mind

[We begin our study of this aspect of “**The Peace Of Christ**” by considering...]

### I. THE NEED FOR PEACE OF MIND

#### **A. THE PROBLEM OF ANXIETY...**

1. Anxiety is distress
    - a. Characterized by mental agitation and uneasiness, either mild or severe
    - b. It primarily has to do with what may happen in the future, either near or distant
  2. According to the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)...
    - a. More than 23 million people suffer from anxiety disorders
    - b. Anxiety disrupts work, family, and social lives, with some becoming housebound
    - c. It is the most common of all the mental disorders
  3. Anxiety (or worry) is one of the most counterproductive things we can do
    - a. Worry is like a rocking chair: gives you something to do, but won't get you anywhere
    - b. Worry is a fast getaway on a wooden horse
- **Anxiety, or the lack of peace of mind, is a very common problem**

#### **B. THE PROBLEM WITH ANXIETY...**

1. Christians certainly are not immune to the problem of anxiety
    - a. Even faithful disciples can worry and be troubled - e.g., **Lk 10:41**
    - b. Just as anxiety disrupts work, family, etc., so it can hinder our service to the Lord
  2. It is also a reflection of “little faith” on our part
    - a. E.g., worrying about things like food and clothing - cf. **Mt 6:25-30**
    - b. E.g., worrying about preserving one's life - cf. **Mt 8:24-26**
  3. “The beginning of anxiety is the end of faith; and the beginning of true faith is the end of anxiety.” - George Muller
- **Anxiety, or the lack of peace of mind, is a very serious problem**

[Since anxiety is both a common and serious problem, consider how...]

### II. JESUS OFFERS PEACE OF MIND

#### **A. HIS PROMISE OF PEACE...**

1. He offers “My peace” to His disciples, so they need not be troubled nor afraid - **Jn 14:27**

2. He says that “in Me” they can have peace, and be of good cheer - **Jn 16:33**  
-- **Thus Jesus promises peace that only He can provide!**

## **B. HIS SOLUTION FOR PEACE...**

1. **Prioritize - Mt 6:31-34**
    - a. We must have our right priorities straight
    - b. Seek first God’s kingdom (reign) and His righteousness
    - c. Make His will and His way our number one priority!
  2. **Simplify - Lk 10:41-42; 8:14**
    - a. Martha was worried and troubled about “many things”
    - b. Many things can “choke” our ability to bear good fruit
    - c. Only one thing is really needed; we thus need to simplify our lives
  3. **Have faith – Mt 6:25,30; 8:26; Jn 14:1**
    - a. Faith is the antidote to worry and fear (i.e., anxiety)
    - b. Jesus taught faith in God and in Him as the solution
    - c. Such faith comes from the Word of God – cf. **Ro 10:17**
  4. **Pray - Ph 4:6-7**
    - a. Pray about everything
    - b. Pray with a thankful heart
- **Four simple steps to enjoying the peace of mind Jesus offers!**

[That we might make the effort to take these simple steps, let’s briefly note...]

## **III. THE PEACE OF MIND JESUS OFFERS**

### **A. IT IS NOT OF THIS WORLD...**

1. Not as the world gives - **Jn 14:27**
2. Peace despite tribulation - **Jn 16:33**  
-- **A heavenly peace despite earthly circumstances!**

### **B. IT IS THE PEACE OF GOD...**

1. That surpasses understanding - **Ph 4:7**
2. That guards one’s heart - **Ph 4:7**  
-- **A peace that transcends the mind and protects the heart!**

## **CONCLUSION**

1. Anxiety with its worry and fear need not trouble the disciple of Jesus...
  - a. Jesus has reconciled the disciple back to the God of peace
  - b. Jesus has taught the disciple how to enjoy true peace of mind
2. It all depends on whether the disciple is willing to heed Jesus by...
  - a. Prioritizing and simplifying
  - b. Believing and praying

Those willing to so follow Jesus have this wonderful promise...

