

The Best Gift

by Jim Cymbala

Jim Cymbala emphasizes that the best gift from God is peace, which is achieved through deepening faith and love.

Duration: 41:41

Scripture: Proverbs 3:5, Ephesians 6:23

Topics: "Blessing"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of growing in faith and trusting God with every aspect of our lives. They encourage listeners to not hold back any areas of their lives from God, as He is able to keep and protect whatever is committed to Him. The speaker shares a personal story of a friend in prison who has found peace and comfort in surrendering to God. They highlight the peace that comes from fully trusting God and the blessings that come with it. The sermon concludes with a reflection on a verse that the speaker had never paid attention to before, prompting listeners to consider what they would want to give to someone they care about and what they would want if they could have anything.

Transcript

I want you to stop before we look at the verse for today. It's just one verse, an odd verse too, a verse I had never paid attention to in my whole life until this week. I want you to stop and think of a person that you really care for.

Let's not make it a husband or wife. Let's make it a good friend, a relative. Think of somebody right now.

Everybody, close your eyes, come on. Maybe they're sitting next to you. Maybe it's a choir member, okay? Now, if you could give them the number one thing they wanted, what would you think that would be? In other words, if you were to turn and ask them, maybe you already know them so well that you know.

If they, if I could give them anything, this is what they'd like. A week in Bermuda, two weeks in Hawaii, a new boss, a new wardrobe, a new car, a Maserati. Think for a second what you would want if you could have anything.

If somebody with just deep pockets came up and said, I'll give you anything that you want. Zero in on that. I ask that question because in this odd place in the Bible, the Apostle Paul is finishing off a letter, probably to the church at Ephesus, but it might have been a circular letter because there's very few personal

references in this letter and usually when Paul was at a place for a long time, he would greet certain people and say a lot of personal things and this letter has very little of that, the letter that we call Ephesians.

So some of the experts think it was a circular letter. You know what that means? It was sent maybe to Ephesus to begin with, but it was supposed to then go from church to church to church to church in that part of the world. Paul had spent three years at this church in Ephesus, working there, he birthed the church, he preached the gospel, started it.

So he knew these people so well and now Paul, at the end of the letter, is giving them a prayer for the best thing that he knows they could ever receive. He's about to describe for Christians the best gift you could ever have. Way better than any material thing that we were thinking of.

Makes a Maserati look like a headache. He is now, and this shows you how Christians thought 2,000 years ago, and since this is part of scripture, this is God's wish for us, God's plan, God's desire for us. Tell me if it makes sense to you, if it syncs up with anything you've thought about.

So at the end of Ephesians, in chapter six, let's look at verse 23. Peace to the brothers and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. He's signing off now and he says, I love you so much, I'm not with you, so I want to give you the best thing you could ever have.

Peace to the brothers, include the sisters too, and love with faith, that's nowhere else found like that anywhere in the New Testament, love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Let's read it out loud together, ready? Peace to the brothers and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul's about to sign off and he says, I love you so much, I'm going to pray for you and wish you the best gift that you could ever have.

All of them, notice, come from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. What are they? Peace, I want you to have peace along with love coupled with faith. Peace, I want you to have.

Then I want you to have, along with that, love, and I want you to have supporting that love and that peace, faith, all from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. I want them to pour into your life more faith, more love, and more peace. Let's just start with a couple surface observations here.

Isn't that so true, the insight Paul has, that if you don't have peace, you don't have anything? You can have a Maserati. If you don't have peace, you'll drive it off to BQE. You can have money, you can have talent, you can be beautiful, you could be handsome, you could be a movie star, you can be a super athlete, and without peace, we read the newspaper every day, people self-destructing, people ruining their lives, people changing partners, can't live at peace with anybody, all because there's no peace.

No inner tranquility, no rest for the soul. Inner chaos, inner striving, inner turmoil. No matter what you get, it's not enough.

No, then if I get that, I'll have peace. Then you get that, no, you have less peace. And then you're going, no, he's the answer to my life.

No, he's not the answer to your life. You find out there's still inner turmoil. No matter how good a husband or a wife is, they can't supply the peace that only God can give.

