

## Jesus Gives Heavenly Peace

February 6, 2022

John 14: 27-31 (ESV)

<sup>27</sup> *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.* <sup>28</sup> *You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.'* *If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.* <sup>29</sup> *And now I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.* <sup>30</sup> *I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me,* <sup>31</sup> *but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.*

In the year 1971, John Lennon sang his famous song 'Imagine'. He sang this, I suppose for people to imagine a world without countries, borders, greed, hunger, possessions and even heaven or hell. He also has a line in the song that goes like this 'Imagine all the people living, for today'. It seems like he was saying 'just live for today'. To me it seems like Lennon was imagining a sort of utopian world where there is no conflict. Lennon himself said that this was a campaign for peace. Fifty years after this very popular song had been written, many people still like the song but the conflict in the world has not ended.

Restlessness, discord, fights, disputes, arguments, divisiveness and quarrelling are part and parcel of this fallen world we live in. And, sadly, we find this restlessness in the individual, in families, in communities, in towns, in cities and in entire nations.

Lennon's song may sound noble but hear the words of an author who wrote about Lennon's song. This author's name is John Blaney, who authored the book Lennon and McCartney. I was surprised by this author's comment. This is what John Blaney said about Lennon's song - "*Lennon knew he had nothing concrete to offer, so instead he offers a dream, a concept to be built upon*".

Now, contrast Lennon's song with what Jesus offers to his disciples. Jesus says, "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you*".

Jesus is not offering a dream, a fantasy, make-believe concept that you can wish for but can never experience. Jesus offers something concrete, real and tangible.

*Have you ever found yourself in a situation or a circumstance where fears, anxieties, trouble and worry come un-announced and without warning?* This is life in the world we live in.

The disciples were no different. Jesus had been telling his disciples that "his hour" had come to leave the world. And the disciples had asked questions about where he was going, what was going to happen. Jesus had spent about three and half years with them. Jesus had been their in person guide, their shepherd, their leader, their protector, their provider. And now he announces that he needs leave them to die on a cross. They heard Jesus say that He is the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for his sheep. They also heard Jesus talk about his burial after Mary had anointed his feet. So, they were grieved and troubled as to where Jesus was going. It's very unlikely the disciples knew in clear detail that Jesus would be betrayed, arrested and crucified before he rose again from the dead. So, knowing fully well their troubled hearts, Jesus promises his disciples two incredible things – *one*: to prepare a place in heaven for them, *two*: a Helper, a Comforter (the Holy Spirit) that Jesus would send in his place. We saw these two promises explained last two Sundays from chapter 14. Today, in this passage, Jesus wants to leave something with his disciples something to the effect of an inheritance a bequest a gift. That gift is peace.

*Have you ever received a personalized gift with your name or initials written on it?*

Jesus wants to give you a very personalized gift. He tells his disciples in verse 27 tells "*My peace I give to you*". His own peace is what Jesus offers. And that peace can be yours too.

And Jesus contrasts the peace that he will give with the peace the world gives. The peace that Jesus gives is not like the peace this world promises and fails to deliver.

This world offers a lot of stuff. You ever wonder the world has to make upgrades new models new versions of same product. Because man is never content. But, oh, the peace that Jesus gives. It is a heavenly peace.

*And what does the peace of Jesus look like?*

Before we see the kind of peace Jesus gives, we must know what kind of a person Jesus is.

Jesus is called the Prince of Peace.

Seven hundred years before Jesus was born, the prophet Isaiah foretold that a son would be born. And that son “*shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.*” <sup>7</sup> *Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end*”. Jesus is this Wonderful Counselor and Prince of Peace.

And the Prince of Peace has an unlimited supply of peace. His kingdom of peace will have no end.

But, humanity, on the other hand is not at peace with God. Man’s actions or inactions are offensive to God. Psalm 7:11 tells us that God is offended everyday by the actions of the wicked. The Bible also tells that the best of our deeds are filthy rags before a Holy and Righteous God (Isaiah 64:6).

Paul in writing to the Ephesians says that we were once dead in our trespasses. In the deadness of our sin, we followed the world, the devil and flesh. And whoever is in love with the world is at enmity with God. And what happens to the enemies of God? They are marked for judgment.

So what sinful man or woman needs to know is that the first thing and foremost thing they need to do is make *peace* with God.

But how does unholy man make peace with a God who is perfect in holiness?

How do you reconcile with God who cannot be *appeased*, *satisfied* or *placated* by any good deeds?

