

The Spartan Sower

The sower soweth the word... Mark 4:14



February 19, 2006 (Vol. 6)

Peace

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Do you have peace? If so, what kind? If not, do you seek it? And again, what kind are you seeking? Have you even seriously considered whether you have peace or not?

Peace is "quietness, rest, set at one again". For example, "When the strong man fully armed guardeth his own court, his goods are in peace" (Luke 11:21). Peace is security. It is **not** the absence of all trial, dangers or concerns. It is rather, assurance that even in the midst of trials, temptations, or just rough circumstances - we know where we stand in Christ. So, do you get angry and frustrated because things are not going your way? Do you let temptation issue forth into sin? Do you murmur and complain when your life doesn't turn out like you expected? We need to be aware of our attitudes, for not only will we be judged for them, but such will also issue forth into our words and actions (Matt. 15:18; Prov. 4:23). You know the saying, "Misery loves company." Frequently, people who are not at peace tend to make others around them miserable as well.

Two things are established here: peace must be sought & it is conditional: "For he that will love life, and see good days, let him **refrain his tongue from evil**, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him **seek peace**, and **pursue it**." (1 Pet. 3:10-11). Peace must be pursued, sought after and it is conditioned upon how we live, our conduct. There is no peace in this text apart from truth and godly living. It is a **conditional peace**.

It is further described as a "way" or "pathway" that is to be walked in Rom. 3:17 and Luke 1:79. Thus, it is not a "once in peace, always in peace" concept. Yes assurance is there, **WHEN** we walk in the pathway of peace. But when we turn

from that way into the dirty and filthy highway of sin, can we expect to have assurance of salvation?

Many denominational people think they have security, and also that once they have it they cannot lose it. And it seems that sometimes (in practice) we think so too. Do we not, at times, look for comfort, enjoyment and happiness in some sinful activity (Heb. 10:25)? We get tired of abstaining from sin, weary of fighting it, and we want some rest from the struggle... so we give in (1 Pet. 4:1-5; 5:8-9). We turn ourselves over to commit some trespass, putting out of our mind for the time being that God hates it and condemns those who do such. We shut out the fact that every time we choose sin we harden our hearts that much against God's word (Heb. 3:7-15). We ignore the fact that judgment can fall upon us **WHILE** we are in that lost and sinful state. But, we must make the choice to be faithful. To walk in the pathway of peace that God has revealed through His word. We must exercise ourselves in resisting temptations and enduring trials, and must cease from practicing sin.

Peace, assurance, rest and security are wonderful blessings from God. But again, it is not a peace that the world offers or that the worldly usually understand. Christ, just before the ordeals of His trial & the scattering of the apostles, said: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: **not as the world giveth**, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful." (John 14:27) He then proceeded to explain that He is the way, the truth & the life (v. 6) And it is by means of His words were God's words. (v. 10). And God will abide with those who keep Christ's word (v. 23-24). Therein is assurance, comfort and peace.

This is the key, the answer to how the apostles could later face persecution and death, praying, rejoicing and singing all the while. Not because they enjoyed their immediate circumstances all the time, but because by faith they could see through it all. In every reaction that people had to the truth (for good or ill), they could see God's word confirmed (Acts 28:24-29). In every trial they faced, they could find the way of escape as God had promised (1 Cor. 10:13). And if they physically suffered, they trusted in God's promise of life to come. Knowing that those who endure shall receive a crown of life (James 1:12).

Again, peace is conditional. Writing to Christians at Ephesus, Paul said, "I therefore, the

prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to **walk worthily** of the calling wherewith ye were called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; giving diligence to **keep** the unity of the Spirit in the bond of **peace...**" (Eph. 4:1-3). Countless passages connect "walking" with keeping hold on peace. And such a walk will also be a blessing to others around us. When we are at peace with God (doing His word), then we will treat others properly. While the fact that we stand with the truth can bring conflicts with worldly people (Mt. 10:34), it at the same time makes us easier to get along with and less prone to anger, murmuring, frustration, anxiety, etc. Among the brethren, we will have better relations, more gracious and selfless consideration. And with people of the world, we will be calm and confident in the truth, as we seek and take opportunities to influence & help others learn of Christ.

So, let us ask ourselves again: Do I have peace? If so, what kind? If not, do I seek it? And again, what kind am I seeking? Have I even seriously considered whether I have peace or not?

If you have not considered it, then do so now. If you have sought after worldly peace, and find frustration and disappointment (as you will when things fail!), change! Seek for & pursue the peace that God offers. You will find no better.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

- **Home Bible Study** – Sat., Feb. 18th
- **Business Meeting** – Sun. Feb.26 @ 5pm.
- **Men’s Class / Ladies Class** - Tues., March 14th @ 7 pm.
- **Debate on Security of Believer** - Sparta Civic Center on March 24-25, 2006.

- **Gospel Meeting** - Ron Daly, April 2-7, 2006.
- **Gospel Meeting** - Ron Roberts, Oct.15-20, 2006.

PRAY FOR

Mag Bumbalough, Greg Capps, Sabrina Capps (tests), **Thelma Cunningham, Donald Eller** (recovering from neck surgery), **Wanda Frazier** (Life Care, room #207), **Holly Jernigan** (Joyce Gardner’s niece has cancer), **John Ross Key** (Mary Cox’s son), **Roger Kline** (undergoing chemotherapy, slow progress), **Marci Miller** (Alisa Fletcher’s mother), **Monie Petty, Dave Poteet** (Surgery Feb 24th), **Kenny Streeval, Rose Taylor** (recovering from knee surgery), **Sissy Wheeler** (friend of Marilyn’s, cancer), **Ed Williams, Dorris Williams, Ruth Williams** (Betty England’s niece).

Those in Iraq: **Jason Zelenak** (Alisa Fletcher’s brother), **Cary Matheny**.

We Invite You To All Our Services!

Sunday Bible Study	9 am
Sunday Morning Worship	10 am
Sunday Evening Worship	6 pm
Wednesday Bible Study	7 pm

NOTES FROM THE SERMON:

North Sparta church of Christ

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