

2016

JOHN 16:29-33
PEACE IN JESUS!

Please turn in your Bibles this morning to John chapter 16 as we continue our in-depth study of the Gospel of John.

As we have seen over the last several weeks, John is focusing on the last several hours before Jesus is arrested, put on trial by the religious leaders and then the Roman authorities. And this all began with the Passover meal that Jesus shared with His men.

It is during this time, here in John chapters 13 through 17 that Jesus is instructing His men on the things that they need to be aware of, what they will expect, how they are to respond after He is gone!

As we saw in John chapter 15, Jesus was heading out of the Temple area, through the Beautiful Gate or the Golden Gate, and He will cross over the brook Kidron to the Garden of Gethsemane on the Mount of Olives.

This morning we are going to see Jesus speak of these men scattering, running away as Jesus is arrested. Obviously, they are in turmoil, they are afraid, and it is here that we see Jesus speak of a peace, not like the world has in mind but a peace that is only found in Him!

Let me ask you this question.

What is peace according to the world?

As the world looks at peace, they see it as a concept of friendship and harmony. That there is this absence of hostility and violence. No war, just everyone getting along with each other. There are no conflicts, ***NONE!***

Now think about that over the history of the world, how much peace has there been?

Not very much peace. Even after creation we see Cain murder Abel! So this is not new, not at all.

What seems to be the problem?

Man has all kinds of reasons why we can't have peace with each other but there is really only one answer that shows us what the problem is!

Do you know what that is?

It is simple, the problem is – *SIN!*

And yes, sin is manifested in many different ways, but the central issue with sin is self. I want to please myself and I don't care about anyone else!

And when you take a good look at what is going on in the world today, all the conflicts, all the fighting, and I am not just talking about countries, I am talking about family, friends. And the issue is always the unholy trinity of – *ME, MYSELF AND I!*

And this trend of warring with each other, divisions, fighting seems to be on the increase in the days we are living in. And Paul warned us of this very thing. He wrote in II Timothy 3:1-2a, "**But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of themselves . . .**"

There is the key – *LOVERS OF THEMSELVES* and it is out of that we see all kinds of wicked behavior that does not bring about peace, but wars! Paul goes on to say, "**. . . lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!**"

And when you look at that list, you can easily see why people are not getting along and it all stems from – *SIN!*

James even picks up on this point, dealing with where wars come from. He wrote in James 4:1-3, **“Where do wars and fights come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.”**

Again, the idea here is that it is all about you and you will do whatever you need to do to get what you want no matter how it hurts people and causes divisions.

It is out of all these divisions, these wars, these disputes and fighting that we are living in a world that is looking for peace and they just can't seem to find it!

And I believe it is a peace that the world is longing for. But they are rejecting the Prince of Peace Jesus Christ and in doing that it will help usher in the Antichrist. You see, there is coming the Rapture of the church where millions of Christians will be caught up to meet the Lord in the air. There is this massive war in the middle east with Russia and its Muslim allies coming down upon Israel. There will be all kinds of conflicts and this man of sin, the Antichrist will come with the solutions to the world's problems, and they will embrace him and make him the world leader!

And so I have called our study this morning – *PEACE IN JESUS!*

I have broken down the verses we will be looking at into these three main points. They are,

THE DISCIPLES PROFESSION – JOHN 16:29-30

THE PROPHECY OF JESUS – JOHN 16:31-32

THE PEACE OF JESUS – JOHN 16:33

With that as our introduction, let's begin reading in John chapter 16, beginning in verse 29 and let's see what the Lord has for us as we study His Word and look at this topic – *PEACE IN JESUS!*

JOHN 16

VERSES 29-30

As you read through the Gospels did you ever feel like these guys got it?

I don't think so and yet, that is what they are saying here.

Here's the thing, they didn't completely understand yet, but they are learning.

What did they get then?

First of all, they believed that Jesus was omniscient or that He knows all things. We see that in John 16:30, "... You know all things ..."

The term omniscient can likewise be split into two parts. "*Omni*" means "*all*", and "*scient*" means "*knowing*."