So Paul, knowing how life really works, talks about the need, the blessing, the number one, numero uno gift that you could ever get from anyone if someone could give it to you, and that is peace. Some atheists believe, one female radical atheist was quoted as saying, there is no such thing as inner peace. There's just nervousness and death.

At least she's honest. That's her experience. I don't want to hear about inner peace.

There is no inner peace. There's just inner tension, chaos, just, there's no rest, and then you die. That's when you get your rest.

But Jesus said, peace I give you. Not like the world gives you. The Bible talks about a peace that passes what? All understanding.

It's not even logical. You can have it in the middle of an outside storm. You can have peace, and without that peace, what does it matter what you have? What does it matter how famous you are? Think of the people who take their lives.

They just had this great athlete, hidden from everyone it seems, Junior Seau, this great linebacker from the San Diego Chargers, played all those years, all pro, money, good looks, involved in the community, but something must have been cooking inside of him because he opened up a shotgun in his chest, and they found him. So he had everything, a career, whatever. No peace, no peace, and without peace, we harm not only ourselves.

We harm our marriages. We harm our children. How many children are stunted and scarred for life because they grow up in a house where there's no peace? The mother has no peace.

The father has no peace, and when you live with no peace around you, what do you think the effect will be on you? Think of all the fights that go on between husbands and wives, not because they don't love each other, not because something really happens that's insoluble. No, it's because no peace carries into our relationships with other people, and you fuss and fight with other folks because you're fussing and fighting within yourself. People who have no peace pick a fight with almost anybody.

Haven't you met somebody so chaotic with no peace that they're on the edge, ready to go off at someone? Haven't you ever met anyone like that? No peace. Money doesn't bring peace. Sex doesn't bring peace.

Clothes, fame, we know from history, nothing brings peace except God brings peace, and people who don't believe in God go the other way and say, there is no peace, but there is peace, and that's the greatest blessing anybody can have. Let's notice something else about this. All the things that he's asking for and blessing the people with, they already have in part because they're Christians.

So he's not saying to people who don't believe. He's saying to people who do believe, who do have peace. He's asking for more peace.

He's talking to people who do have love, but he's saying, I want you to have more love. He's not talking to some stranger and saying, I hope you get saved. He's saying to the brothers and sisters, I want you to have peace backed up by love, which is backed up by faith, which goes to tell us here that everything we have from God has the capacity to grow.

Just because you have some peace today doesn't mean there's a deeper peace that God has for you. Oh, there's a much deeper peace. Just because we have some love doesn't mean it can't be increased.

This is his prayer. This is his blessing. I want you to have peace to the brothers, love with faith, all from God.

Now, let's go in reverse because you have to go in reverse to understand this. It starts with peace and then it goes to love and then faith but the way God works spiritually, the way things work in our lives, it all starts with faith which leads to love which leads to peace. Peace is the product of faith and love and as faith and love increases, then peace increases.

Let me say that again. Faith is the foundation. Everything with God begins with faith for without faith, it's impossible to please God.

The person who comes to God must believe that he is and he rewards those that really look for him. Everything begins with faith. The just shall live by faith.

You can't get peace without faith. A lot of people are searching for peace without deepening their faith. Faith is the foundation of everything.

Faith comes before love. Love is greater we know from 1 Corinthians 13. Now abideth faith, hope and love but the greatest of these is love but faith has a priority in time.

Everything begins by faith. Relationship with God begins not by loving him but by having faith which leads to love which leads to peace. So Paul is praying, I know you have faith, you're Christians but now I want you to have more faith.

I want you to deepen your faith. I want God to pour out more faith in you because that'll lead to all kinds of good things including more peace. Now that tells us something about faith.

What is faith? Let's use the word in its ordinary sense. Faith in the Bible, in the New Testament, the best definition we can come up with is total reliance and trust in a person and what they say. Let's make it everyday kind of rubber meets the road definition.

The kind of faith that the Lord wants us to have in him is the kind of faith but on a different level that we have in a doctor. The kind of faith we have in a lawyer. The kind of faith we have in a friend.

