

The Blessing of Peace

by Thomas Reade

The sermon emphasizes the blessing of peace as the fruit of the Spirit, the legacy of Christ, and the portion of God's children, and encourages believers to experience peace by abiding in Christ and resting in their heavenly Father's love.

Scripture: Isaiah 26:3, John 14:27, Romans 5:1, Philippians 4:7, Colossians 3:15, 2 Thessalonians 3:16

Topics: "Peace Of God", "Faith In Christ"

Description

Thomas Reade preaches about the blessing of peace that comes from Jesus, contrasting the fate of the wicked who mock sin and the believer who finds peace in Christ. He emphasizes that true peace is a gift from God, the fruit of the Spirit, and a legacy of Christ to His people. Reade encourages believers to abide in Christ through faith, even in the midst of tribulations, as Jesus promises peace to those who remain in Him. He reminds the congregation of the peace Jesus bestowed upon His disciples after His resurrection, urging them to trust in the Savior's love and find solace in His promises.

Transcript

22. THE BLESSING OF PEACE

"Then said Jesus to them again; Peace be unto you." John 22:21

"Fools make a mock at sin." Possessed, it may be, of wealth and power, they glory in their shame, despise the godly, and dare even the vengeance of God. The loud laugh, the shafts of ridicule, the finger of scorn, are contemptuously directed against the humble Christian. The battery of infidelity is opened against his principles and hopes. He is held up as weak in intellect, superstitious in his fears, and unfit to be the associate of a man of substance. But it will not be always so.

The time will come when the arrows of the Almighty shall drink up their spirits; and when, awakened to a sense of their danger and of the blessedness of the believer, they shall exclaim, "We fools accounted his life madness, and his end to be without honor; how is he numbered among the children of God, and his lot is among the saints! Therefore have we erred from the way of truth, and the light of righteousness has not shined unto us, and the sun of righteousness rose not upon us. We wearied ourselves in the way of wickedness and destruction; yes, we have gone through deserts, where there lay no way; but as for the way of the Lord, we have not known it. What has pride profited us? or what good has riches with our vaunting brought us? All those things have passed away like a shadow, and as a runner that hastens by;

and as a ship that passes over the waves of the water, which when it is gone by, the trace thereof cannot be found, neither the pathway of the keel in the waves; or as when a bird has flown through the air, there is no token of her way to be found, but the light air being beaten with the stroke of her wings, and parted with the noise and motion of them, is passed through, and therein afterwards no sign where she went is to be found; or like as when an arrow is shot at a mark, it parts the air which immediately comes together again, so that a man cannot know where it went through....The hope of the ungodly is like dust that is blown away with the wind; like a thin froth that is driven away with the storm; like as the smoke which is dispersed here and there with a tempest, and passes away as the remembrance of a guest that tarries but a day. But the righteous live for evermore; their reward also is with the Lord, and the care of them is with the Most High. Therefore shall they receive a glorious kingdom, and a beautiful crown from the Lord's hand; for with his right hand shall he cover them, and with his arm shall he protect them."

O! that every thoughtless sinner might thus be led to reflect on his own state, and on the blessedness of the despised Christian. In the midst of gaiety and dissipation, the sinner feels a thorn rankling in his bosom. The word of God has declared it, and it cannot be reversed; "There is no peace unto the wicked." "They are like the trouble sea, when it cannot rest." Satan is a hard master; his wages are present and future misery. The sensualist is a slave to his lusts. He is bound with fetters. Hurried on by his passions, he plunges from one sin into another, until, satiated with worn-out indulgences, enfeebled in body and mind, seared in his conscience, and hardened in heart, he dies, the wretched victim of his love of sin.

"What scenes of horror and of dread,

Await a sinner's dying bed!

Death's terrors all appear in sight,

Presages of eternal night.

His sins in dreadful order rise,

And fill his soul with sad surprise,

Mount Sinai's thunder stuns his ears,

And not one ray of hope appears.

Tormenting pangs distract his breast,

Wherever he turns he finds no rest,

Death strikes the blow- he groans, he cries,

And in despair and horror dies!

Not so the heir of heavenly bliss,

His soul is filled with conscious peace,

A steady faith subdues his fear,

He sees the heavenly Canaan near.

His mind is tranquil and serene,
No terrors in his looks are seen;
His Savior's smiles dispel the gloom,
And smooth his passage to the tomb."