So when we refer to God as being *omniscient*, we're describing the fact that He is all-knowing. God knows everything. There isn't a single thing that can be known, past, present, or future, that God isn't completely aware of.

We see this in Jesus in Luke 6:8 where we are told, "**But He knew their thoughts, and said to the man who had the withered hand, 'Arise and stand here.' And he arose and stood.**"

He knew the thoughts of the Jewish religious leaders who were challenging Him to heal this man with the withered hand on the Sabbath. And that was work in their minds and not a kosher thing to do on the Sabbath. But Jesus knew what they were thinking, He knew what they wanted to do and in spite of their view of not healing on the Sabbath day, Jesus healed this man with a withered hand!

And yes, Jesus did empty Himself of some of His Godly attributes in the Incarnation, but we also see Him use these Godly attributes in the New Testament, like I have shared with you. (Emptied Himself – Philippians 2:7)

Let me give you a few more examples of Jesus's omniscience because it plays into what these men also knew.

In Matthew 9:4 we are told, "**But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, 'Why do you think evil in your hearts?'**"

Jesus knew what they were thinking because He knows all things!

In Matthew 12:25 we are told, "**But Jesus knew their thoughts, and said to them: 'Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself will not stand.'**"

Once again we see that Jesus knew what they were thinking and because of that, He is able to speak forth words that should pierce their hearts and get them to think that there is something different about this Man.

For these religious leaders, it did not pierce their hearts, it only made them angry, and that anger was growing and growing against Jesus!

And lastly, in Mark 2:6-8 we are told, “**And some of the scribes were sitting there and reasoning in their hearts, ‘Why does this Man speak blasphemies like this? Who can forgive sins but God alone?’ But immediately, when Jesus perceived in His spirit that they reasoned thus within themselves, He said to them, ‘Why do you reason about these things in your hearts?’**”

Again, we see that Jesus knew what they were thinking, what they were trying to do because He knows all things, He is – ***OMNISCIENT!***

And there are other examples, like the woman at the well in Samaria, He knew that she had five husbands and the one that she was with at this time was not her husband! (John 4:18)

But I think you can clearly see that Jesus was and is omniscient.

Here is the other thing that they knew. Since Jesus is omniscient and only God is omniscient, only God can know all things, then Jesus came from God the Father and Jesus is God! That is what they said to Jesus, “**. . . by this we believe that You came forth from God.**”

All throughout His ministry Jesus claimed that He and the Father were One, that they saw eye to eye because they were equals. It was not just this teaching here or a teaching there. Over and over He said this, and His men got it! The religious leaders, for the most part, didn’t, or they just did not want to!

We see this in Mark 14:62, **“Jesus said, ‘I am. And you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven.’”**

And listen to the response of the Jewish religious leaders, **“Then the high priest tore his clothes and said, ‘What further need do we have of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy! What do you think? And they all condemned Him to be deserving of death.’”**

Mark 14:63-64.

He being a man made Himself equal with God and these religious leaders could not accept it, even though it was true!

In John 8:24 we are told, **“Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that *I am*, you will die in your sins.”**

Jesus is claiming to be the voice from the burning bush in Exodus chapter 3 and thus, He is saying that He is Almighty God!

In John 10:30 we are told, **“I and My Father are one.”**

Jesus is claiming equality with God the Father! Now many miss it, but it is hard to deny this fact when you see how the Jews responded to it. You see, at least they were honest about what Jesus said, they knew exactly what He was saying.

And they responded like this, **“Then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. Jesus answered them, ‘Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?’ The Jews answered Him, saying, ‘For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.’”** John 10:31-33.

You see, they knew exactly what Jesus was saying and the penalty for this blasphemy was stoning. But Jesus is God, they just didn't accept it. And we see this over and over in the Gospel of John as well as in the other Gospels. But John's focus is to show you that Jesus is Almighty God!

And lastly, remember what Thomas said as he saw the risen Lord in John 20:28, "**My Lord and my God!**"

Not "*a god*" but God!

So they did understand that Jesus is omniscient or that He knows all things and since He does, then He must be God, and He is!

