

# Pursuing Peace

*Philippians 4:4-9*

## Peace

The Bible opens with peace in the garden; the Bible closes with peace in eternity. In fact, you could chart the course of Biblical history based on the theme of peace. There was peace on earth in the garden. Man sinned, peace was interrupted. Man chased elusive peace. At the cross, peace became a reality again as He who died on the cross became our peace. And since the Lord Jesus Christ has provided peace, there can be peace in the heart of a man or a woman who comes to know Him.

## The State of the World

There is an absence of personal peace, family peace, local peace, national peace, or international peace. There are always people trying to find peace: peace in the cities, peace in the communities, peace in the family, peace in relationships, peace in the world. People want peace in their lives. Peace is elusive in this world and for those who do not know God in this fallen world, there is no peace. Period.

## The Word "Peace"

The most normal greeting among Jewish people is, and has been for centuries: "Shalom." Peace. It in essence means this: a wish for completeness; or a wish for contentment; or a wish for fulfillment, or satisfaction, or blessing; a wish for prosperity on all levels. In other words, it is a desire that all that is good would flow into your life. In one word "wholeness."

## Peace of Christ

John 14:27 - "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be afraid." This is a supernatural peace. It is Christ's peace and it belongs only to those who are Christ's.

## Objective Peace

An objective peace is that peace which is outside of you. It is a transactional peace. This is a deposit; this is a gift. When God declares you just, when He imputes the righteousness of Christ to you, you are declared righteous. You are justified by faith in Christ and by the work that He did on the cross. We are welcomed into God's family and God's presence forever.

## Subjective Peace

We also have a subjective peace, an internal peace, an experiential peace; a sense of goodness, trust, contentment, tranquility, confidence, well-being. Experiencing the subjective peace that comes from the objective reality of being reconciled to God is the joy that we have in being believers.

## Source of Peace

"My peace I give to you." That is to say it's divine, it's supernatural. It comes from heaven; it belongs to Christ; it belongs to God. 2 Thessalonians 3:16 "Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. The Lord be with you all!" That's Paul's prayer again, that you would enjoy the peace that comes from the Lord of peace.

## Supremacy of Peace

This peace from God is not found in the human realm, it transcends all that the world offers of superficial and temporary peace. The world's "peace", the "peace" for those outside of a saving knowledge of Christ is very different. The world's pseudo peace is simply the peace of ignorance.

## Pursuit of Peace

Psalms 34:14 "Seek peace and pursue it." Isaiah 26:3 says "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you." Isaiah 32:17 says "the effect of righteousness will be peace." Pursue righteousness and you'll find peace.

## Practice

Practice brings peace. Listen to Isaiah 26:3 again "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you." Perfect peace is the product of perfect trust. Perfect trust is the result of perfect knowledge of God. The more you know about God, the more you trust Him. The more you trust Him, the more eagerly you go to Him in the midst of your trouble with thankful prayers. And when you go to Him in your trouble with thankful prayers, the peace of God floods your soul beyond comprehension. It surpasses understanding.

## Three R's

*Remember* - Remember what Christ did for you. See how he has given you grace, how he has been merciful. See how in the midst of hard providences He was there. See how he brought you through the trial and tribulation. See how he has provided more than you could think or ask.

*Read* - Read the word. Spend time in the Bible. It's how you pursue righteousness, it's how you meditate on the attributes of God, it's how you learn truth. It's where you learn trust. It builds your faith.

*Rest* - Rest in the objective peace that is as once and done as your justification. And rest in the peace and contentment and joy that comes from a intimate relationship with the three persons of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Philippians 4:7 - And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.