*“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you.  
Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” - Jn 14:27*

# The Peace Of Christ

## Making Peace With Families

### INTRODUCTION

1. We have seen that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, offers...
  - a. Peace with **God**, through justification and reconciliation
  - b. Peace with **mankind**, through abolishing barriers
  - c. Peace with **oneself**, one that surpasses understanding and guards our heart
2. What about peace with **families**? Did not Jesus say...
  - a. His disciples would be persecuted by their own families? - **Mt 10:21-22**
  - b. He came to set family members against each other? - **Mt 10:34-37**
3. It is true that following Jesus sometimes causes family turmoil...
  - a. When unbelieving family members cannot accept one's conversion to Christ
  - b. Where resistance to such faith results in expulsion and disinheritance, or worse

[Even so, when families are willing to submit themselves to the will of God, Jesus and His apostles show the way to true peace within families. But first, let's consider...]

### I. THE NEED FOR PEACE WITH FAMILIES

#### **A. MANY FAMILIES ARE DYSFUNCTIONAL...**

1. Where conflict, misbehavior and even abuse on the part of individual members of the family occur continually, leading other members to accommodate such actions. - **Wikipedia**
  2. Where children grow up understanding such conduct to be normal
- **Dysfunctional behavior is often passed down from generation to generation**

#### **B. FAMILY DYSFUNCTION DESTROYS PEACE...**

1. Between husbands and wives, leading to fights and divorce
  2. Between parents and children, leading to mental and physical abuse
  3. Between siblings, leading to life-long alienation
- **Dysfunctional behavior often creates a volatile home environment**

[Where peace is not in the home, it is rarely in the heart. When we do not have peace in the home, we often lash out at others at work, at school, at church. But now let's examine how...]

### II. JESUS OFFERS TRUE PEACE FOR FAMILIES

#### **A. BY HIS TEACHING ON MARRIAGE...**

1. Jesus taught that marriage is to be for life
  - a. It was God's plan for the family from the beginning - **Mt 19:3-6**
  - b. So much family turmoil is caused when spouses divorce - cf. **Mal 2:16**
2. Jesus gave only one reason to dissolve a marriage
  - a. That reason is fornication - **Mt 5:31-32; 19:6-9**
  - b. Obeying Jesus prevents quick and easy divorces

-- **Commitment to marriage is a big step toward preserving family peace!**

**B. BY HIS APOSTLES' TEACHING ON FAMILY...**

1. **Husbands** are to love and respect their wives
    - a. They are to love their wives - **Ep 5:25-29**
    - b. They are not to be bitter towards their wives - **Co 3:19**
    - c. They are to understand and honor their wives - **1 Pe 3:7**
  2. **Wives** are to love and submit to their husbands
    - a. Older women are to teach the younger women to love their husbands - **Ti 2:3-4**
    - b. Wives are to submit to their husbands as the church submits to Christ - **Ep 5:22-24**
    - c. It is fitting in the Lord, even as we all submit to one another - **Co 3:18; cf. Ep 5:21**
    - d. In so doing, they become "daughters of Sarah" - cf. **1 Pe 3:1-6**
  3. **Parents** are to raise their children properly
    - a. Fathers are not to provoke their children to wrath - **Ep 6:4; Co 3:21**
    - b. Fathers are to bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord - **Ep 6:4**
    - c. Mothers are to love their children, manage the house - **Ti 2:4; 1 Ti 5:14**
  4. **Children** are to obey and honor their parents
    - a. They are to obey their parents in the Lord - **Ep 6:1**
    - b. They are to honor their father and mother - **Ep 6:2-3**
    - c. This is well-pleasing to the Lord, who also submitted to His parents - **Co 3:20; Lk 2:51**
- **Commitment to family duties produces peace and harmony in the home!**

[Through such teaching by Jesus and His apostles, the peace of Christ can be enjoyed in many families. Before we conclude this lesson, allow me to share a few observations about...]