But they did not fully understand everything, not even close. Here are a couple of problems that I don't think they fully understood.

First of all, the death and resurrection of Jesus!

They still didn't understand this, and dark days were ahead for them.

And it is out of that that their faith will be tested. And Jesus will be dealing with that aspect in a minute.

You see, He knew them better than they knew themselves and it is out of their failure that they will look up and Jesus will empower them to do the work that is before them.

In fact, Morgan wrote, "***They declared that their belief in the Divinity of His mission was confirmed. They were perfectly sincere. They felt that they had at last passed beyond the region where it would be possible to doubt. How much better He knew them than they knew themselves!***"

We too must be careful because the Lord has warned us of so many things and if we think we can stand; look out, we have given way for the opportunity for us to fall. We can stumble if we lose sight of what Jesus has warned us about!

Think about this for a minute. In a world that is full of wickedness, we are surrounded by evil; we ourselves are inadequate to deal with the problem.

The only way to deal with it is to draw close to God, not to go down that path, and as trials and testing's do come your way, don't fight them on your own, ask the Lord to keep you, to help you!

In other words, when we are in the middle of these testing's, Lord, don't leave us in the middle of them, but see us through them!

I like the way that George Adam Smith illustrated this. He was on a mountain-climbing tour of the Alps and on one particularly high peak; he ran to the very edge and looked out at the awesome view of Switzerland below.

Suddenly, a strong gust of wind came up and threatened to blow him over the edge.

His guide, several feet away, yelled out to him, "***Mr. Smith! On your knees, sir! The only way you're safe up here is on your knees!***"

And George Smith thought, "***How true, the only way we're safe is on our knees because Satan would like to blow us away.***"

You see, we need the protection of our loving Savior, for trying to stand on our own, we will be blown away! But Jesus brings stability to our lives, He is what anchors us down and keeps us safe! Don't let us come under the sway of temptation that will overpower us and cause us to sin!

Humble yourself in the sight of the Lord, don't think too highly of yourself, and He will lift you up. If you lift yourself up, then you are in a place where you will fall. Not because God hates you, but He wants you to see what is in you and that you can't stand apart from God!

Listen to what Jesus now tells His men who said, “... **‘See, now You are speaking plainly, and using no figure of speech! Now we are sure that You know all things, and have no need that anyone should question You. By this we believe that You came forth from God.’**” John 16:29-30.

Again, after almost two thousand years, are we able to comprehend it?

Not that we can't comprehend some things, we can. But we can't know an all-knowing God. But His Spirit is teaching us the mind of Christ, He is revealing things to us. But so many Christians feel, “***Hey, I am saved, that is all that is important!***”

No, it is not. We are to be growing in the Lord and as you are idle or stagnant in your walk with the Lord you are giving the Devil an opportunity to cause you to stumble. We will see that with the disciples. They did not listen with their heart what the Lord was telling them, what was ahead for them, and they all ran away when Jesus was arrested!

So we have seen here – ***THE DISCIPLES PROFESSION!***

That Jesus is ***OMNISCIENT!***

And that Jesus is ***GOD!***

Let's read on and see what Jesus does here as we look at – ***THE PROPHECY OF JESUS!***

VERSES 31-32

As you read this it almost sounds like Jesus is rebuking them or calling them on their faith, what they just said that they believed!

Once again listen to how Jesus opens up here.

He says, “**Do you now believe?**”

Again, it sounds like Jesus is doubting what they are saying! I don't think that is what this verse is saying.

I like the way one writer summed this up for us because we take it as a question, but it really is not a question.