Happy believer! who lives in the sunshine of heavenly love; who dies beneath the smiles of the Prince of Peace! To him, what is earth with all its vanities? Thorns and thistles may spring up around him, but they hurt him not. The cares and afflictions of life are sanctified to him, while he looks not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. Under every trial, the peace of God rules in his heart, and fortifies him against the attacks of Satan. Being justified by faith, he has peace with God. Through the power of the Spirit he follows after peace with all men; and when called from this world of strife, he enters into peace, into that peaceful region, where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary are at rest.

Peace is a precious gift. It is the fruit of the Spirit, the legacy of Christ to his people, the portion of God's children, the promised blessing to his Church. "All your children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of your children." Paul styles the Almighty, the God of Peace. Under this endearing title the richest mercies are conveyed. "The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly." "May the God of peace sanctify you wholly." "May the God of peace make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ." No wonder, then, that the Apostle should close his Epistles with this holy desire, "May the God of peace be with you."

Our blessed Lord, in his gracious discourse with his disciples, spoke words of peace and love; "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world gives, give I unto you." "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In the world you shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." How true, and yet how supporting to every real believer- "In the world you shall have tribulation" "In me you shall have peace."

Tribulation springs from many sources; the malice of wicked men, the assaults of wicked spirits, the corruption of our wicked hearts. Where is the Christian who has not to mourn over the sin that dwells in him? Who is not tempted by Satan? Who does not experience the hatred of the world? The more faithful we are to Christ, the more devoted we are to his cause, the more we exhibit his holy image by the holiness of our lives, and the more we shall suffer from the united attacks of men and devils. But oh! precious promise- "In me you shall have peace." Abiding In Christ by faith, enjoying the indwelling of his Spirit, and resting in our heavenly Father's love, we shall rise superior to every tribulation, like the Alpine traveler who ascends until he leaves the storm beneath his feet.

After his resurrection, Jesus was the same peace-bestowing Savior. When little expected, the doors being shut for fear of the Jews, Jesus appeared in the midst of his sorrowing disciples, and said unto them, "Peace be unto you." Then were the disciples glad when they saw the Lord. The loving Redeemer said to them the second time, "Peace be unto you." And, as if to show them the abundance of his grace, he appeared again, after eight days, and said, "Peace be unto you." Can we be insensible to such love as this? Oh! that every heart may be softened by the Savior's love. What can exceed the touching history of the resurrection, as given us by John, when the question is put, "Do you love me?" May all who read these searching words reply, with Peter's warmth and Peter's sincerity, "Lord, you know all things; you know that

I love you."

Blessed Jesus! enable me by faith to cleave to you in every trying hour. When the waves of affliction run high, and threaten to overwhelm my little vessel, may I, through grace, firmly confide in your power and love. Allow me not for a moment to doubt your goodness. You, O blessed Savior, can be touched with the feeling of my infirmities. You, my compassionate High-Priest, will plead my cause on high. Pour the balm of consolation into my soul. Strengthen me with faith in your promises, and in mercy overrule all the vicissitudes of life for my spiritual good. Enable me at all times to look unto you. Give me grace to perform the duties of today, and to leave with you, in faith, the events of tomorrow. Preserve me, O Lord, from all unreasonable cares and anxieties, knowing that without you not a sparrow falls to the ground.

"In me you shall have peace." Sweet declaration! Oh! that my heart were filled with your peace! Adorable Redeemer, take full possession of my soul, that I may be wholly, unreservedly, and forever yours. Make me a habitation for yourself. I am not worthy that you should come under my roof; but, O, for your mercy's sake, dwell in my heart by faith, then shall I experience the joys of your salvation, and the unutterable blessings of peace and love; then shall I walk before you in newness of life, and be daily preparing for that new heaven and that new earth, wherein dwells righteousness.

Sweet is the peace which Christ bestows,

A peace the worldling never knows;

'Heart's-ease' grows on Emmanuel's ground,

Which only near the Cross is found.

Though great my trials, grief, and care,

My Savior will the burden bear;

His grace and promise never cease,

He kindly utters words of peace.

Let not your troubles make you fear,

Believe in me- I'm always near;

Though while on earth, you tried shall be,

Yet still, your peace is found in me.

Should waves dash over your fragile bark,

And all around be wild and dark,

My word can bid the tempest cease,

And all be calm- and all be peace.

Oh! precious words of love divine,

What rays of bliss around me shine;
My grateful song shall never cease,
Since Jesus calls Himself my Peace.

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