God’s standard is absolute holiness. Jesus himself said in the Sermon on the Mount that “you must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matthew 5:48).

*And how do you do that? How do you become perfect?*

The answer is you cannot.

No one can unless a sinless innocent perfect man a peacemaker mediates on our behalf.

Jesus is that Peacemaker.

This is the heart of the Gospel.

(It is said that the great reformer Martin Luther was struggling with this very issue of satisfying a Holy God with good deeds. And his mentor supposedly told Luther to love God more and more. To that Luther was struck in his conscience and blurted out, “I don’t love God, I hate God”. Until he found out that it only by faith he would be considered just before God.)

Jesus is our propitiation. Meaning Jesus satisfied, pleased and appeased the holy demands of God. God demands that sin must receive its penalty. So for those who repent and trust and put faith in the Prince of Peace, in his death and resurrection, God treats them as if they are perfect in his sight. This is Good News!

Jesus is the Only Peacemaker between God and Man.

And because of Jesus, because He stood in the gap, we have *peace* with God. Meaning you are no longer marked for judgment but for eternal life. You are adopted as sons and daughters. This is the Gospel of peace.

The apostle Paul describes Jesus this way, “He (Jesus) himself is our peace” (Ephesians 2:14) How wonderful!

This is what Jesus was going to do for his disciples. He was getting ready to go to the cross as a peacemaker and to make a peace offering to God on behalf of his disciples. Not just for his first disciples only but to all who trust in him. The disciples did not first understand why Jesus had to suffer so much. They did later. Peter wrote in 1 Peter 3:18 that “*Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God*”. Isn’t that just amazing?

Puritan Thomas Watson writes about Christ, the Prince of Peace, this way, “*He came into the world with a song of peace:*

*‘On earth peace...’ He went out of the world with a legacy of peace, ‘My peace I give to you’. Christ’s earnest prayer was for peace; He prayed that His people might be one. Christ not only prayed for peace, but bled for peace”.*

But Jesus also has a mission for his disciples. He had been training them so that they would go into the world to preach the message of the Good News. The problem is that they would have to go into a world that has rejected God and is hostile to God. And, now their beloved leader is leaving them. And Jesus knows that they will give into anxiety, fear and cowardice. Jesus knows they will not be able to take a stand against the religious establishment against the Roman authorities against the apathy of people.

So, in that context, Jesus tells his disciples. Don’t be troubled. Don’t be afraid. Don’t give in to timidity or cowardice. Jesus promises them his own peace.

1. Jesus in his own life displayed a sense of calmness when there was confusion, adversity, tension all around him. There was a time Jesus was invited to a wedding and the wine had run out, the host did not know what to do. And you see no agitation in Jesus. He refills their supply of wine.
2. There was a time when a Roman official came to Jesus pleading and begging him to come. Why? Because his son was at the point of death. But Jesus displays no sign of distress. He calmly tells the Roman official to go his way and that his son would be healed. Amazing!
3. There was this other time when there were at least five thousand people without a meal. And his disciples had no clue as to how to provide bread for these thousands. But Jesus himself knew what he would do. He feeds all of them supernaturally.
4. And we saw that famous passage where Mary and Martha were so upset, grieved and even confused why Jesus was late when their brother Lazarus had been dead for four days. But Jesus was not even rattled a bit. He came late to raise Lazarus from the dead.
5. Now we saw two weeks ago that Jesus was troubled by the actions of Judas and his own journey to the cross and yet he fully entrusted himself to His Father.
6. You know the disciples were once on a boat with Jesus and there is a great storm. And Jesus is not bothered one bit. But what does Jesus do to the storm, “Peace, be still!”. This is incredible! Not only does Jesus possess a calmness in himself but he is able to bring peace and stillness to the situation around him. *When Jesus is your life, he is able to bring peace to whatever the circumstance.* Jesus said to his disciples. Have faith!

So the disciples had been watching Jesus walk in such a peaceful way even when the circumstances around him were quite stressful.

But now, Jesus knows the time for his betrayal is really closing in on him. That’s why he says in verse 30 that the ruler of the world is coming for me. Meaning, Satan working through Judas is really, really close.

But notice what he says in verse 30.