Listen to what I mean. He wrote, “*The words Do you now believe? can also be taken as a statement. This is preferable, as it brings out better the emphasis laid upon now in the original. ‘You do now believe, but your belief will soon be shaken.’*” (Tasker)

Another pastor put it like this as he wrote, “*Though the disciples were honest and sincere in their affirmations of faith (verse 30), Jesus knew their limitations far better than they did (cf. 2:24–25). The words “Do you now believe?” tells us the disciples did have faith in Jesus - but it was not complete faith or strong faith until after the death and resurrection of Jesus and the advent of the Spirit. ‘You will be scattered’ is a fulfillment of Zechariah’s words which spoke of the Shepherd (the Messiah) smitten by decree of the Lord Almighty, which resulted in the scattering of the sheep (Zechariah 13:7). In spite of the disciples’ loyalty, faith, and love, they soon failed Him miserably.*”

As I have said, their faith will be tested, and as things reach their climax, they will scatter, they will hide, most will not even go to the cross to witness what will take place!

In fact, of the eleven, only John will be there at the cross. In other words, their faith is going to be shaken!

In saying that, the question you may have may go something like this. ***“Was this profession of faith given by the disciples sincere or were they just empty words?”***

I believe that their profession of faith that night was very sincere! They loved the Lord very much and they did have some faith. But even some faith will be tested as Jesus is showing them here.

If you don't think their faith was sincere, let me ask you this. ***“As you look back over your Christian life have you believed certain things about the Scriptures, you know what they say and you really want to follow through and do them, but you fail at times?”***

Of course I have and of course you have. Because we try to accomplish these things in the power of our strength instead of asking the Lord for help.

The best example I can give you is the life of the disciples before the death and resurrection of Jesus and after, when the Holy Spirit came in them and empowered them for the work.

They are like different people, and I guess that is true. The work that was going to be done was not going to be done in the power of their flesh but by the power of the Holy Spirit working in them and through them!

Look at what we are told in Matthew 26:31-35 about what Jesus warned all of them about, and then called Peter out to warn him as well.

We are told, **“Then Jesus said to them, ‘All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night, for it is written: “I will strike the Shepherd, And the sheep of the flock will be scattered.” But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee.’ Peter answered and said to Him, ‘Even if all are made to stumble because of You, I will never be made to stumble.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.’ Peter said to Him, ‘Even if I have to die with You, I will not deny You!’ And so said all the disciples.”**

So here are these eleven men with Jesus and they just celebrated Passover, it was a great feast showing how God delivered the children of Israel from their bondage in Egypt. They must have been pumped up as they finished singing this Psalm, and then Jesus says to them, **“... ‘All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night . . .’”** Matthew 26:31.

Did you notice that it was not just a few or even a handful but **“All”** of them will **“stumble”** because of what is going to happen to Jesus, it is because of Him!

The Greek word for **“stumble”** is SKANDALIZO, (skan-dal-id’-zo) and it literally means to set a trap or a stumbling block.

In other words, Jesus is telling His men that they would encounter a stumbling block or obstacle that is going to make them stumble and fall away from following Him, their loyalty to Him. That is a heavy statement and again, it is to all His men, and He is that obstacle!

Now as you look at Matthew 26:32 you see that Peter does not agree with the Lord and is basically saying, ***“Look Lord, all these other guys may stumble, but not me. I am Peter, the Rock!”***

It is never a good idea to go against the Lord and yet Peter boldly rejected what the Lord said. He was not going to stumble! And I am sure Peter was sincere about this, but he was also sincerely wrong. Again, God is omniscient, He knows all things, they even acknowledged this, but they did not apply it to their lives when what He said came to pass!

I am going to let you in on a little secret, it is better to listen to the Lord's warning than to think you are above it, because if you refuse, you will fall, you will stumble!

It is as Spurgeon wrote, *"No doubt these words were spoken from his heart; but 'the heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked.'" How true that is!*

Now the Lord responded back to Peter's words and said, "... 'Assuredly, I say to you that this night, before the rooster crows, you will deny Me three times.'" Matthew 26:34.

And as we can see, that is exactly what took place.

Now the other disciples also said that they would not deny the Lord either but again, Jesus said, "... 'All of you will be made to stumble because of Me this night ...'" Matthew 26:31.

And we do see that as Jesus is arrested in Matthew 26:56, "... Then all the disciples forsook Him and fled.'"

Not some of them, *ALL OF THEM FORSOOK HIM AND FLED!*

The lesson is obvious. We need to heed God's warning's that He has given to us in His Word, they are there to protect us and keep us safe.