When you go to your doctor, you have total confidence. When I get my annual checkup, I go to that doctor and I go there and I have total confidence he's gonna give the right test, he's gonna look at the results, he's gonna talk to me, he's gonna prescribe the right thing. I have total confidence and if he writes out a prescription or tells me this gotta change or that gotta change, I don't question him, I have total confidence in him.

That's the kind of trust that the Lord calls us to in having with him. I know that doctor, I trust that doctor, I relax with that doctor, I don't go in nervous like what's he gonna do, what's he gonna mess up? No, I know this doctor, I trust this doctor. And then the doctor tells me something, I do what he says, he's the doctor, I trust him.

Everything in the world really is based in terms of relationships on trust. Without trust and faith in a person, you can't have any kind of relationship. Carol's gotta trust the choir members, they're gonna come to the

practice, they're gonna have the right attitude, they're gonna sing with all their heart.

If she starts doubting that, the choir's gonna fall apart. They gotta trust her that she loves them, she wants to make music that will glorify God. There's a trust element here.

Don't you see it and feel it every time she leads? Everything like that in life that's meaningful is based on trust. So now Paul is saying, I want your trust to deepen. When you go to a closing and you have a lawyer representing you, you don't go in biting your nails and even though you're going through all those papers, you don't know what they mean.

You act like you're reading them, but you're not reading them. Come on, we've all done that. You know, you look through them like, yeah, that makes sense.

You have no idea what that means. But you got the man, you got the lawyer. The lawyer is taking care of business for you.

And that trust means, I'm not gonna get cheated, this is not gonna blow up in my face, I got a good lawyer. You go before a judge, you don't know how that all works, but you got a lawyer and the lawyer's gonna protect you. Why? Because you trust in him.

It's just that kind of trust that Paul says, I want you to have deeper with the Lord Jesus Christ, with God. Just because you and I are Christians, what does that mean? We've trusted him for our salvation. How many trust Jesus that he died for us and that all our sins are gone? How many trust him for that? Okay, now Paul says, that's good.

Now, so that you'll grow deeper, I want you to trust him for more. I want you to trust him for things that he wants to do in your life, for ways that he wants to use you. Not just bring you to heaven, but use you on earth.

I want you to learn to trust him with your finances. I want you to learn to trust him with your children. Give your children up, dedicate them.

Lend them to the Lord. Trust the Lord that he'll work it out. No, no, no, I gotta watch out for my kids, I gotta plan everything, I gotta do hyper control.

No, no, trust him. Paul says, there's levels of growing in faith. Two things about this faith that Paul brings out.

First of all, faith has to be continuous. The moment our faith breaks down, our peace is affected. You can't trust God six days a week.

You can't trust him 12 hours a day. You gotta trust him 24 hours a day. You gotta trust him seven days a week.

You gotta trust him all the time. I can't trust my doctor most of the time, I gotta trust my doctor all the time. And with the Lord, the way it works with us is sometimes we trust him and sometimes we look away.

And we trust ourselves. Or we believe a lie from the enemy that says he doesn't care about us and he's not gonna take care of things for us. Even though in his word, he says over and over, I will not leave you, I will fight your battles.

You have to believe that. When you stop believing that, you get agitated, you lose your peace. Come on, we've all lost our peace.

How many, since you've been a Christian, you've lost your peace at times? Right. Why did you lose your peace? Because your faith. Faith is the foundation that peace rests on.

So faith has to be continuous. That's why in a little few moments here, we're gonna pray, God, help me not only to trust you, help me to trust you all the time. I've noticed in life, not only is it hard or difficult to keep believing, but sometimes we have faith in one area of our life and we don't have faith in another area of our life.

We have faith with money, we trust God, and we give and all of that, but some don't have faith for personal relationships. You know, a single woman, a single guy, they don't believe that God has a plan, they don't trust him to bring the mate that they have, they forgot what 1 Corinthians says. You only marry someone who's in the Lord.

You don't date and get involved with someone who's not a Christian. You don't do that. No, but pastor, if I don't do that, you know, these Christians are duds.