**III. THE PEACE JESUS OFFERS TO FAMILIES**

**A. BY THEIR FRUITS YOU SHALL KNOW THEM...**

1. Many oppose what the Bible teaches concerning marriage, divorce
  2. They rebel against such concepts as wives submitting to husbands
  3. But consider the lives and families of those who protest so loudly
- **As Jesus said, "...by their fruits you will know them" - Mt 7:15-20**

**B. WISDOM IS JUSTIFIED BY HER CHILDREN...**

1. Compare marriages and families of those who submit to Biblical principles; e.g.:
    - a. My wife's grandparents were married 77 years
    - b. My wife's parents were married 53 years, my parents 57 years
    - c. My wife's brother 43 years, my three brothers and I 41, 34, 26, 23 years (as of 2007)
  2. Life-long marriages and loving families can be the norm for generations, not the exception, where the teachings of Christ are followed!
- **As Jesus said, "...wisdom is justified by her children" - Mt 11:19**

**C. OUR TRUE FAMILY IS GOD'S FAMILY...**

1. Despite one's best efforts, sometimes other family members do not cooperate
  2. Spouses may not become believers, and even leave - **1 Co 7:12-15**
  3. Family members may become enemies over the faith - **Mt 10:21**
  4. We have a much larger family that can offer support - **Mk 10:28-30**
- **There can be peace of mind in knowing one's true family - Mt 12:48-50**

## **CONCLUSION**

1. The best hope for peace with the family comes from above...
  - a. Don't listen to "family experts" whose own lives and families are a mess
  - b. Listen to the God of peace who ordained the institutions of marriage and family
2. Put your trust in His Son Jesus Christ, who together with His apostles...
  - a. Provide clear teaching concerning marriage and family
  - b. Will lead you and your families into the paths of peace!

***"To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death,  
To guide our feet into the way of peace." - Lk 1:79***

# The Peace Of Christ

## Making Peace With Brethren

### INTRODUCTION

1. Previously, we have seen that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, offers...
  - a. Peace with **God**, through justification and reconciliation
  - b. Peace with **mankind**, through abolishing barriers
  - c. Peace with **oneself**, one that surpasses understanding and guards our heart
  - d. Peace with **families**, when family members fulfill their duties to one another
2. Jesus also offers peace with **brethren**...
  - a. Christians who are fellow members of the body of Christ
  - b. Disciples who chose to work and worship together in a local church

[As before, let's begin by noting the need for such peace...]

### I. THE NEED FOR PEACE WITH BRETHREN

#### **A. LACK OF PEACE HINDERS OUR MESSAGE...**

1. We claim to be Christ's disciples, brotherly love reinforces our claim - **Jn 13:34-35**
  2. We claim that God sent Christ, brotherly unity reinforces that claim - **Jn 17:20-23**
- **When there is no peace, love and unity cannot reinforce our message!**

#### **B. LACK OF PEACE SUGGESTS CARNALITY...**

1. Envy, strife, and divisions reflect carnality, or spiritual immaturity - **1 Co 3:1-4**
  2. Confusion reflects bitter envy, self-seeking, earthly wisdom - **Ja 3:13-16**
  3. On the contrary, peacefulness reflects heavenly wisdom - **Ja 3:17-18**
- **When there is no peace, it may be indicative of spiritual immaturity!**

[If possible, without compromising truth, we should seek to possess the peace that Jesus offers. With that in mind, let's consider how...]

### II. JESUS OFFERS TRUE PEACE FOR BRETHREN

#### **A. BY HIS OWN EXAMPLE...**

1. We are to love one another as Christ loved us - **Jn 13:34**
  2. In Romans, Paul pointed to the example of Christ - **Ro 15:1-3,5-7**
  3. In Philippians, Paul pointed to the mindset and example of Christ - **Ph 2:3-8**
- **By His own humility and selfless service, Jesus shows us the way to peace!**

#### **B. BY HIS APOSTLES' TEACHING...**

1. Such as Paul's admonitions
  - a. Pursue peace - **Ro 14:17-19**
  - b. Live in peace - **2 Co 13:11**
  - c. Be diligent to maintain unity in the bond of peace - **Ep 4:1-3**
  - d. Let the peace of God rule in your hearts - **Co 3:15**

- e. Be at peace among yourselves - **1 Th 5:13**
- f. Pursue peace - **He 12:14**
- 2. Such as Peter's admonitions
  - a. Have compassion, love as brothers, tenderhearted, courteous - **1 Pe 3:8**
  - b. Not returning evil for evil, nor reviling for reviling, rather blessing - **1 Pe 3:9**
  - c. Seek peace and pursue it - **1 Pe 3:10-12**
  - d. Be diligent to be found by Christ in peace - **2 Pe 3:14**
- **Taking such admonitions seriously go a long way to enjoying peace with brethren!**

[If we take such admonitions seriously, and are willing to follow the example of Jesus, what benefits will peace with brethren provide...?]