Our strength is not in ourselves, it is in the Lord and the Devil loves to sift us like wheat when we think too highly of ourselves.

What do I mean by that?

I mean this. Like Peter, get ready to fall where you think you are the strongest! It is like Paul said in I Corinthians 10:12, “**Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.**”

There is a warning to us and when we think we are beyond the reach of some sins, we are ready to fall!

“I don’t need anyone to tell me what to do and what not to do!” Very dangerous!

“I am my own man, and I can do what I want!” Very dangerous!

“I know what the Bible says, but that does not apply to me!” Very dangerous!

May we heed the warning that Clarke gave, *“Was not this warning enough to him not to trust in his own strength, but to depend on God?”*

I guess not. May we learn the lesson because if we don’t, we will go through it!

Now please don’t get me wrong here. I think Peter and the other disciples were absolutely sincere when they proclaimed their faith, devotion, and loyalty to Jesus.

But again, like so many, their devotion and loyalty were based more on *their* strength than on *God’s* strength!

And remember what the disciples of Jesus just said. That they believe Jesus knows all things and that He is God.

This profession of faith is going to be tested and when it is placed in the fires of testing, they are going to get burned.

You see, without a doubt, because God is omniscient, which they just acknowledged, God knows us better than we know ourselves and thus, we need to listen to Him.

Now think about this for a minute. They all are going to forsake Him in His time of need and yet, He tells them He is not alone.

Why? How can that be?

Because the Father is with Him!

Spurgeon gives us this insight as he wrote, *“I remember that passage about Abraham going with Isaac to mount Moriah, where Isaac was to be offered up. It is written, ‘So they went both of them together.’ So did the Eternal Father and his Well- beloved Son when God was about to give up his own Son to death. There was no divided purpose; they went both of them together.”*

What a great picture that is!

But wait a minute. What about when Jesus hung on the cross of Calvary and we see Him cry out, “. . . **‘My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?’**” Matthew 27:46. (Psalm 22:1)

Why did the Father turn His face from the Son?

It was because the sins of the world were placed upon Him, He was made sin for us! And thus, that sin separated Him from the Father for those three hours before He gave up His Spirit and died for our sins!

And let me show you His love for us. He was alone so that we might never be alone!

Praise God for that!

He was forsaken that we might never be forsaken! Praise God for that!

In other words, God loves us more than we will ever know and was willing to pay in full the penalty for our sins! That truly is amazing, this grace that God has given to us!

Now you may have this question. *“If God the Father turned His face from Jesus because He bore the sins of the world, and as Christians we still sin, does that mean that God the Father will forsake us?”*

It is a good question, but it is not really a good question.

Why is this not a good question?

Because when God the Father looks at you, He sees you as sinless!

How can that be when we sin? Folks, Paul even struggled with sin in his life as he said in Romans 7:15-20, **“For what I am doing, I do not understand. For what I will to do, that I do not practice; but what I hate, that I do. If, then, I do what I will not to do, I agree with the law that it is good. But now, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) nothing good dwells; for to will is present with me, but how to perform what is good I do not find. For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice. Now if I do what I will not to do, it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me.”**

I believe that Paul is speaking of his life after he was saved. And please understand that Paul is not speaking of himself being in a backslidden condition or that he was living a carnal life. I think Paul was at the very pinnacle of spirituality and maturity in his walk.

And think about that. Have you met a carnal Christian or a backslidden Christian or even someone who is not saved, that will see his sin? Of course not, they are doing what they want and there is no struggle. Paul is struggling here; he is in a battle with the flesh!

And if you are struggling with this being about Paul’s life when he was a Christian, let me ask you this. Do any of you struggle with sin? Do you feel like you have to battle with sin daily?

Of course you do and if you say that you don't, you are a liar!

And we see Paul describing himself locked in a battle with his flesh, wanting with all of his heart to obey God but confessing that he didn't always do it, and in so doing he is describing the struggles that all of us experience after we get saved, typifying the frustrations that all of us can relate to.

