

Don't Let Them Agitate Your Spirit!

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Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you: not as the world gives, give I to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid (John 14:27).

To be spiritually minded is life and peace (Romans 8:6).

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7).

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts (Colossians 3:15).

One of the greatest assets of the child of God is *peace*. It is the divine counterpart to grace. Thus, Paul repeats in each of his epistles, “*grace and peace*.” This is not a religious cliché; it is our heritage as sons of God.

Peace is defined as:

Freedom from disturbance; tranquility (*Oxford Dictionary*).

Inner contentment; serenity (*American Heritage Dictionary*).

Freedom from disquieting or oppressive thoughts or emotions (*Merriam-Webster Dictionary*).

Calm and quiet; freedom from worry or annoyance (*Cambridge Dictionary*).

Freedom from agitation or disturbance by the passions, as from fear, terror, anger, anxiety or the like; quietness of mind; tranquility; calmness; quiet of conscience (*Webster's Original 1828*).

There surely is much uncertainty and turmoil in the world around us; but there is one thing that we need to remember: God is not *ruffled* by earthly events and details. This is because He *is* GOD ... and He *is* in sovereign control of *everything*. Simply put, this means that God is at peace – no wringing of His hands, no wiping of sweat from His brow – after all, Paul calls Him the “*God of peace*” (Romans 15:33; 16:20; 4:19; I Thessalonians 5:23).

There are two distinct scriptural spheres of divine peace: “*peace with God*,” and “*the peace of God*.” We have “*peace with God*” because of the work of our Lord Jesus Christ on Golgotha’s hill. All enmity and strife between us and God has been permanently removed. Paul declared that Christ “*was delivered for our offences and was raised again for our justification*,” and that, “*therefore, being justified by faith*,” we, who once were estranged from God in our hearts and minds, enjoy “*peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ*” (Romans 4:25; 5:1).

However, it is one thing to have “*peace with God*,” and quite another to have “*the peace of God*.” It is our divinely-given privilege to enjoy not only “*peace with God*,” but “*the peace of God*.” In fact, Father desires that we are at rest *with Him* in every detail of life, enjoying His very Own unworried and tranquil spirit. We are to *let the peace of God rule in our hearts, i.e.*, to take charge of all of our cares, concerns and worries; the peace of His Own nature and character *settling*¹ our hearts!

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts (Colossians 3:15).

The peace of God is your God-given possession. Therefore, *don't let anyone or anything agitate your spirit!*

Who or what manages to get under your skin and causes you to lose your peace? Are they *bigger* than He? Do they in any way threaten Father’s plan for you? Can they derail His purpose for you? Certainly not! If He is the God of the universe, then why allow your spirit to be agitated by others?

One area that seems to bring great agitation to many is that of Nationalism. For all of my adult life I have seen professing believers allow their spirits to be agitated by social, political and economic pundits of nationalism and patriotism. For over four decades I have watched Christians surrender their God-given peace to these commercial agitators. My first exposure to them was through such national personalities as Carl McIntire, Billy James Hargis, W.S. McBurnie, Dan Smoot, Willis Car-to and Robert Welch. A couple of generations have passed, but the stirring rhetoric continues. Their modern prophets include Bill O’Reilly, Rush Limbaugh, Sean Hannity, Glenn Beck, Neal Boortz and Michael Savage. Don’t let them agitate your spirit. Don’t allow them to displace your peace.

Listen to Paul’s wonderful words of encouragement to us,

Be anxious for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:6).

1. “*Settle*” – Weymouth, Colossians 3:15.

While only those who know that they are at *peace with God* can know “*the peace of God*,” it does not follow, however, that all of those who know that they are at *peace with God* necessarily ENJOY “*the peace of God*.” Believers can enjoy “*the peace of God*” only as they practice Philippians 4:6 and turn every care over to His capable hands – *all* of our trials, *all* of our problems. As we follow these instructions the promise which follows will certainly be fulfilled.

And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep [“guard,” Rotherham; “garrison,” Weymouth] your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (:7).

God is *never* caught surprised. He knows *exactly* what He is doing. We can have complete confidence in Him because nothing is outside of His sovereign control. Therefore, we should not be overwhelmed and defeated by the adversities of life.

*We know that **all things** work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose (Romans 8:28).*

PEACE EVEN IN THE SPHERE OF NATIONALISM

Why do the nations rage? (Psalm 2:1; Acts 4:25).

The key to nationalism has to do with understanding its place in God’s plan. When we understand God’s purposes, we are better able to know how to relate to them. Nationalism is a divine judgment upon mankind introduced at Babel’s Tower (Genesis 10; 11), and is His instrument of vanity among the Gentiles.

