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The Peace of Christ

John 14.27

Series: Signs of Life

July 18, 2021

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I. **The Need for Peace**

- A. By all accounts, Shell Point is a peaceful place
 - 1. If by peace we mean the relative absence of conflict, we do pretty well
 - 2. It's not that we don't have our issues or disagreements
 - a. But, by and large, we live in a community where we try our best to work things out
 - b. We agree to disagree on occasion
 - c. And when we disagree, we try to disagree agreeably
 - 3. There are exceptions, of course; there always are
 - a. But we respect those who have responsibility for our welfare
 - b. As well as those who have authority over whatever domains we share
 - 4. And in order to maintain this relative peace, we all give up some of our preferences and desires
 - 5. But our community is, by the world's standards, an unusual place
- B. The world is anything but a peaceful place
 - 1. Four current conflicts have resulted in more than 10,000 deaths in the past two years
 - a. The conflict in Afghanistan, which began long before 911 and American involvement, has resulted in over 2 million deaths since 1978
 - b. The Mexican drug wars have claimed the lives of more than 150,000 by organized crime since 2006
 - c. The Al-Qaeda insurgency in Yemen, the Yemeni civil war, and other related sectarian conflicts have killed upwards of 233,000 since 2011 in Yemen and Saudi Arabia
 - d. The Tigray war in Ethiopia, Sudan and Eritrea have killed some 50,000 since 2020 alone
 - 2. More than a dozen other conflicts around the world continue today which have killed more than 1,000 in the last two years
 - a. Many of them lasting over many decades have killed more than 1,000,000
 - b. We, in this country and community, have no idea...
- C. That doesn't even take into consideration the extraordinary level of conflict we see right here in our own country
 - 1. Dozens of people have been killed in relation to protests resulting from the

- high profile deaths of African-Americans since 2020
- 2. Homicides escalated in 2020 in many of our major cities
 - a. More than 750 were killed in Chicago alone; another 322 in Los Angeles, and 437 in New York City
 - b. But the murder rates have spiked in smaller cities as well
- D. And of course, the level of antagonism in the public discourse seems to be at an all time high – at least in our memory
 - 1. The level of vitriol in what used to pass for television and radio news and information is shameful
 - 2. And the social media hasn't helped the situation
 - 3. People use the social media to tell strangers things they would never tell a person in a face-to-face encounter
- E. The world is not a peaceful place
 - 1. And to a significant extent, we live in a bubble, unaware of much of the devastation of a world in desperation
- F. But the world seems to have no solutions
 - 1. No matter how hard governmental and non-governmental organizations try, things seem to continue on a downward spiral
 - 2. Jeremiah 8:11 (NASB95) — 11 “They heal the brokenness of the daughter of My people superficially, Saying, ‘Peace, peace,’ But there is no peace.”
- G. All of which makes our text this morning all the more relevant to the people of God
- H. Text
 - 1. **John 14:27** (NASB95) — 27 “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.”

II. **The Meaning of Peace**

- A. Greek word for **peace – eirene (Gk)**; translates Heb **shalom** in Septuagint
- B. Shalom
 - 1. Not limited to the absence of conflict or the opposite of war
 - 2. But includes holistic welfare
 - a. Domestic tranquility
 - b. Material prosperity
 - c. Interpersonal relationship
 - d. Inward satisfaction
 - e. Sense of blessing
 - 3. Shalom comes to the people as a gift from God
 - a. Normally as a result of God's covenant commitments to provide welfare to people who belong to Him by faith
 - 4. **Numbers 6:24–26** (NASB95) — 24 The LORD bless you, and keep you; 25 The LORD make His face shine on you, And be gracious to you; 26 The LORD lift up His countenance on you, And give you peace.’
- C. So, when Jesus says, “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you...” He is going well beyond any attempt at resolving armed conflict in the world or social unrest in our streets

1. He is seeking to establish a transcendent peace
2. A peace that dissolves the conflicts that sin and selfishness cause
3. A peace that makes the way for God to reign and rule in our hearts, in our relationships, in our church, and in our communities

