

Galatians 5: 22; “The Believer’s Peace”, Message # 44 in the series – “Christ has Set us Free”, a Bible Study conducted on September 16th, 2015, by Pastor Paul Rendall at his home.

The fruit of the Spirit is the Holy Spirit’s presence and power at work in the heart of a Christian leading them on to experience, in a very personal and practical way, the rich benefits of Christ’s death and resurrection in their lives. The experience of receiving imparted grace, that is, Christ’s strength and His wisdom being given to you in relation to the Scriptures by the Holy Spirit, is intended by God to lead you on to greater measures of obedience in your attitudes and actions. “For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” (Romans 8: 14) This is pursuing righteousness and holiness, a thing which is very pleasing to God. It is the Spirit who will lead you to mortify the sinful thoughts and motions of your heart, based upon Christ’s having died to sin once for all. It is the Spirit who leads you to put to death the sinful deeds of the body that you might truly live, according to the resurrection power of Jesus Christ. We ought always to be thankful for the experience of grace, which is leading us on to continually experience more of Christ’s glory. Are you thankful, even now, for the precious and powerful working of the Holy Spirit in your life, dear Christian? Now, this evening we want to look at the grace of peace. The fruit of the Spirit is peace. We want to see 1st of all – Our experience of peace is based upon Christ’s death which purchased it, and He by His Spirit faithfully conveying it to us. And 2nd – We want to see that having this grace of peace leads us then, to be peacemakers in relation to people around us.

1st of all – Our experience of peace is based upon Christ’s death which purchased it, and He by His Spirit faithfully conveying it to us.

Turn with me over to John Chapter 16, verses 32 and 33. “Indeed the hour is coming, yes, has now come, that you will be scattered, each to his own, and will leave Me alone.” “And yet I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.” “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.” You see this is the basis of the believer’s being of good cheer, and having peace rule in his or her heart. It is because Christ has overcome the world. Believing in His word is the basis of your having His peace. His going to the cross alone is the basis of His conveying to you His abiding peace. Isaiah 53: 5 – “But He was wounded for our transgression, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him.” By all rights we should not have any peace because of our many sins. Isaiah 57: 20 – But the wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt.” “There is no peace, says my God, for the wicked.” But Jesus suffered so that we might be reconciled to God, and come to know the spiritual reality of what He suffered and died to bring to us. Our coming to have peace with God, and experiencing the peace of God is all of His doing. Colossians 1: 20 – “For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell, 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.”

At this particular time, when he was about to be betrayed, and go to the cross, he was telling His disciples that they would be scattered, and temporarily forsake Him, but He tells them that He would not be alone; His Father would be with Him. John Gill says: “The Father was with Him, not only as the Son of God, by virtue of union to him, and as one with him; but as Mediator, in consequence of His promise to uphold him, and assist him in His human nature; and though he withdrew His gracious and comforting presence from Him, He bearing the sins, and standing in the room and stead of his people, yet not His powerful and supporting

presence.” (End of quote) The tribulation of Christ’s being arrested, betrayed, and His sufferings and crucifixion, would be very troubling the apostles.

But Christ is here actually giving them an explanation which is intended to bring them peace. He was saying to them: As long as you are in the world of unbelieving people, people who hate Me, you will have the tribulation of their being opposed to you as well, because they are opposed the idea that they themselves need grace to be saved. But, He was saying, He had already, even before the cross, overcome the world by His perfect obedience to the Father’s will; His keeping the commandments of God before the watching world. The “world” that Jesus is speaking of is the world of the unbelieving Jews and Gentiles; especially those Jews who thought of themselves as righteous in themselves. He kept all the commandments of God perfectly, and yet they hated him for it. You can see this if you will look at John 15: 18 – “If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you.” “If you were of the world, the world would love its own.” “Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you.” This would set the stage for His going to the cross and laying down His life for us, so that we could have peace with God, and the peace of God. As long as we rest our souls upon Christ’s word of promise to us, we will find peace. “These things I have spoken to you, that in Me, you may have peace.” The basis of your having all true and lasting spiritual peace is the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ imputed to you. Romans Chapter 5, verse 1 – “Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with god through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” The basis of your being able to experience this peace as you commit your way to God, day by day, is the resurrection life and power of Jesus Christ being conveyed to you.

Turn with me over to the gospel of John, chapter 14, verses 19-27 – “A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me.” “Because I live, you will live also.” “At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.” “He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.” “Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, ‘Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?’” “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.’” “He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father’s who sent Me.” “These things I have spoken to you while being present with you.” “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.” “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.” Notice that it is because Jesus Christ lives, that we also come to have spiritual and eternal life, and therefore have real peace.