### **III. THE PEACE WITH BRETHREN THAT JESUS OFFERS**

#### **A. SANCTUARY IN A TROUBLED WORLD...**

- 1. In a world where peace is rare, Christ offers peace in His family - **Ep 2:14-17**
- 2. A peace based on unity, that is both good and pleasant - cf. **Psa 133:1**
- 3. Whenever we assemble as brethren, it should be in an atmosphere of peace
- **Assuming, of course, that we letting the peace of God rule in our hearts!**

#### **B. FORETASTE OF HEAVEN ITSELF...**

- 1. The kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit - **Ro 14:17**
- 2. That is now, imagine what it will be like in the eternal kingdom!
- 3. Where peace will be enjoyed without effort required to maintain it!
- **For now, peace among brethren can be a glimpse of glories to come!**

### **CONCLUSION**

- 1. Remember, our walk worthy of our calling requires both...
  - a. Diligence to maintain the unity of the Spirit - **Ep 4:3**
  - b. Doing so in the bond of peace - **Ep 4:3**
- 2. If we are to enjoy peace with brethren, we must pursue peace by...
  - a. Following the example of Christ
  - b. Applying the admonitions of His apostles

We cannot compromise the purity of truth for the sake of unity, but neither can we ignore the need for peace as the bond that holds unity together. As James, the brother of the Prince of Peace, wrote in his epistle:

*“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.”*

*- Ja 3:17-18*



# The Peace Of Christ

## Making Peace With Churches

### INTRODUCTION

1. Previously, we have seen that Jesus, **the Prince of Peace**, offers...
  - a. Peace with **God**, through justification and reconciliation
  - b. Peace with **mankind**, through abolishing barriers
  - c. Peace with **oneself**, one that surpasses understanding and guards our heart
  - d. Peace with **families**, when family members fulfill their duties to one another
  - e. Peace with **brethren**, working and worshiping together in love and unity
2. Jesus also offers peace with **churches**...
  - a. Where churches can co-exist in peace and harmony
  - b. Presenting a picture of unity in the eyes of the world

[Of course, such is generally not the case today. Which is why we need the peace of Christ, not just in our individual lives but in our churches...]

### I. THE NEED FOR PEACE WITH CHURCHES

#### **A. THE DENOMINATIONAL MESS TODAY...**

1. According to one reckoning, there are 33,820 denominations today - **World Christian Encyclopedia (2000)**
  2. By definition, a denomination is “A religious organization uniting in a single legal and administrative body a number of local congregations.” - **Webster**
  3. Two or more congregations under a single administrative and legal hierarchy create a denomination
  4. Example of denominational hierarchies:
    - a. Churches under a single pope or archbishop
    - b. Churches united by a synod, council, or convention
    - c. Churches subject to the oversight of other “sponsoring” churches
- **The number of denominations continues to grow rapidly**

#### **B. THE SIN OF DENOMINATIONALISM...**

1. It is unscriptural
  - a. There is no Biblical basis for local churches being divided into denominational bodies
  - b. No denomination can go to the Bible and say, “See that passage? There is our church (denomination)!”
2. It is anti-scriptural
  - a. It is contrary to Jesus’ prayer for unity - **Jn 17:20-23**
  - b. It is condemned by Paul - **1 Co 1:10-13; 3:3-4**
  - c. It opposes the work of Christ on the cross - **Ep 2:14-16**
3. It harms the cause of Christ
  - a. Jesus believed unity to be “the final apologetic” (Schaeffer) - **Jn 17:21**
  - b. Religious division has been a stumbling block to many unbelievers
  - c. Denominationalism has led to the rise of many cults (Mormons, JWs, etc.)

-- **No true disciple of Christ can sanction denominationalism in any form**

[The religious confusion today does not come from God: “For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.” (1 Co 14:33) On the contrary...]