As Paul said in Galatians 5:16-17, **“I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.”**

We are in a battle, and we need to take it seriously!

I don't know about you, but for me, this section does give me encouragement that even a man like Paul had this struggle within his life.

Paul, in Romans 6:12-13 said, **“Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.”**

Don't give in, keep up the fight and don't let sin rule your life, let God!

Now, back here in John chapter 16, if this chapter ended here, wow! These words that Jesus just said can be very discouraging to those who love the Lord and want to do what is right, like these disciples.

Tough times are ahead and because of it they will run away!

But praise the Lord this chapter does not end like that.

So, let's read on and see what Jesus has for us.

VERSE 33

This almost seems out of place, talking about peace when Jesus has been talking about persecution, loving those that hate them, that it is not going to be easy. In fact, they are all going to run away from Jesus very soon, when He is arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane.

And now, after this long talk that Jesus had with His men, He tells them, **“These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”** John 16:33.

So what is this all about?

This is the reason for this long talk with His men, the purpose for it! He wants to bring them peace even though they are going to find it very difficult as the world comes against them.

Remember what Jesus said to them in John 15:18-21, **“If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you. Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.”**

These can be very troubling words but at this point I don’t think they got the extent of this persecution that was going to be coming against them.

Once Jesus is arrested in the Garden of Gethsemane, once they see the report of how badly beaten Jesus was. In fact, it was so bad He did not even resemble a man anymore! And then He was crucified, the One that they loved so much and now they were on the run, trying to protect their own lives!

That was what was coming, and Jesus has given them a heads up on this. And now He tells them that yes, in this world, there will be no peace for them. But the true peace is only going to be found in Jesus!

And it is after this, as we move into John chapter 17, we will see Jesus pray for Himself, for His disciples, and then for you and me.

When you think about this peace that Jesus is speaking of, it is an offer that is made in the most unlikely circumstances!

Again, Judas left them during the Passover meal to meet with the Jewish religious leaders and they were plotting to arrest Jesus. And Jesus knew that He would be arrested, forsaken, rejected, mocked, humiliated, tortured and executed before the next day was over.

When you think about it, it should have been the disciples that should have comforted Him. But look at this. Jesus had **peace**, and enough *peace* to give to others. You see, He is the ***PRINCE OF PEACE!***

Let me ask you this question, it may not be as easy as you think to answer it.

“Did Jesus promise us peace?”

I think most people would say, ***“Yes, of course He did. He said that our peace is in Him!”***

I get it, but I don't think that is correct. You see, He did not promise us peace. Then what is He saying here?

Jesus is offering peace to us. He said, **“in Me you may have peace.”**

Think about it. Have you known Christians that don't have peace in their lives, maybe you are struggling with this. The problem is not that this peace is not there for you to receive, but that is the key, you must receive His peace into your life!

Let me say this. First of all, you cannot experience this peace of God without first receiving Him as your Lord and Savior.

Paul tells us in Romans 5:1, **“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”**

You see, prior to coming to Christ, we can't have peace with God. In fact, the Bible says we are at war with God.

Maybe you don't believe me on that one but let me show you.

Think about what Paul has said here. We are now at peace with God through Jesus Christ. And the opposite of peace is war and thus, we were at war with God prior to us coming to Him!

Paul said in Romans 8:7-8, **“Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. So then, those who are in the flesh cannot please God.”**

You are at war with God, and you can't please God in the things you are doing because you are not a child of God. You have not asked Jesus to be your Lord and Savior.

Thus, the war is fought because we want to do our own thing, we think God is some kind of cosmic kill joy who is ruining all our fun, or we can even be neutral about God.

But the reality is, if you are not for Him then you are against Him! We tend to enjoy sin, not realizing that sin is like a cancer that slowly consumes our bodies!

You can never experience the peace *OF* God in your life until you first make peace *WITH* God, and, as I have said, that is only done through Jesus.

Once we make peace *WITH* God, Paul tells us **“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”** Philippians 4:6-7.