There's a lot of deadheaded men out there, I can't trust all of that, rah, rah, rah, rah, rah. You wanna get yourself in big trouble? Trust, start leaning on your own understanding. No, but the Bible says, lean not upon your own understanding, but in everything, acknowledge the Lord and put your trust in him.

There's areas in your life that you're trusting the Lord, but then there's other areas where your faith has to deepen. He's gonna take care of everything for us. Can we put our hands together and say amen to that? He's gonna take care of everything for us.

So that's why Paul is saying here, I want you to have, grow in faith. Now, let's just think, not only faith has to be continuous, but faith, if it's alive, has to grow. Everything that's alive grows.

You know why this stuff doesn't grow? Have you noticed every week, it's not getting higher? If it was alive, it would be blocking all these, what is these, altos, ran altos? It'd be blocking them. Why, you know why it doesn't grow? It's dead. Everything that's alive grows.

That's not growing. So here comes the question, if your faith isn't growing, and my faith isn't growing, is it even alive? Because everything that's alive grows. And don't you think there's a lot of Christians who go to church across the land today? Their faith hasn't changed in 20 years.

They haven't grown to trust God more. They don't confide in Jesus more. They haven't put more of their life on the line and at the altar and said, I know you're gonna take care of my future.

I'm not gonna worry about it. I used to worry about that all the time, but now I don't worry. I've grown in faith.

You're not only my savior, you're my keeper. Woo, you're my keeper, you're my supplier, you're my Jehovah-Jireh, that's how faith grows. If it's real faith, it grows.

A lot of us have dormant faith. It's not healthy, it's not growing. And Paul is saying here, I know what you really need.

You nearly need more peace, growing peace, the blessing of peace, but that's all gonna depend on the foundation of a growing faith. When faith is dormant or faith goes backwards or faith is injured or is discontinued, oh my goodness, everything starts to shake, rattle and roll. How do Christians, what we call backslide, what does backsliding mean? They lose their faith.

Their faith is disrupted. They used to come all the time to the prayer meeting. You know why they came to the prayer meeting? Not because Pastor Symbolus had come to the prayer meeting, because they believed God answered prayers.

They believed that that was really important. Now they don't have time for that. They're watching American Idol or whatever is going on.

That's a battle, don't you get what that's about? That's about faith. That's about faith. If I were to say this Tuesday here in 48 hours where we want you to join with us, the doors open at five.

Some people are online at 4.30 to come in at five for a meeting that begins at seven. What do you think God's gonna do for them? What kind of faith is that? If I were saying everyone who comes on Sunday, on this Tuesday, I'm giving you \$100 bill. How many would be here today on Tuesday? How many would come if they trusted me and didn't think I was running a scam? A lot would come.

I only get \$100. But God says, ask and you receive. Seek and you'll find.

Knock and it shall be opened. He's able to do beyond what we could what? Ask or think. We quote that, but when you believe it, it's like no, I gotta be there.

Oh no, I gotta be there. We're gonna pray for people around the country who are hanging by a thread. God's given us the privilege.

See, it's all a matter of faith. When faith grows and faith gets strong, behavior changes and peace is like a flood. When faith falters, you start living off of little just nibbles and drops.

You barely are eking out an existence. So Paul prays. Here's what I want you to have.

I want you to have more peace and love, but I want your faith to grow. How many want your faith to grow? I want my faith to grow. Wave your hand at me.

I want my faith to grow. I have faith. How many have faith? Say amen.

I have faith. I know I have faith. I'm here, I'm preaching, I'm a Christian.

Ah, but there's levels of it. You can't stop and say, I have faith, I'm going to heaven. No, no.

So Paul prays. I know you have faith. I want you to have more faith.

But faith in Jesus is different than faith in a doctor, faith in a lawyer, faith in a friend, because the more faith you have in Jesus, you will always love him more. Whenever someone doesn't love Jesus more, you know that they don't have faith that's growing. So Paul is not only praying that you'll have more faith, he's praying, I want you to have more love for the Lord, which always accompanies faith.