**II. JESUS OFFERS TRUE PEACE FOR CHURCHES**

**A. BY HIS OWN EXAMPLE...**

1. Consider the religious climate of Jesus’ day (Pharisees, Sadducees, Essenes, etc.)
    - a. What kind of Israelite was Jesus while living under the Law of Moses?
    - b. He was simply a faithful Israelite, just as the Law of Moses intended
  2. Suppose Jesus came today, to show us how to live under the New Covenant
    - a. What “kind” of Christian would He be (Baptist, Methodist, Catholic, etc.)?
    - b. Would He not simply be a Christian? - cf. **Ac 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pe 4:16**
- **Jesus would be a Christian, nothing more, nothing less!**

**2. BY HIS APOSTLES’ DOCTRINE...**

1. Early Christians were governed by the apostles’ doctrine
    - a. From the very beginning of the church - **Ac 2:42**
    - b. Which they respected as the Word of God - **1 Th 2:13; cf. 1 Co 14:37**
  2. The apostles’ taught a simple form of congregational organization
    - a. When fully developed, a church would have elders - **Ac 14:23; Ti 1:5**
    - b. Elders were also known as bishops and pastors - **Ac 20:17,28; 1 Pe 5:1-2**
    - c. They had to meet stringent qualifications - **1 Ti 3:1-7; Ti 1:5-9**
    - d. There was always a plurality in each congregation - e.g., **Ac 20:17; 21:18**
    - e. They were assisted by deacons, also qualified - e.g., **Ph 1:1; 1 Ti 3:8-13**
  3. Important to note is the limited oversight of elders
    - a. Their oversight was limited to those “among” them - **Ac 20:28; 1 Pe 5:1-2**
    - b. They had no oversight of Christians in other congregations
    - c. The only authority above the local congregation was Christ and His apostles
  4. This resulted in independent, autonomous congregations
    - a. No hierarchy above the local congregation
    - b. No single bishop over several churches, no synod, council or convention
    - c. No sponsoring church where elders of one church oversee the work of another
- **By His apostles’ doctrine, Jesus offered peace from denominational division**

[Through His own example and His apostles’ doctrine, Jesus offers true peace for churches. Let’s summarize the nature of...]

**III. THE PEACE WITH CHURCHES THAT JESUS OFFERS**

**A. PREVENTS HIERARCHAL CONTROL...**

1. By uninspired men (unlike the apostles of Christ)
  2. By unqualified men (where are the qualifications for such authority?)
  3. By unspiritual men (for denominationalism is indicative of carnality) - cf. **1 Co 3:3-4**
- **The Lord desires that each church be overseen only by its own elders**

**B. HINDERS THE SPREAD OF ERROR...**

1. False doctrine accepted by the hierarchy quickly spreads to churches under them

2. Where congregations are autonomous, error spreads much more slowly
- **Can we not see the Lord's wisdom in designing independent churches?**

**C. PRESENTS A MUCH BETTER PICTURE...**

1. Autonomy does not prevent the rise of error
2. But where congregations are independent, the error is not apparent
3. It is when denominations are formed over doctrinal differences that division become visible to the outside world
- **We may not all agree, but we hinder the cause of Christ by "airing our dirty laundry"**

**CONCLUSION**

1. In a world of religious division, let us not forget...
  - a. Jesus prayed for unity among believers, that the world might believe - **Jn 17:20-23**
  - b. God is the author of peace, not confusion, in all the churches - **1 Co 14:33**
2. If we want to promote the cause of Christ, let us...
  - a. As individuals, follow the personal example of Christ (free of sectarianism)
  - b. As congregations, follow the apostolic doctrine regarding church organization

Only then can we hope to have even a semblance of peace among the churches of Christ...

***"The churches of Christ greet you." - Ro 16:16***

# The Peace Of Christ

## Making Peace With Enemies

### INTRODUCTION

1. In this series we have seen that Jesus, **the Prince of Peace**, offers...
  - a. Peace with **God**, through justification and reconciliation
  - b. Peace with **mankind**, through abolishing racial and social barriers
  - c. Peace with **oneself**, one that surpasses understanding and guards our heart
  - d. Peace with **families**, when family members fulfill their duties to one another
  - e. Peace with **brethren**, working and worshiping together in love and unity
  - f. Peace with **churches**, by creating independent, autonomous churches
2. Finally, we will examine how Jesus teaches us to make peace with **enemies**...
  - a. Who show animosity because we are Christians
  - b. Or simply personal dislike for other reasons

[Let's begin by first pointing out...]