Or as The Amplified Bible puts it, **“Do not fret or have any anxiety about anything, but in every circumstance and in everything, by prayer and petition (definite requests), with thanksgiving, continue to make your wants known to God. And God’s peace [shall be yours, that tranquil state of a soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and being content with its earthly lot of whatever sort that is, that peace] which transcends all understanding shall garrison and mount guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”** Philippians 4:6-7.

What a glorious promise to each of us, the peace of God that surpasses all understanding but is very real in our lives once we make peace *WITH* God through Jesus Christ!

We might not understand it, but when we are going through a difficult time, we can *KNOW* the peace *OF* God in our lives!

How do we know this peace of God? By believing in the promises of God to us in His Word!

Now am I saying that those who don’t know God can’t experience the peace of God in their lives?

That is exactly what I am saying. Well, let me be clear on this. I am not saying this, God is. We are told in Isaiah 48:22, **“There is no peace,’ says the Lord, ‘for the wicked.’** (Also, Isaiah 57:21)

I think that is very clear.

But again, Christians, those who follow the Lord may deny themselves this peace because they are not receiving it into their lives.

I think about Christians today and all that is going on in the world and they are in turmoil, they have no peace. ***“Come Lord Jesus!”*** is all they can say. They can’t say, ***“Lord, as difficult as things may get, use me to minister the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost and dying world and to glorify my Father in heaven!”***

Peace is there for them; they just don’t receive into their lives what the Lord has offered them because of the difficult situations that they have encountered.

But these men were going to experience some of the most difficult times in their lives and yet, Jesus is offering them peace in the midst of these difficult times, just as He is doing with us!

Maclaren put it like this. He wrote, ***“He promises a peace which co-exists with tribulation and disturbances, a peace which is realized in and through conflict and struggle.”***

It is something that is offered to us, a peace in the midst of turmoil, a peace when things are falling apart, a peace that surpasses all understanding, and that peace is there for us to have as we rest in Jesus!

There truly is no real peace anywhere else! Thus, we need to stay focused. We need to keep our eyes upon Jesus. We need to trust in Him because everything around you will be shaken, there will be tribulation, not might be!

And what does the world have for us?

What kind of peace does the world offer to us?

And I really should say what kind of peace does the Devil have for us because that is who is using this world to do his bidding!

Make no mistake about it, the Devil knows that people have a hard time functioning in an environment that is filled with stress, turmoil, anxiety and fear for a very long time.

Look at what COVID has done to people not only in this world, but in our country. This stress has caused people to turn against each other, fight against each other, avoid each other! There is no peace because they are not receiving this peace that God has for them!

And let me say this. It's no mistake or accident that as our society devolves more and more into chaos, confusion, COVID madness and anarchy that we see alcoholism, drug abuse and suicides rising exponentially.

And think about this. If they try to endure this for a long time, they can have all kinds of emotional problems!

But don't fear, the Devil comes in with solutions to our fear, our anxiety, our turmoil and it is not a supernatural peace that can come from God, but an artificial peace that only brings more turmoil, more problems!

How does the Devil do this?

I think you know some of his ways, but I will tell you anyway.

His peace is offered through drugs. His peace is offered through alcohol. His peace is offered through hypnosis. His peace is offered through transcendental meditation. His peace is offered through yoga. And you can put whatever else you want in there that is a superficial answer to a spiritual issue.

And this is all an effort to help a person escape the pressures they are experiencing in life!

Look at marriages, for instance. Your marriage is stressful, difficult and what does the Devil tell you to do?

He tells you that you need to get a divorce if you are truly going to find peace. So in this instance, peace is found in escaping this situation, running away.

I don't think you can find a peace like that or a teaching like that in the Bible. Well, let me be clear – ***YOU CAN'T!***

And in extreme times of anxiety, pressure and depression, the devil tries to push them into the ultimate escape – ***SUICIDE!***

But Jesus is offering true peace that is found in Him. Not a peace like the world wants to give you. That is a peace that is artificial and destructive as I have said!

