

Morning Sermon December 23, 2018
"Prince of Peace" Isaiah 9:6-7; Luke 2:8-14

Our Lord Jesus is rightly called the Prince of Peace because coming into this world and dying on a cross, He initiates a peace process that ultimately results in a perfect, eternal peace. As Christian, we are called to be "peacemakers" –

⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. (Matthew 5:9 NKJ)

This does not mean that all our or even Christ's efforts bring immediate / instant "peace" –

"Do not think that I came to bring peace on earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword. ³⁵ "For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law"; ³⁶ "and a man's enemies will be those of his own household." (Matthew 10:34-36 NKJ)

Real peacemaking is a process, even often a painful one, as peace and sin are oppositional things –

**"There is no peace," says the LORD, "for the wicked." (Isaiah 48:22 NKJ)
"There is no peace," Says my God, "for the wicked." (Isaiah 57:21 NKJ)**

Jesus' battle, as Prince of Peace, for our peace, required the cross -

For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, ²⁰ and by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross. (Colossians 1:19-20 NKJ)

I. We have legal peace with God, justification, only through Christ's blood shed on the cross, on the cross Christ dealt with the penalty due our sin -

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, (Romans 5:1 NKJ)

1. By nature, when we are born into this world, we are children of wrath –

among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others. (Ephesians 2:3 NKJ)

2. Now, "peace" is something more than absence of fighting, war and anger, but it definitely includes these things –
"The Hebrew word for *peace* often signifies prosperity, for of all blessings none is better or more desirable than peace." John Calvin

"The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵ The LORD make His face shine upon you, And be gracious to you; ²⁶ The LORD lift up His countenance upon you, And give you peace." (Numbers 6:24-26 NKJ)

A. The great blessing of God culminates and reaches its height with peace! Peace, includes prosperity, meaning Biblical prosperity –

He shall be like a tree Planted by the rivers of water, that brings forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also shall not wither; And whatever he does shall prosper. (Psalm 1:3 NKJ)

B. It is something impossible for the ungodly –

The ungodly are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind drives away. ⁵ Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. ⁶ For the LORD knows the way of the righteous, But the way of the ungodly shall perish. (Psalm 1:4-6 NKJ)

C. Though the ungodly may enjoy a temporary false peace –

They have also healed the hurt of My people slightly, Saying, `Peace, peace!' When there is no peace. (Jeremiah 6:14 NKJ)

For they have healed the hurt of the daughter of My people slightly, Saying, `Peace, peace!' When there is no peace. (Jeremiah 8:11 NKJ)

These people, false teachers were leaving dealing with sin out of the message of salvation –

"And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name JESUS, for He will save His people from their sins." (Matthew 1:21 NKJ)

D. Even and especially God's elect should not be at peace when sinning –

When I kept silent, (meaning before he -David- confessed and started repenting of sin) my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long. ⁴ For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer. Selah (Psalm 32:3-4 NKJ)

If you are a so-called Christian who can run into sin freely, without feeling pangs of conscience, its probable you are not a true Christian at all – “Mercy is not for them that sin and fear not, but for them that fear and sin not.” Thomas Watson

3. Yet the mercy we have in Christ is a great abundant mercy, and with it comes the start of peace –

<A Psalm of David. A Contemplation.> Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered.² Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit. (Psalm 32:1-2 NKJ)

This peace with God starts with Christ's washing away our sins with His blood – and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, (Revelation 1:5 NKJ) Jesus took care of the penalty due sin on the cross!

II. Jesus enables us to deal with the power of sin, by sending His Spirit –

Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? ²⁰ For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 NKJ)

1. If the Holy Spirit is truly in us, we should expect He will do us good, make us holy –

A. Peter in his first letter connects these things - elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace be multiplied. (1 Peter 1:2 NKJ)

W.S.C. Question 35: What is sanctification?

Answer: Sanctification is the work of God's free grace, whereby we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness.

2. We are to cooperate with God in this work (of sanctification) –

I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. ...²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **peace**, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness ... (Galatians 5:16-23 NKJ)

Note, peace is one of the fruits of the Spirit, it is:

A. Peace Christ gives, different from worldly peace – “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (John 14:27 NKJ)

B. It is that “peace” that peace of God, that peace which passes understanding – and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7 NKJ)

³³ “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33 NKJ)

III. Jesus brings about perfect peace, when He delivers us even from the presence of sin in Heaven –

⁷ Of the increase of His government and peace There will be no end, (Isaiah 9:7 NKJ)

1. Christ had this perfect peace, even on earth, because He was and is sinless –

And a great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that it was already filling. ³⁸ But He was in the stern, asleep on a pillow. And they awoke Him and said to Him, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” ³⁹ Then He arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, “**Peace**, be still!” And the wind ceased and there was a great calm. (Mark 4:37-39 NKJ)

2. We can have this too, to a high degree when we trust God – You will keep **him** in perfect peace, **Whose** mind is stayed on **You**, Because he trusts in **You**. ⁴ Trust in the LORD forever, For in **YAH**, the LORD, is everlasting strength. (Isaiah 26:3-4 NKJ)

3. He ultimately reconciles, makes peace that is complete and permanent, peace in Heaven = eternal pleasures – You will show me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (Psalm 16:11 NKJ)

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