See, when you receive and trust the Lord and see how faithful he is, you can't help but fall in love with him. How many can honestly say today, I feel this in the room, I really do. How many love him more than you

did five, 10 years ago? Just lift your hand up, don't we? And if your love grows cold, it's a sign your faith is growing cold.

And there was a church called Ephesus, which years later, when there's a letter was written to it, by Jesus himself, he says, you got a lot of good stuff going for you, but one thing I have against you, you've lost your first what? You lost your first love. You don't love me like you used to. So that's a question for all of us.

How much do we love the Lord? That's what he asked Peter when he rose from the dead, and he said, and he appeared to the disciples, he said to Peter, Peter, do you love me? Yes, Lord, you know I love you. Peter, do you love me? And he was using a stronger word for love, and Peter was using a weaker word. I love you like a friend.

Jesus said, no, do you love me more than anything else in the world? No, you know I love you as a friend. He used another word. We can't see it in our translation.

Second time, do you love me more than anything else that you'll lay down your life for me? No, you know, Lord, yes, I love you like a friend. He used a different word. Finally, the Lord, condescending to him, used that other word and said, do you love me like a friend? Lord, you know all things.

I love you like a friend. So the Lord is wanting us to love him deeper. Paul is saying, here's what I want to pray.

You want a blessing in life? I want you to learn for your faith to grow, and as your faith grows, I want you to love him more and more. How could you walk with the Lord and not love him more and more? How could you not read the word and talk to him and see how faithful he is in life and not love him more? In life, because God wants our faith to grow, because he knows the effect it has on our peace, and he wants our love to grow, he will regularly in your life let problems arise. He will regularly let the bottom partially fall out, and he will let people be nasty, or he will let you get hurt, or these things will happen.

Don't you know the steps of a righteous person are ordered by the Lord? All things work together. Don't you know that God is shaking us and rattling our cage and shaking our nests? Why? Because he sees us starting to trust in other things other than him, and when the bottom falls out and the nest is all wobbly, we go, oh, help me, Jesus. Come on, haven't you ever had a help me Jesus moment? Everyone who's ever had a help me Jesus moment? And then when you go help me Jesus and you see how he helps you, you love him more? From glory to glory and from faith to more faith? So Paul is praying now what I want to pray over you.

He's saying to them, I know what you really need. I want your faith to grow. Don't stay where you are.

Come on, grow. Grow in your faith. Trust him with more.

Confide in him more. Give every area of your life to him. Don't have those compartments in your life where you're nervous about and you're anxiety-ridden about because you haven't given it to him.

Whatever you commit to him, he is able to keep it because he loves us so much. The only thing that he deserves back from us, oh my goodness, is such love. You know, I have a friend in prison, Angola prison, and he says it on the video.

His name is Harold. He got arrested when he was 19. His mama had been going to church for about six months, and she told him, she called him by his nickname, Bubba.

She said, Bubba, don't go out tonight. I have a feeling you're gonna get in trouble, and that was the last night, 19 years old, he would ever be free. Got a first-degree murder charge, and he's away forever, but he found Jesus in prison, and now although he's locked up in a place that you would find amazing, this Angola prison, Louisiana State Penitentiary, he has this experience of loving Jesus and being loved back.

You see, faith gives you such peace because you can just lean on him and know he's gonna take care of everything for us. Isn't that a wonderful peace that comes when you just know he's gonna take care of this for me? Because if you have to take care of it for yourself, then you're agitated. If you depend on other people, they could let you down, but when you give it to God, there's such a peace.

And when you have someone who loves you so much that you love him back and you can put your head on his chest like John the Apostle did, that's like heaven on earth. I trust him, and I love him. So Harold says in this video, and he's told me about the same when we've talked, he says sometimes he'll be alone now, and he has a little office.

They give him a job to do at the prison there. He lives in a dorm and not locked up in a cell because he's shown such a good character in prison. And he says, sometimes he says, I'm in my cell, and I start to cry like a baby, and I think, what, am I having an emotional breakdown? I love the way he says that with his little Southern Louisiana accent.