*“the ruler of the world is coming and in me he has no one”.*

Satan has no hold on Jesus. Satan has nothing to accuse Jesus for. This whole betrayal is pure hatred against an innocent man. But through that evil God will bring out good. And even in the heels of his arrest, betrayal and crucifixion, Jesus remains calm and resolute. Jesus is *undeterred* in spite of what he will have to go through. This is the peace that Jesus possesses. And this is the peace that Jesus wants to give his disciples and you as well. A resolute calmness and confidence even when things are not going well.

However, the disciples don’t see God’s plan in its entirety. They are still grieving and troubled that Jesus would leave them. They turn inward to their own grief without comprehending the grand purposes of God.

So, Jesus tells them in verse 28:

<sup>28</sup> *You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because*

*I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.*

Jesus told them that he would be leaving and coming back. But here Jesus tells them, if you loved me you would be happy that I am going back to the place where I used to be. With his Father. Jesus was sent by the Father to the earth for a mission. And in that sense the Father is greater than Jesus but is not unequal to Jesus. The Father and Jesus are One.

There is something we can learn from Jesus here. The disciples are too worried. Now this is legitimate worry but they are not to worry beyond a certain limit. Because there is hope.

*Growing up, I knew a mother who had lost a son. And the way she grieved was there was no tomorrow. You know Paul reminds the Thessalonians that we are to grieve but not without hope. The hope of the Christian believer is that one day you will be re-united with Jesus.*

So, grieve yes but also rejoice that Jesus is in heaven preparing a place for you. And God gives you the Holy Spirit. And Jesus gives you His peace.

And in verse 29, Jesus tells his disciples that they ought to believe his words.

Finally, Jesus tells his disciples that his own mission is to walk and love and submission to this Father.

*<sup>30</sup> I will no longer talk much with you, for the ruler of this world is coming. He has no claim on me, <sup>31</sup> but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father. Rise, let us go from here.*

Its one thing to say “Do as I say” but its another thing to say “Do as I do”. Jesus modeled perfect obedience to His Father. He obeyed His Father because He loves His Father. And the Father loves His Son.

In the same way, Jesus wants you and I to keep his commandments. This is the evidence of your love for God.

Jesus is done with the last supper teaching. So he ends his discourse by telling them “Rise, let us go from here”.

Where is Jesus leading them?

He is going to take them to the garden. The garden of Gethsemane. A garden where Jesus will spend time in prayer. for his disciples and for the world. This was a garden of suffering. But it was a garden of preparation for his disciples.

I began with Lennon story and his song. Sadly, Lennon was killed by violence in 1980.

In this world of violence, hatred, bigotry and prejudice, you know what Jesus wants his disciples to be?

Jesus wants you to be a peacemaker. Jesus said, “*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God*” (Matthew 5:9). You want to be called a son or daughter of God? Be a peacemaker!

- The Bible tells us to “*Seek peace and pursue it*” (Psalm 34:14).
- Psalm 37:37 tells that “*There is future for a man of peace*”.
- Psalm 119:165 tells us that there is “*Great peace for those who love God’s law, nothing can make them stumble*”. What a promise! You want great peace? Love the Word of God. Soak in His Word. Meditate on it.
- You know why some people don’t have joy in their hearts? Because they are always plotting, comparing, wishing ill and evil for others. The prophet Isaiah tells us that “*there is no peace for the wicked*”. (Isaiah 48:22). The wise man Solomon wrote this “*Deceit is in the heart of those who devise evil, but those who plan peace have joy*” (Proverbs 12:20)

I want to close with these words of the apostle Paul to the Philippian church.

*<sup>6</sup> Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. <sup>7</sup> Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:6-7 NLT).*

----- Discipleship Questions -----

MESSAGE SUMMARY: **Jesus Gives Heavenly Peace.** John 14:27-31

HEAD: These questions help you examine the truth of God's Word.

1. How did Jesus become our peacemaker and make peace on our behalf when we were once far from God? Go around and share. Romans 3:23-25, Hebrews 2:17, 1 John 4:10, Romans 5:1, Ephesians 2:14-17 (Read in this order for clarity).

HEART: These questions help you wrestle with what you believe.

2. Do you believe in the promises of God that you can experience a heavenly peace? How? Psalm 119:165, Proverbs 3:1-2, Isaiah 26:3, Philippians 4:6-7
3. What is God convicting you of and to believe in light of this message?

HANDS/HABITS: These questions help you bring the truth into your everyday life and develop behaviors that change your habits.

4. For personal reflection: Jesus desires for his disciples to be peacemakers (Matthew 5:9). What do you need to do in order to have peace and be a peacemaker?