Nationalism is but a further tool in God’s hand to subject mankind to vanity (Romans 8:20). Men look to governments for the answer to their problems, and even believers try unsuccessfully to influence the predestined course of the *vanity* of the Gentiles. The history of nationalism is one of successive and mounting failure. Hopes are raised for a “good” government, society and economy, only to find that “evil” prevails again: one nation after another, one kingdom overthrowing another, one party defeating another, one cause overpowering another, all in vain cycles. Yet, God is at the center of it all, “*for there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God*” (Romans 13:1). Pharaoh was God’s servant (Romans 9:17), as well as was Cyrus (Isaiah 45:1).

... for this cause have I raised you up ... (Exodus 9:16).

We must never forget that “... *the most High rules in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever He will ...*” (Daniel 4:17, 25), and that “... *He does according to His will ... among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can restrain His hand ...*” (Daniel 4:35). It is God Who rules “*over all the kingdoms of the heathen*” (II Chronicles 20:6).

We know that “*the king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, as the rivers of water: He turns it wherever He will*” (Proverbs 21:1); and, in fact, “... **HE** is a great King over all the earth” (Psalms 47:2).

God rules over all nations, establishing their times and boundaries. The *who*, *how*, *when* and *where* are all determined by Him for His Own purposes.

[God] *has made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and has determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation* (Act 17:26).

Why is man's life filled with such vanity; such futility, emptiness, barrenness, purposelessness and aimless frustration? Because he has been subjected so by his Creator.

For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him Who has subjected the same in hope (Romans 8:20).

Life is vain when viewed apart from the sovereign, loving God Who is our Father. "Vanity" is the lot of man "under the sun." All areas of life illustrate and demonstrate the vanity of life apart from God (Ecclesiastes 1:2-8). Vanity is the purpose of *Phase One* of our existence.

I feel for those who face daily life apart from the knowledge that *He alone* is in complete control. Many live their daily lives without recognition of the stabilizing truth of the One Who "works all things after the counsel of His Own will" (Ephesians 1:11). They approach their day and struggle through it as the master of their own lives.

For those who live as though they were in charge of their lives, two of the hardest parts of the day are waking up in the morning and going to bed in the evening.

In the mornings, days are greeted with uncertainty as thoughts of the "What if ..." trials and challenges of the day press in upon the mind and heart. There is a waking up to varying degrees of uneasiness, concern, apprehension, worry and anxiety; even at times to overwhelming fear, dread and depression. Feelings of inadequacy and uncertainty press in.

In the evenings, days are retired with the annoying "What if ..." reflections of its happenings. There is second guessing, regret and disappointment. Feelings of frustration, dissatisfaction and failure settle in; even at times shame, guilt and worthlessness.

After all, they see themselves as the lords of their own lives, the captains of their own ships and the masters of their own destiny. With this view comes but a recurring cycle of vanity.

Those of us who know Father as the great Planner and Director of our days have a completely different approach to our mornings and evenings – and the entire unfolding of our every minute of our day.

In the mornings, days can be greeted with the joy and excitement of knowing that *they* as well as ourselves are His. The uncertainties of the "What if ..." viewpoint are divinely transformed into the eager anticipation of seeing what God has planned for the day. We are able to awaken to the thrill of knowing that we will be witnesses of the unfolding of His detailed plan and purpose for our day. His presence presses in upon our minds. There is a waking up to peace and joy as we know that our life, with all of its daily circumstances, is firmly in His hand and carried out by His capable direction. Our hearts are able to say, "Today we are on the great adventure of faith!"

In the evenings, when the day is over, we can rest our heads on our pillows and with surety and

confidence regarding our day say, “This was the will of God.” The “What if ...” reflections of its happenings are transformed into a place of peace and rest, knowing that the will of God was done, and who could have prevented it? The realization of our divine appointment is able to settle within our hearts and minds. After all, *He* is the Lord of our life, the Captain of our ship, the Master our destiny.

He does according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay His hand (Daniel 4:35).

The “peace of God” that we possess has nothing to do with family, neighborhood, civil, social or national peace. The issue is that *our hearts* are aligned with God *and* His purpose, thus bringing quietness and peace to our hearts and to the very disposition of our lives.

No matter in what circumstances we may find ourselves, we can remain calm, peaceful and happy, knowing that Father is in *absolute* control. *THIS* is godly living. *THIS* is honest living – living in the truth that Father is completely in charge of all things. *THIS* “*godliness and honesty*” alone allows us to “*lead a quiet and peaceable life.*”

That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty (I Timothy 2:2).

Our disposition towards “*all things*” and “*all men*” reflects our disposition toward God. A divinely aligned disposition will bring a change of quietness and peace to our life.

Many believers live in the turmoil created by the misjudging of the true source of “*all things.*” Government, politics, and economics are no exception. The political pundits agitate their spirits – displacing them from their God-given “*quiet and peaceable life.*” Do not give way to such a snare!

Don't let them agitate your spirit!

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