III. **The Legacy of Peace**

- A. First, Jesus leaves His disciples – and us – a legacy of peace
 1. “Peace I leave with you...”
 - a. **Leave = aphemi (Gk)** – means to leave something to someone which will remain and continue to bless
 - b. Brings to mind something like an inheritance
 - c. Something someone leaves to others when they die
 - d. In this case, something that Jesus leaves when He leaves – which He has indicated He is about to do
- B. There are all kinds of things people could leave as an inheritance or as a legacy to those they wish to bless
 1. Recently a TV show highlighted some of the more unusual, even bizarre, legacies left by the departed
 - a. *Strange Inheritance* hosted by Jamie Colby of the Fox Business Network
 - b. Everything from Ma Barker’s hideout, to Nat Turner’s Bible, to stolen artwork, to a B-17 bomber, to an entire town in Western PA have been left as legacies to family or relatives
 2. Of course money is the most common legacy left to loved ones
 - a. But sometimes even the leaving of money can be strange
 - b. As when Leona Helmsley left most of her billions to the care of her dogs
- C. But the most significant legacies are not material at all
 1. I consider the most important legacies left to me and my brother by our parents to be immaterial – a set of attitudes and dispositions that continue to bless us
 - a. From my mother we inherited a value for education
 - b. My mother was a graduate of Carnegie Institute of Technology back in the 1930's when the vast majority of women never went to college
 - c. Her thoughtful mind and inquisitive nature were part of the relative humidity, the intellectual atmosphere, in which we grew up
 - d. That legacy was of more value than anything monetary
 - e. And from my father we inherited a strong moral compass and a ethic of hard work
 - f. Those legacies continue to bless us, and will for the rest of our lives
- D. Arguably the most valuable legacy anyone can leave was the legacy that Jesus left his disciples, and by extension, to us
 1. Jesus leaves them peace as His legacy

IV. **The Treasure of Peace**

- A. Just think what a treasure that legacy is!

- B. First, **peace comes to us as a gift**
1. “My peace I give to you...”
 - a. **Give = didomi (Gk)** – to give something of value
 2. Gift implies a relationship
 - a. In which the benefactor is the greater
 - b. And He blesses the lesser
 - c. **James 1:17** (NASB95) — 17 Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.
 3. Gift also implies a gracious relationship – a relationship based on grace
 - a. Peace is not something we earn
 - b. In fact, the opposite is true
 - c. What we truly have earned and deserve is the opposite of blessings
 - d. We deserve death; we deserve eternal destruction – because we have sinned against a holy and eternal God
 - e. We are enemies of God by nature
 - f. **Romans 6:23** (NASB95) — 23 For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 4. By faith in Jesus Christ, that enmity is dissolved
 - a. **Romans 5:1** (NASB95) — 1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ...
 5. Jesus, in His life, death, and resurrection, has gifted us with a right relationship with God
 - a. We no longer fear the wrath of God, the eternal punishment of God
 6. What an incredible gift that is! What a great treasure!
- C. Second, **peace dissolves the conflict in our own souls**
1. Sin has made our souls the locus of inward distress
 - a. Our minds, wills and emotions are disturbed because of sin
 - b. But the peace of Christ changes all of that
 2. While our **minds** used to be a mass of confusion – Jesus has transformed our minds, renewed our minds
 - a. As we grow by the renewing of our minds through His Word we begin to understand the things of God; begin to think the thoughts of Christ
 - b. Our world views, which were turned upside down by sin, are slowly but surely turned right side up again
 - c. Our existence begins to make sense
 3. Our **wills** were like bucking broncos – trying desperately to throw off any guidance or restraint imposed by the Deity
 - a. But through sanctification by the Holy Spirit our wills more and more conform to the desires and inclinations of Jesus
 - b. We begin to want what Christ wants
 - c. Our selfish motives and inclinations are stripped away little by little – sometimes painfully so
 - d. But ultimately we genuinely desire the things of God and not the

