

No Peace for the Wicked

by Chuck Smith

The sermon explores the contrast between the peace found in God and the unrest experienced by the wicked, emphasizing the need for surrender and confession to achieve true peace.

Duration: 33:26

Scripture: Genesis 1:1, Psalm 32:1, Isaiah 57:20-21, Isaiah 58:6, Isaiah 58:11, Matthew 6:33, Revelation 22:21

Topics: "Wickedness"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the story of King David and his guilt after taking the widow of a fallen soldier as his wife. David felt restless and burdened by his wrongdoing, describing it as an inner roaring that left him with no rest day or night. However, when David confessed his sin, God forgave him and brought him peace. The sermon also touches on the importance of trusting in the Lord and not fighting against His laws, as doing so leads to sorrow and separation from God.

Transcript

Shall we turn in our Bibles now to Psalm 32 for our scripture reading today. I'll read the first, the outnumbered verses, and Pastor Brian will lead the congregation in the even-numbered verses as we stand to read the Word of God. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity and in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me.

My moisture is turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

For this shall everyone that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found. Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. Thou art my hiding place.

Thou shalt preserve me from trouble. Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go.

I will guide thee with mine eye. Be not as a horse or as a mule which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked, but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.

Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart. Let's pray. Father we thank you for that blessedness of knowing that our transgressions have been forgiven, our sins have been covered.

We thank you Lord for the wonderful peace that we have in our hearts today. The peace of knowing that we're no longer at war with you, but that we have surrendered Lord unto you and have yielded our lives to be controlled by your spirit. Now Lord we pray that today as we open the word you will open our hearts to the receiving of the instruction of your word.

In Jesus name we ask this. Amen. You may be seated.

As we continue our journey through the Bible, this week we come to Isaiah 56 through 58. And tonight Pastor Skip will be leading us in our study through these chapters. I've enjoyed immensely the Sunday night studies with Pastor Skip.

The background, the information and all that he is giving to us and guiding us through the study of the Bible. So we encourage you to come on out at seven o'clock. Join with us as we worship the Lord and continue to journey through the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation.

This morning we'd like you to look at Isaiah 57 verses 20 and 21. Here Isaiah declares, But the wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.

Now verse 20 begins with the word but. Way back in the dusty files of my brain where there are a lot of cobwebs and all, I do remember in an English class in high school that the teacher taught that the word but is something that you never start a sentence with. It's a disassociated conjunction, she said.

That is, it is joining together two diverse things. Two different things are joined together by the word but. So in going back in verse 19, the Lord declared, I create the fruit of the lips.

Peace, peace to him that is far off and to him that is near, saith the Lord, I will heal him. But the wicked are like the troubled sea. So the contrast is between the peace that God is promising to give to his people with that unrest that goes on in the heart of the wicked.

Peace, you might say, is one of the fringe benefits of our trusting and knowing God. God commanded Aaron when he had gone from the offering of the sacrifice there in the tabernacle that he was to go out to the people and he was to put God's name upon the people saying, the Lord bless thee and keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine upon thee and be gracious unto thee.

The Lord lift up his countenance upon thee and give thee peace. God wanted the people to know that he wanted to give them peace, that he was gracious and compassionate and he wanted them to know peace. In Isaiah 26, Isaiah said that the Lord would keep a person in perfect peace whose mind was stayed upon the Lord.

Rather than looking at the circumstances, rather than looking at the problems, looking to the Lord. The wonderful promise is that he would keep you in perfect peace if you would just get your mind stayed upon him. When Jesus was born there in Bethlehem and the angels went out to let the shepherds know that the Messiah had been born in the city of David.

As the shepherds were announcing the birth of Jesus, they said glory to God in the highest and on earth peace. He is called in Isaiah the prince of peace and thus now on earth peace, goodwill toward men. Paul the apostle writing to the Philippians spoke about the peace that God gives us, how that it passes human understanding.

Have you ever had an experience that peace? When the situation that you are going through or have just gone through is one that is so disturbing and could be so upsetting but somehow you find that you're not really disturbed, you're not really upset, that you have that perfect peace because you know that God is on the throne. God loves you. God is watching over you and you rest in his love and in that confidence that God is going to take care of it.

I don't have to fret or worry over it. God is going to take care of it. In a world that's filled with so many pressures, so much turmoil, how wonderful it is to know the peace of Christ which passes understanding.

Jesus said to his disciples, peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you. Not as the world gives, give I unto you.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. As Christians, we first of all have peace with God. Before we were at war with God, we were at war with the law of God.

We were at war with the spirit of God that was calling us and drawing us to submit our lives unto God's control. Fighting against God, you can never know peace. But having surrendered our lives to God, we now have peace with God.