What, am I having an emotional breakdown here or something? And what it is is that when you love Jesus and you feel his love back to you, anybody here ever just cry for joy? Come on, anybody ever have that where you just cry? You don't even know why you're crying? You don't even know why you're crying? And that brings such a peace. To know your love, that God's going to take care of everything, that's heaven on earth. I don't care how much money you're making a year, because if you don't have that, what good is it? What good is it? Tell me all this stuff.

The drugs you use, you got to come down. Then what are you going to do when you come down from your high? The alcohol is going to wear off. Sex, clothes, cars, education, what? What is it going to get you? Some of the most brilliant people in the world are the most miserable.

Some of the wealthiest people are taking their lives, they're blowing their brains out. Nah, Paul says, I know what you need. It's something money can't buy.

It's peace. I want your peace to grow. Just to rest and know that God's going to take care of you.

For those who are agitated today, listen, there is no greater joy, no greater feeling than the peace you have when you have everything, you've given it to God, and you can just rest. God's going to take care of that for me. Oh, Pastor Simba, how do you know that's just emotionalism, fanaticism? Hey, I'm telling you, faith knows that God's going to take care of it.

Because when you know the person, you know his word is true. God's not a man that he should lie. He's going to take care of it.

How many know today, believe with me, that whatever we give to God and trust him for, he will take care of it? Just say amen if you believe that. And to just rest in him, someone that loves you, that's, when

people get mean, he's not going to get mean. If you rest on how people think about you and what they like, then here's your life.

It's a yo-yo. But if you're confiding in his love, if you're resting in his love, in his faithfulness, you have peace that passes all understanding. Nothing can shake it.

The world can go up and down. 10,000 can come against you. The psalmist says, though the whole world go in a turmoil and the storms rage and all of that, he said, no, I will just rest in the Lord because God doesn't change.

Something made me think last night, again, of how easy I could have died when I was in the first grade. My mother and dad had told me they knew I didn't know how to swim yet. If you go with your friends to Prospect Park, don't go near that lake.

And I went near the lake, and there was a ball that had fallen in the lake, half deflated, and it was near the edge, and I saw one of my friends kick the ball, lean over the water and kick it. And I had this thing for any kind of ball, basketball, football, baseball, just, so I went to the edge, and I kicked the ball, and my foot sneaker slipped on the top of the ball, and I tumbled into the water, and I didn't know how to swim. And I was with kids in the first grade, and it was a summer day, and it was about noontime.

And I remember screaming, panicking, going down once, going down twice. My whole life passed before me, all the cream cheese and jelly sandwiches I had eaten for lunch. In first grade, you don't have too much of a life to have go by you.

And by God's providence, a businessman walked by, saw it, had a thin attache case, put it down, took off his jacket, and jumped in the lake, or I would've died, and pulled me out. And I was too panicking and crying, because I, you know, I thought I, it was over. I remember him just, like, pushing the water down, the water off of him, putting the jacket over his shoulder, sopping wet, and picking up this little attache case, which was stylish back then, and he walked away.

And I got home, and I was. I mean, remember when you were a kid, you ever have any of those seizures? Crying, scared, and my mother opened the door, and I remember she put her arms around me, and my friends yelled at her, he fell in the lake, he fell in the lake, and my mother just held me. When you fall in a lake, and you're in the first grade, to have your mother hold you is a good thing.

And all the, calm down. Everything disappeared. Because this is what God can do for us.

Paul says, I want your faith to increase. I want you to lean more on his arms. Let his arms go around you.

Trust him with everything, because whatever you don't trust him with, you're gonna lose your peace. The best blessing you can have is peace. When you have the peace of God, you don't envy anyone in the world.

When you don't have the peace of God, you're looking at this one, oh, I wish I was like that, I wish I was like that. When you have the peace of God, you have the best thing in the whole universe. Who in the world could you be jealous of? They don't have the peace of God.

But if you don't have the peace of God, now you're living like mere earthlings. You're not setting your mind and hearts on things above. And I remember her just holding me.

She had a cotton dress on, it was the summer, and she just held me like this, and she rocked me with peace. Now unfortunately for me, my dad came home, and they remembered that they had told me never to go near that lake. And they beat me until they got tired that night.