things of this world

4. Our **emotions** were a roller coaster of fickle impulses, dependant on the changing circumstances of our lives – whether pleasurable or aversive
 - a. But the peace of Christ settles our emotions and we find our joy in God Himself and in His Son Jesus
 - b. We find we are delighted to do His will
 - c. And our emotions begin to function as designed by God – to reflect the joy God has in Himself!
 - d. **Psalm 16:11** (NASB95) — 11 ... In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.
- D. Third, **the peace of Christ provides for peace with one another**
 1. Sin not only separated us from God, and disturbed our own souls, it also destroyed the relationship with others
 2. But the peace of Christ has changed even that!
 3. We just read the NT scripture in Ephesians 2 showing that in Christ two groups historically at enmity with one another have been brought together in Christ
 4. **Ephesians 2:14–18** (NASB95) —
 - a. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.
 - b. 17 AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR...
 5. The unity of the early church reflected the peace of Christ
 - a. **Acts 4:32** (NASB95) — 32 And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them.
 - b. Acts 2:46–47 (NASB95) — 46 Day by day continuing with one mind in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they were taking their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart, 47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number day by day those who were being saved.
 6. And it is the peace of Christ that gives each one of us the capacity to resolve our differences
 - a. **1 Peter 4:8** (NASB95) — 8 Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins.
 - b. **Romans 12:16–18** (NASB95) — 16 Be of the same mind toward one another; do not be haughty in mind, but associate with the

lowly. Do not be wise in your own estimation. 17 Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. Respect what is right in the sight of all men. 18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

7. Only the peace of Christ gives us the capacity to live in community with one another
 - a. We are building a community of forgiveness, purpose and hope in Jesus Christ
 - b. Forgiveness – to be a people who are forgiven and forgiving, we must have the peace of Christ
 - c. Building a community is dependant on the peace of Christ
 - E. What a treasure is the gift of the peace of Christ!
 1. Peace with God
 2. Peace within our selves
 3. Peace with others
 - F. All because of the legacy Jesus has left His disciples
 1. And the legacy Jesus has left with us
- V. **The Man of Peace**
- A. Let's not overlook the obvious from this text
 1. **John 14:27** (NASB95) — 27 “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you...”
 - a. My peace – the peace of Jesus
 - B. The reason Jesus can leave this legacy of peace is because Jesus is a man of peace
 1. Indeed, He is the man of peace
 2. “He Himself is our peace” (**Ephesians 2.14**)
 - C. He is the **author of peace**
 1. As one commentator put it: “as a work, he made it; ... as a scheme, he wrought it out; ... as a purchase, he paid the price;... as a gracious interference between offensive man and offended Deity, he is the Mediator;... as a divine principle, he imparts and inspires it. He is the peace-maker and the peace offering.” (B. Thomas)
 - D. He is the **exemplar of peace**
 1. Jesus exhibited peace like no other
 2. He was always on mission – but never frantic bundle of energy
 3. He always acted with purpose – but was never in a hurry
 4. When the wind and the waves crashed about the disciples, threatening their survival – He was asleep in the boat!
 5. And when He was wakened, he gave peace to the wind and the waves and admonished the disciples for their lack of faith
 6. His peace flowed naturally from His perfect obedience and supreme confidence in His heavenly Father
 7. His perfect love and sacrifice flowed inexorably from His peace
 8. If you want to know what peace looks like, look to Jesus
 - E. He is the **Prince of Peace**
 1. For peace to reign, the Prince of Peace must prevail
 2. **Isaiah 9:7** (NASB95) — 7 There will be no end to the increase of His

government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

3. Peace must flow from the only righteous ruler the world will ever know

F. “My peace I give to you...”

1. Jesus gives His peace because He is the Man of Peace

VI. **The Ministry of Peace**

A. Now a legacy is only valuable as it continues to bless, continues to extend its value

1. And that is never more true than with the legacy of the peace of Christ

B. The Man of Peace – Jesus Christ

1. The author of peace

2. The exemplar of peace

3. The Prince of peace

a. Has gifted us with His peace

C. But it is not a peace that is meant to simply stay with us, to stagnate in us

D. The gospel of Jesus Christ is **the gospel of peace (Ephesians 6.15)**

1. And He has entrusted us with the gospel of peace to extend to a world which is desperate to know something of true and genuine peace

2. **2 Corinthians 5:18–19** (NASB95) — 18 Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, 19 namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

E. That ministry of reconciliation is another name for the ministry of peace

1. We are to bring the peace of Christ to others

a. To one another

b. To our friends

c. To our enemies!