Paul, in Ephesians 2:14 said, "**For He Himself is our peace . . .**"

In other words, the peace that Jesus is offering us is not a peace that is found in a pill or a program but in a ***PERSON!*** And the name of this Person is – ***JESUS CHRIST!***

Again, this is not a promise of peace, but you can receive it if you want, it is up to you.

The world's peace is empty; Jesus can give to us a peace that surpasses all human understanding. He can give us peace as we go through the storms of life!

It is as Jesus said in 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 heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.**"

The question is, "***Do you believe?***"

Now, how can we be so certain that this peace is real?

Because Jesus based this peace on His victory over the world as He said, "**. . . I have overcome the world.**" John 16:33.

Now let's think about this for a minute. Here is a Man, Jesus, and He is telling us that you can be assured of this peace because He is victorious!

Wait a minute, how can that be?

He is going to be arrested and face three religious trials and three civil trials.

He is going to be beaten, mocked, and put to death!

But the religious authorities, Pilate, the soldiers, the crowds, death and the grave could not overcome Jesus. He overcame them! And thus, we can be assured of this peace because He showed us nothing can stop our God - ***NOTHING!***

And as true as it was back then, it is even truer today!

And Jesus spoke these words before any of this happened and He could because He knows all things!

So once again we see words of comfort that Jesus is giving to His men. Yes, great tribulation will come upon them for their faith, their faith will be tested, but what the world has for you and what Jesus has for you is night and day apart.

The world is coming against you, Jesus is for you. And in Him we find peace in a world that is coming against us. Don't lose sight of that fact.

And here is something that we don't think much about when things get difficult in our lives. Jesus said that He has overcome the world and thus, we should "**... be of good cheer ...**"

How can we be of good cheer when all this is happening to us?

Because Jesus is in control of everything, even you and me! That truly is the foundation for our faith, knowing that He is in control and when we have that as our focus, we can – ***BE OF GOOD CHEER!***

How appropriate this study is for the days we are living in. The world is at war with us, and we are at peace in Jesus!

Yes, like – *THE DISCIPLES PROFESSION* we too have made a profession of faith.

But when we see – *THE PROPHECY OF JESUS*, does that cause us to fear, to lose hope?

It should not because we can have – *THE PEACE OF JESUS* in our lives! You see, our victory is in Jesus, never forget that!

As we move on into John chapter 17 next time, we will see Jesus, our Great High Priest, pray for Himself, for His men and then for all those who come to believe, including you and me. Jesus is praying for us!

Make no mistake about it, this truly is the Lord's prayer, and it is beautiful and powerful.

And we will begin to look at that next time, as I have said.

Let me close with this. We are told,

Long ago a man sought the perfect picture of peace.

Not finding one that satisfied, he announced a contest to produce this masterpiece.

The challenge stirred the imagination of artists everywhere, and paintings arrived from far and wide.

Finally the great day of revelation arrived. The judges uncovered one peaceful scene after another, while the viewers clapped and cheered.

The tensions grew.

Only two pictures remained veiled.

As a judge pulled the cover from one, a hush fell over the crowd.

A mirror-smooth lake reflected lacy, green birches under the soft blush of the evening sky. Along the grassy shore, a flock of sheep grazed undisturbed. Surely this was the winner.

The man with the vision uncovered the second painting himself, and the crowd gasped in surprise. Could this be peace?

A tumultuous waterfall cascaded down a rocky precipice; the crowd could almost feel its cold, penetrating spray. Stormy-gray clouds threatened to explode with lightning, wind and rain.

In the midst of the thundering noises and bitter chill, a spindly tree clung to the rocks at the edge of the falls. One of its branches reached out in front of the torrential waters as if foolishly seeking to experience its full power.

A little bird had built a nest in the elbow of that branch.

Content and undisturbed in her stormy surroundings, she rested on her eggs. With her eyes closed and her wings ready to cover her little ones, she manifested peace that transcends all earthly turmoil.

- Berit Kjos, *A Wardrobe from the King*, pp. 45-46

As Jesus told His men, He is speaking to us, **“I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace and confidence. In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.]”** (John 16:33, The Amplified Bible)