That's a wonderful experience. I can lie down at night and lying there on my pillow, I can look up and just say, God, you're watching over me. You love me and you've forgiven all of my transgressions.

I'm not running from you anymore. I'm not fighting against you anymore, Lord. Thank you for the peace that I have with you through surrender.

Once I have peace with God, then I can experience the peace of God. Now that is different than peace with God. The Bible tells us that the peace of God passes human understanding.

That is, God gives me his peace. As Jesus said, my peace I give unto you. So that God isn't really worried or concerned or, you know, spending sleepless nights over the conditions that are going on.

He has it all in control and thus the glorious peace of God that he then puts in my heart. And I can now have peace with myself. No longer in turmoil.

No longer in a position of being so upset, but peace within myself. I realize that God does not require from me more than I am capable of doing. Having peace now with myself, I can have peace with my fellow men.

Now, I can't have the peace of God until I have peace with God. I can't have peace within myself until I have the peace of God. And I can't have peace with you until I have peace with myself.

If I'm going around constantly in this state of edginess and, you know, just don't get too close, don't, you know, and I'm tight and all, I can never have peace with others because I don't have peace with myself. I'm always looking for some little thing to be upset over or to be angry about because I don't have peace within, peace within myself. But having peace within, now I can have peace with you.

And that's exactly what God wants. Now, this is something that the wicked can't know. The child of God can experience complete peace, but not so the wicked.

The wicked are like a troubled sea. Now, the last couple of weeks on television, we have been watching troubled seas. Seas that have been stirred up by these powerful hurricanes.

Seas that are being tossed, as Jude describes them, raging seas that are just foaming and and breathing out their foam and so forth. And we've seen pictures of raging seas. You know, if you could take a picture of someone's heart or of someone's mind, that's what you would see for the wicked.

Those raging seas, the restlessness, that constant churning and turning over and, you know, overflowing the mind, the heart of the wicked. They're like a troubled sea. Like a restless sea, because they're being tossed and driven by the winds of passion and their own lust.

There are some sins that if you begin to engage in them, they will never allow you to rest. Lust is one of those sins. The more you feed it, the more it will demand.

It will never allow you to rest. It continues to demand more and more until it finally consumes you. People consumed by their lust never can rest.

For evil passions can never find fulfillment, never find satisfaction. There's that constant turmoil. Anger is another one of those sins that will keep you in constant turmoil.

It seems that there are some people that just go around looking for something to get upset over. That they're always on edge. They're like a volcano.

There's all this boiling and all going on inside, and they're just waiting for the opportunity to vent all of this unrest that is within them. You know that they're going to erupt. You don't know when, you don't know what will provoke it, but you know that they are just, there is that unrest within them that is so great that all they're looking is for the opportunity to just give vent to that inner turmoil that just, you know, begin to lay it out before you.

Anger. So often when we are angry, we'll say, I am so upset. What is that? Upset.

Restlessness. It's a confession of the restlessness that you have within. Like a troubled sea, restless.

Anger will do that to you. Rarely a calm or serene moment. Not even in sleep, they toss and turn during the night because of the restlessness within.

Greed is another one of those sins that cause that restlessness within. There's never quite enough. There are people who have established certain goals in life.

As soon as I have so much money in the bank, I'm going to retire. I'm just going to retire. I'm just going to take it easy.

I'm just going to, you know, I'll have sufficient to take care of me, and I won't worry about that. And so they have their goals set for what they are striving to attain so that they can then have rest. I'll have rest when I get there.

I'm striving to get there, but as soon as I get there, I'm going to rest. But usually when they achieve that amount that they've set in their mind, that they are certain they can rest when they get that, as soon as they achieve that amount, then they say, well, maybe I don't have enough. Maybe I need a little more.

And so they're back striving again to get a little more, always hoping that they can one day get enough that they can rest. One of the wealthiest men in the world was one time asked the question, how much does it take to be satisfied? And he said, just a little more. He had more money than he could possibly spend ever in his lifetime.

But still did not have peace. Just a little more. And so it is with the person who is mastered by greed or mastered by his own lust or mastered by an ungoverned temper.

The reason why an evil heart is constantly restless is because of the evil passions in the heart that will not allow them to rest. And so God then declared, there is no peace for the wicked. They're like a troubled sea, casting up their mire and their mud.

There is no peace, saith the Lord, for the wicked. For God is at war with wickedness. And if you are living a life of wickedness, then you are fighting against God.

The Bible says, woe unto him who strives with his maker or is fighting with God. Number one, how could you ever hope to win? I mean, he's God. He's all powerful.

He has all knowledge. How could you ever hope to win in fighting against God? You are in a no-win situation if you find yourself fighting against God. Because if you win, you've really lost.