The peace which Jesus was leaving with his bewildered apostles was the peace which He alone could give them during this time. It was a time of great uncertainty for them. He was physically present with them at that time, and as such, He could convey to them the peace that they needed so that their hearts would not be troubled. But, in a little while, they would not see Him, because He would go to the Father and they would see Him no more. In that day, He was saying to them, the Father would send the Holy Spirit, who would be given on the Day of Pentecost to the Church as a whole. This giving of the Holy Spirit is specifically related to being able to live the Christian life; a life of difficulties and sometimes even persecutions, and still be a good and faithful witness. And have peace in the midst of it. These apostles already had the working of the Spirit in their hearts at that time. They had been regenerated, and He was working in their hearts and minds. But in that day when Christ ascended to the Father the Spirit would be given in a formal sense to Christ’s Church to be with all Christians; all through the

many generations, even until the end of the age, so that even though we do not see Christ, we do know by the working of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, that He is with us. Notice that because Christ lives, you who believe live also. His life is in your life; His peace becomes your peace.

You may not have an apostolic office or gifts, but if you are a believer in Jesus Christ you will come to know and have this peace which peculiarly belongs to a believer. When you go about to obey Him, it will be because you know that you have received grace from Christ. After you have believed the gospel, you have this peace with God because of what Christ has done for you. You will also know at various points in your experience, the Lord manifesting Himself to you in and through the Spirit's working. Verse 23 – "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him." This is a real sense of His presence and the understanding that the Lord is with us; working in our heart and life, and giving us grace which is evidenced in knowing real peace. The Holy Spirit, who is called "the Helper", in verse 26, would help the apostles in a special way, in teaching them everything that they needed to know in terms of their living their Christian life to His glory, even when being persecuted, and fulfilling the ministry which they were called to. He would be with them, helping them in their preaching and teaching which they would give to the lost as well as to the fledgling Church. He would bring to their remembrance all the things that Christ had said to them. And He would then guide them infallibly in the writing of the New Testament Scriptures. He would help them in all of their labors for Christ, both in terms of doctrine and practice. Christ would be with them in this wonderful and personal way, giving them His peace in the midst of all of these things, and it would not be the peace which the world gives; it would be distinctively different. 2nd Thessalonians 3: 16 says: "Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way." (Peace in every circumstance, it says in the NAS)

Now 2nd – We want to see that having this grace of peace leads us then, to be peacemakers in relation to people around us.

Turn with me over to Ephesians 2, verses 13-18. "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ." "For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is the law of commandments contained in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity." And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near." "For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father." You can see here that the basis of our reconciliation with God, the basis of our being brought near to God, was our Lord's having fulfilled the law on our behalf. The law, in its ordinances required a priesthood offering sacrifices for the people and for themselves. But Christ came and fulfilled the moral law and the ceremonial law both, by His being a righteous sacrifice and a bloody sacrifice. Therefore peace was made for both Jews and Gentiles, His having put to death the enmity. In doing so, He has also enabled us who are Gentiles to be made part of His spiritual body, the Church, with the Jews. Since Christ fulfilled the ceremonial law with its ordinances and abolished it, this set the stage for the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles so that there should be no enmity between them; the Jews thinking that they were the only people of God, and the rest of the world dogs.

No, when the gospel of the grace of Christ is really perceived in its intent to reconcile God and man, it is also should be recognized in its intent to bring people together as well; people who have been estranged from one another. Look over at Matthew 5, verse 9. "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God." What does it mean to be a peacemaker? Well, turn with me over to Romans chapter 12, verses 16-21. "Be of the same mind toward one another." "Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble." "Do not be wise in your own opinion." "Repay no one evil for evil." "Have regard for good things the sight

of all men.” “If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.” “Do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, ‘vengeance is Mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” “Therefore ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head.” You can see the components of being a peacemaker are. It is trying to be like-minded with brothers and sisters in Christ; having as your basis of agreement, the truth of the Bible. It is trying to come to terms with why a brother or sister might have a different perspective from yours. It is trying to reconcile with those persons who you have had a disagreement with, so as to restore the relationship for Christ’s sake, and the church’s sake. It is not thinking that wisdom simply resides with me; that there are other people who have wisdom from God as well. It is not repaying evil with evil, and not taking your own revenge, but actually trying to do good to those who are your enemies. I hope that each of us will attempt to live in this holy way.