### I. THE NEED FOR PEACE WITH ENEMIES

#### **A. ENEMIES CAN BE EVERYWHERE...**

1. Government - **Lk 19:43**
  2. Families - **Mt 10:36**
  3. Other religions - **Ro 11:28**
  4. In the church - **Ph 3:18**
  5. Satan - **1 Pe 5:8**
- **Not to sound paranoid, but the potential for enemies is great**

#### **B. ENEMIES CAN BE TROUBLESOME...**

1. Physical persecution - **Mt 10:17,21**
  2. Spiritual turmoil - **2 Co 11:26; Ga 2:4**
  3. Causing problems in the family, at work, etc.
- **Wherever there are enemies, the need for peace is great**

[Jesus told us to expect tribulation (**Jn 15:18-20**). But He also promised peace (**Jn 16:33**). While we may not always escape tribulation, there are ways to often reduce the conflict. Consider, then, how...]

### II. JESUS MAKES PEACE WITH ENEMIES POSSIBLE

#### **A. BY PROVIDING PEACE WITH GOD...**

1. If at peace with God, He helps us to make peace with enemies - **Pro 16:7**
  2. Jesus makes peace with God through justification and reconciliation - **Ro 5:1**
- **The first step to peace with enemies is to be at peace with God**

#### **B. BY TEACHING US TO LOVE OUR ENEMIES...**

1. This He did on several occasions - **Mt 5:44; Lk 6:27,35**

2. His apostles did so likewise - **Ro 12:14,20**
  3. Both Jesus and His apostles displayed such love - **Lk 23:34; 1 Co 4:12-13**
  4. This is **agape** love (active good will) - **1 Co 13:4-8a**
  5. The same love God showed toward us when we were His enemies- **Ro 5:6-11**
- **Peace with enemies is possible when we love them as God loved us**

[Not all enemies will appreciate our efforts to show them love (cf. **Ro 12:18**). But loving them as God loved us is the best way to have...]

### **III. THE PEACE WITH ENEMIES THAT JESUS MAKES POSSIBLE**

#### **A. ONE THAT CAN TRANSFORM OUR ENEMIES...**

1. "Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into friend." - **Martin Luther King Jr.**
  2. Did not God's love that transformed us when we were enemies? - **Ro 5:10; Co 1:21-22**
- **Loving your enemies is the best hope for changing them**

#### **B. ONE THAT CAN MAKE ENEMIES OUR FRIENDS...**

1. Transformed by love, enemies can become friends
  2. Did not Joseph make his brothers who hated him his friends? - cf. **Gen 50:15-21**
  3. Did not God make us His people, who before were not His people? - cf. **1 Pe 2:9-10**
- **The peace with enemies that Jesus offers is one most likely to make them our friends**

#### **C. ONE THAT MAKES US MORE LIKE GOD...**

1. "It is easy enough to be friendly to one's friends. But to befriend the one who regards himself as your enemy is the quintessence of true religion. The other is mere business." - **Gandhi**
  2. Loving our enemies makes us more like God ("sons of your Father") - **Mt 5:44-48**
- **Making peace with enemies is a God-like quality**

### **CONCLUSION**

1. As Jesus stated in His sermon on the mount: *"Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God."* - **Mt 5:9**
2. We have seen that by following **the Prince of Peace**, we can experience...
  - a. Peace with **God**, through justification and reconciliation
  - b. Peace with **mankind**, through abolishing racial and social barriers
  - c. Peace with **oneself**, one that surpasses understanding and guards our heart
  - d. Peace with **families**, when family members fulfill their duties to one another
  - e. Peace with **brethren**, working and worshiping together in love and unity
  - f. Peace with **churches**, by creating independent, autonomous churches
  - g. Peace with **enemies**, by transforming them into friends through God-like love

Enjoying such peace, let us then prove to be true sons of God by becoming peacemakers ourselves and introducing others to Jesus, the Prince of Peace...!

*"The LORD bless you and keep you; The LORD make His face shine upon you,  
And be gracious to you; The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace."  
- Num 6:24-26*