If God is convicting you of a sin in your life that has separated you from God, and in our study next week, as we get into the 59th chapter, Isaiah says, God's hand isn't short that he cannot reach out and save you. God isn't deaf that he cannot hear you, but your sins have separated you from God. It isn't that God cannot, it's he will not, because you're at war with God.

God is at war with wickedness. And if you've allowed it to govern your life, then you are at war with God. And within, there's that turmoil, there is that fighting that's going on against God, against your own consciousness, against what you know is right.

And you find yourself in this turmoil because you're fighting against God. But let's say you win. Let's say when God is calling you to repent and to turn from your sin, you are going on stubbornly fighting him and saying, I'm going to continue my sin.

I don't care what you say or what your word says. If the Spirit of God is drawing you to confess your sin to Jesus Christ and to receive his forgiveness, and you say, I won't, I'll continue in my sin. I won't accept the forgiveness of Jesus.

Then you've really lost. You're lost forever. So thus to fight against God puts you in a no-win situation.

There's no way you can fight against God and win. Because if you win that battle, you're lost forever. Some of you find yourself fighting against God today, fighting against his law.

You've bought into Satan's lie that the law of God isn't really relevant to you or to your situation. That somehow you have a special kind of a dispensation so that what God has said doesn't really apply to your situation. Or that it's all right with God if you go ahead and disobey his commandments.

That in reality, the commandments of God are too severe. They're too strict. That God just doesn't want you to have any fun.

And thus he's holding back from you something that is good and something that is pleasurable. It may be pleasurable, but it's not good. And you find yourself striving with God today over issues in your life.

And you know exactly what Isaiah is speaking about when he said, there is no peace, saith the Lord, for the wicked. For in your heart, you know what's right. In your heart, God is speaking to you, but you won't listen.

You go on in that sin, fighting against God. The Bible tells us that he has shown you, oh man, what is good. The law of the Lord, David said, is perfect, converting the soul.

The statutes of the Lord are right, making wise the simple. The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether, more to be desired than gold, yea, than much fine gold. But being at war with God, you find that you're at war with yourself.

The Bible says that God would write his law on the fleshly tablets of our hearts. And I know within myself that what I'm doing is not right. I shouldn't be doing it.

And when I do it, and I know I shouldn't, there's this conflict that is set up within. There's this restlessness, and the wicked are like the restless sea that is tossed. The waves, tossed by the winds of passion, and we've mentioned.

The psalm that we read this morning, Psalm 32. It was written by David after his sin of adultery. David had sought to cover his sin.

He sought to cover it with greater sins, actually. He had had this adulterous affair with Bathsheba. As a result, she became pregnant.

He tried to create a deception, bringing her husband home from the battlefield, figuring that he would have a relation with his wife, and when she would notify him that she was pregnant, he would then realize, or think at least, well, it happened while, you know, I came home on leave. But he didn't cooperate with David's scheme. So, David then ordered the general to put him in the thick part of the battle that he might be killed.

And then David, in sort of a magnanimous gesture, took the wife of this young soldier into his harem. And everybody thought, oh, how wonderful is our king taking in the widow of one of the fallen soldiers who was pregnant. But within, David knew what had happened.

He knew the truth. And David describes what was going on inside of him, as the people would come up and compliment him and say, oh, you're so wonderful, my, to take that, you know, why take her as your wife, a fallen soldier. Oh, David, how marvelous.

But David knew the truth. And there was a restlessness within. He describes it in the psalm we read.

He said, there's an inner roaring all day long. Inside, this roaring going on, there's no rest. And night and day, he said, God's hand was heavy upon me.

The guilt, the knowledge that he had done what was wrong, it was pressing him down day and night. There was no rest, even at night, because he knew he was guilty. Inwardly, he said, I felt as dry as the summer drought, until I said, I confess my sin.

And he said, and God forgave me. And that's when he said, oh, how happy is the man whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Peace, joy.

I'm not fighting with God anymore. I consent to the law of God that it is good. I seek to live by the law of God.

Peace that passes human understanding. But not so for the wicked. Troubled sea.

There is no peace, God says, for the wicked. Today, look at your heart. Is it like a troubled sea? Is there conflict going on? Is there unrest and turmoil there? Are things just churning inside? Situations that just have you churning inside? God wants you to have peace.

The peace that passes human understanding, the peace that can only come when you surrender the issue totally to God and you experience his peace. This is the day. God wants you to receive his peace.

Father, we thank you for that wonderful peace that we experience when things are right between you and us. Lord, we pray that today, those that are here going through the turmoils, the restlessness, the churning inside, the feelings of guilt, help them, Lord, this day to come to that glorious place of having peace with you as they surrender, Lord, now themselves and their lives and their situations, Lord, to become obedient unto your will and unto your purpose. Help them now, Lord, to realize that there's only one way of peace and that's surrender, surrender to God.

In Jesus' name we pray, Father, amen.

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