But let's go back to this part, when she just held. So I say to you, brothers and sisters who love Jesus Christ, I wish you the best blessing in the world that your peace might increase, because your faith increases in God. And you love him more, because the more you love him, the more peace you'll have.

The closer you are, the more peace, the more you trust him. Oh, there's a peace that passes all understanding. And you know what makes me sad, because I love you all, is to see someone walk out of this building without the peace of God.

Now, if you're not a Christian, if you haven't had your sins forgiven, then you're not gonna have peace. In fact, the Bible says there's no peace for the wicked. The same God who's called the God of peace, he says, but say this, thus saith the Lord, there's no peace for the wicked, because their hearts are like the bottom of the ocean.

It's always putting up dirt and mud. It's always coming up, frothing up. And that's why the first way to get peace is to let Jesus be your Savior and forgive you of your sins, because then you're not afraid of death anymore.

Most people are agitated, because they know at any second they could die, and they don't wanna think about what's gonna happen when they have to stand before God, so they deny there is a God, but really, they're in denial. There is a God. This all didn't happen by accident.

There is a God. So the first way to get peace is just trust him with your sins and your mess-ups, and say, Jesus, I believe you died for me. I trust you with my future, my eternity, my soul.

Then even if you are a believer, you have to just come with the stuff that's agitating you and where you're attacked in your mind. Oh, my goodness. I've been thinking so many times in the last week about that time in my life when my daughter was away and my wife had had surgery, and I keep thinking about those moments where God delivered me.

I had no peace. My nerves broke down, and when the phone would ring, I would start crying like an imbecile. I'd just start crying, screaming, crying, just hiding, just the phone ring.

I didn't even know who it was, just the phone ringing. Have you ever had one of those times in your life where you just have no peace? Oh, but it's so good to come into the harbor and let the Lord just minister peace to you, every eye closed. Peace.

Shh, peace. We're not gonna have any loud praying. You know what we're gonna do? Is those who say, Pastor, that message was from me.

My faith isn't growing the way it should. My love for him isn't growing. I'm occupied, distracted by so many things.

And the result is I'm not enjoying his peace. The Prince of Peace wants me to have peace. The God of all peace.

He wants to give me that peace. And I need it to increase, but I wanna give him my lack of faith and ask him to help my faith to grow. Let my love grow.

I love so many things so intensely, and sometimes the Lord loses out. I don't love him like I ought to. It's not personal.

It's more go to church. If you're in the balcony downstairs, and you'd like me, a choir member, just to stand next to you so gently, just put our hand on your shoulder, and let God's peace start to grow in you. Your faith will begin to grow.

You just tell the Lord you love him, and Lord, increase my love. Increase my faith. Increase my peace.

Maybe you're coming for the first time. Maybe you're coming for the hundredth time. But remember, the Christian life is made up of 10,000 new beginnings.

Today's your new beginning. No matter what's happened before, you come out of your seat. Just stand here.

You're gonna see God really do something beautiful. Just come out of your seat and stand. Increase our faith.

Increase my faith, Lord. Help us to bring every area of our lives to you, to trust you with. Increase our love.

Save us from those distractions and fascinations with the things in the world that pass away. Increase our love for you. Give us peace upon peace, like the waves on a shore.

Always enough, always more. Quiet every turbulent heart, every agitated soul. If there's any here, Lord, who have never received you as their savior, I pray, oh God, help them to turn away from their sins, those things that they know are wrong.

Their conscience has convicted them. And no matter how others have tried to justify it to them, they know it's wrong. We turn away from that.

We confess our sins and we put our faith in Jesus Christ that his blood would wash away all of our sins. Lord, for the businessman that you brought in who's agitated and worried about his job and his business, grant him peace. For the mother worried about her children, perplexed, grant her peace.

And for all of those, Lord, who are struggling financially and don't know what to do, increase our faith, increase our love, increase our peace. We pray all of this in the name of Jesus Christ. And we know you hear us, God, because we've come in the name of your own son.

And great things are gonna happen. And all the people said. Amen.

Amen.

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