2. We are to be peace makers – not just peace keepers

3. We are to find the words and actions which represent the love and peace of Jesus to a loveless world and a world which seems bent on discord and conflict

4. But it is only through the reconciling work of Jesus Christ that peace will be experienced

F. The recipients of a legacy are responsible for the stewardship of that legacy

1. And thus we are to be peacemakers

2. Matthew 5:9 (NASB95) — 9 “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”

3. Why the “sons of God?”

a. Because the Son of God is the Man of Peace

4. By being peacemakers we reflect the peace of Christ

G. The Ministry of Peace now belongs to us

1. To the disciples

2. To us

3. To the church!

- H. Because Jesus gave us His legacy of peace
- VII. **The Superiority of Peace**
 - A. The text contains a critical statement of contrast
 1. A contrast that I've already referred to
 2. A contrast that I've mentioned in reference to the world's impotence in achieving peace
 - B. **John 14:27** (NASB95) — 27 “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you...”
 1. Not as the world gives...
 - a. The world – the world system which is antagonistic to God and seeks to do whatever it does as if God does not exist – can never, no matter how hard it tries, to achieve any kind of lasting peace
 - b. Even its cease-fires don't last
 - c. Because the world's solutions never address the root problem – the problem of sin
 - d. Only Jesus has done that
 - C. One commentator puts the contrast this way:
 1. “The world gives shadows; Christ gives substances. The world gives that which is not bread, and satisfies not; Christ's gifts are good, perfect, and satisfying. The world gives in vain wishes and empty salutations – “Peace be with you;” but Christ gives substantial peace. The world pays in promissory notes, but they are all dishonored; Christ pays in hard cash....
 2. “The world gives to the body; Christ to the soul. The world gives to the outward and transient in man; Christ to the inward and eternal. The world only supplies music for the physical ear, and sceneries for the physical eye; Christ supplies music for the soul, and spiritual sceneries of unspeakable beauty to the eye of faith. The world supplies the lowest part of man, – his passions and animal propensities; but Christ furnishes the highest part of him – his reason, faith, conscience – and satisfies his immortal aspirations and wants.
 3. “The world gives its best first, and there is a sad deterioration; but Christ keeps the best wine to the last. The world gives laughter which ends in weeping, joy which ends in sorrow, pleasures which end in pain, bright hopes which end in disappointment, a heaven which ends in hell; but Christ gives good things even at first, and they improve with time. He gives pleasures which sweeten with experience, joys which intensify with years, delights which increase with ages, prospects which brighten with eternities, and hopes which are divinely realized. Weeping is converted into laughter, the pains of birth into the pleasures of a new life, the pangs of repentance into the ecstasies of pardon, the gloomy doubts of faith into the brilliant visions of heaven, the streams of peace into an ocean of joy and happiness, and the struggles of the warfare into the hosannas of a final victory.
 4. “The world only lends; Christ gives. What the world gives, it soon takes away; but Christ leaves his peace with his people, and gives them “that good part”... The world at best only gives a life-interest, and that life very

brief and uncertain; but Christ's gifts are eternal possessions and real property. The lease of his gifts is not for the life of the body, but for the life of the soul. The world's fountains soon get dry, but those of Christ are perennial."

- D. **John 14:27** (NASB95) — 27 "... My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. ..."

VIII. **The Effect of Peace**

- A. Finally – the effect of peace
1. **John 14:27** (NASB95) — 27 "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful."
- B. It's where this chapter began
1. **John 14:1** (NASB95) — 1 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me.
 - a. And then came promise after promise – all designed to comfort troubled hearts
 2. The promise of heaven – Christ's preparation for a place for you
 3. The promise of them doing greater works
 4. The promise of prayer answered in Jesus' name
 5. The promise of the Holy Spirit
 - a. The presence of God
 - b. The Spirit of truth
 - c. The teacher of Christ
 6. The promise to not leave them as orphans
- C. And now, He promises His peace
1. But no – this is no promise
 2. This is a present reality
 3. "Peace is leave with you... My peace I give to you..."
 - a. Both present tense verbs
- D. They have much that troubles them; they have much to fear
1. Jesus is leaving them – and they don't completely understand why
 2. They will be attacked from without
 3. They will have doubts within
- E. But the peace of Christ overcomes all of that!
- F. And the peace of Christ will overcome all of that for you too!
1. Whatever you're afraid of
 2. Whatever outward challenges you face
 3. Whatever opposition you encounter
 4. Whatever physical deterioration you experience
 5. Whatever losses you endure
 6. Whatever trials bring you to the brink
- G. The peace of Christ is for you!
1. And so let His peace reign and rule in your hearts in these moments and from now on
 2. That is no promise

- a. If you are in Christ – the will has been read
 - b. He has left you the legacy of peace
 - c. It is His gift to you for all eternity
- H. So let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful