

The peace of God

What is the peace of God, and how can we experience it? Philippians 4:7 refers to *“and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”* Peace is a state of calmness or quietness of spirit that surpasses circumstances. The term peace is a gift from God consistent with His character. (1TH5:23) He is called "the God of peace." God's peace is promised to guard those who pray—with thanksgiving—about everything. This peace will surpass our ability to understand it. In today's world, we see torn apart by strife, sickness, war, danger, unrest, discord. Let us focus on Jesus. He is peace and only through Him can we find peace.

Biblical peace is more than just absence of conflict; it refers to soundness, completeness, harmony and absence of strife. God is the source of peace, one of His names is Yahweh Shalom, which means the LORD Is Peace.(JUD6:24) when someone says, "Shalom" or "Peace unto you" means, I hope you have all the highest good coming your way. The biblical concept of peace does not focus on the non-appearance of trouble. It is a goodness of life that is not touched by what happens to circumstances. You may be in the midst of great trials and still have peace of God. The believer who places full confidence in a loving God and is thankful in every circumstance will possess a supernatural peace. An inner calm will dominate the heart. The faithful believer will know peace—his heart and mind are guarded by it, despite storm raging. *“For God is not the author of confusion but of peace,”*(1CO14:33)

To most, it will remain a mystery how someone can be peaceful in the midst of turmoil. The world's peace depends on having favourable circumstances: if things are going well, then we feel peaceful; when things go twisted, peace quickly dispels. Jesus made distinction between His peace and world's wavering peace: *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives, Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.* (JOH14:27) Christ's "peace" refers to a hope and reassurance. It enables believers to remain calm in most wildly fearful circumstances. It enables them to quiet, rejoice in pain and trial, and sing song in the middle of suffering.

If God is peace, then to know God is to relax in His peace. The closer we draw to Him, the more of His peace we can enjoy. God gives us clear instructions about how to draw near to Him. Psalm 24:3–4 says, *“The one who has clean hands and a pure heart, who does not trust in an idol or swear by a false god.”* We come into the presence of the Lord through His Son.(JOH14:6) When we allow Jesus' death and resurrection to purchase our forgiveness from God, we are counted as righteous.(2CO5:21) Our sins are forgiven because Jesus already paid the price for them. Only then can we have peace with God.(ROM4:5 5:1;1JO4:10) The initial peace that comes from having our consciences sprinkled clean as we get to know God better and to be confident, courageous, and uplifted in living out faith.(HEB10:22). 2 Peter 1:2 says, *“May God give you more and more grace and peace as you grow in your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord.”* When we grow in understanding of the depths and riches of God's love toward us, our minds and spirits begin to rest in His power and wisdom. We begin to understand that He will make all things work together for our good. We learn that His purposes will be accomplished.(PSA33:11;PRO19:21)

Human beings were created to live in peace with God. But sin destroyed that peace and lacks peace with God. However, when we receive Jesus Christ, we make a peace with Him. That's what means in Ephesian 6:15, when he calls the good news of salvation "the preparation of the gospel of peace." Anyone who calls upon the name of the Lord, believes in his heart that Jesus is the only way to God, and is willing to surrender to Him as Savior and Lord can have peace with God. How do we find peace? Well, there is a God that wants to help relieve you from the pressure you may be feeling. He wants to take the weight on you and replace it with grace and peace. He wants to offer you a relationship built on love. The peace of God brings great joy and you will find God's love and peace.

Certain attitudes can destroy the peace of God. Trust means firm belief in the reliability, truth, ability, or strength we have set our hearts to God, whatever may happen. When we choose worry rather than faith, we cannot live in peace. Jesus warned us often about fear and worry.(MAT6:34) Worry is the enemy of peace. If you have a troubled heart, it is because you do not really trust His promise of peace. Anxiety and turmoil seldom focus on present circumstances. God invites us to cast our cares upon Him and then let go of them. We discover that His attributes and character is always faithful. We experience His continual goodness. We read more of His promises.(PSA100:5) We learn to bask in His overwhelming love for us. When we develop a lifestyle of making the Lord our refuge, we begin to live in the peace of God. Psalm 91:1 holds the secret to living in the peace of God. That secret place in our hearts is where we go to meet with God. When we choose to live there and hide away under His shadow, staying in constant communion with Him, we can remain peaceful, even when circumstances may not be. When we learn to cry out to Him in times of trouble, we find that His peace really does pass all human understanding. *"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful.*(COL3:15)

Jesus says *“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.*(JOH20:21) Jesus shows us the proper response to His promise of peace. Jesus Christ is One who gives peace. Jesus said, My peace I give to you. The peace He gives has to be received and applied in our lives. If we lay hold of the promise of peace of Christ, we will have calm, untroubled hearts, regardless of external circumstances. The peace of Christ is an unending source of strength in the midst of difficulties. As Stephen sank bleeding and bruised under the stones of a cursing mob, he offered a loving, forgiving prayer for his murderers, "Lord, do not hold this sin against them!"(ACT7:60) Paul didn't focus on his problems, but on the promises of God to sustain and ultimately glorify him. *And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.*(ROM16:20)

Have peace with God

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Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.(ROM5:1)

We must recognize that human beings in our natural state are enemies of God. Because we inherited a sin nature from Adam and Eve (GEN3;ROM5:12), we are born with a disposition to please ourselves. That rebellious nature sets us at odds with our perfect Creator. His just nature cannot overlook our sin; justice demands punishment (ROM3:23) We cannot create peace with God because our own efforts are nothing but filthy rags compared to His holiness/righteousness.(ISA 64:6) So, in our sinful state, we cannot be reconciled, we cannot have peace with God.

God took the initiative in pursuing peace with us by sending His Son to earth. Jesus lived a perfect life, His crucifixion paid for the sins of all who would trust in Him.(HEB4:15;2CO5:21), and His resurrection guarantees our justification before God.(ROM4:25) The title Prince of Peace is often used to refer to Jesus Christ.(ISA9:6) indicating one of His many roles—the One who is the leader of peace and offers it to others. He is the One who gives us peace with God. Because of Christ's sacrifice, we are restored to a relationship of peace with God. This is deep, abiding peace between our hearts and our Creator that cannot be taken away.(JOH10:27–28) and the fulfillment of Christ's work as "Prince of Peace." Christ's sacrifice provides eternal peace allows us to have a relationship with the Holy Spirit, the Helper who promises to guide us.(JOH16:7,13) A dove symbolises peace.(PSA55:6) The Holy Spirit is the giver of this peace, and He dispenses it as a gift in the life of a believer. Gal.5:22 says one aspect of fruit of the Spirit is peace. The Holy Spirit will manifest Himself in us by filling our lives with love, joy and peace.

The angels' words to the shepherds were "*Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased*"(LUK2:14) God is Supreme Being and Creator of all. To glorify Him means we are to acknowledge the greatness and splendor of His Majesty through honor, worship and praise. With whom is God pleased? God's pleasure and peace rest upon those who receive God's Son by faith.(JOH1:12) hope is only accessible to those who believe in Him. Peace with God means our sin debt has been paid and God sees us as righteous. We are no longer enemies but beloved children.(1JO3:2) His holy nature can have fellowship with us because He sees us "in Christ."

Peace with God means our consciences are cleared.(TIT3:5) The overwhelming weight of guilt is gone, placed on Jesus on the cross.(1PE2:24) The shame that we felt for the wicked deeds we had done was carried by Jesus. God the Father adopts us as His own children and invites us to "come boldly before the throne of grace" to commune with Him and ask for what we need.(HEB4:16) For the Christian, maintaining a sense of peace with God means we keep our ongoing sins and failures confessed.(1JO1:9) Truly born-again people live in attitudes of repentance so that no sin will take root to defile them again.(JOH3:3) Unconfessed sin defaces the joyful fellowship with God.

Peace with God allows the Christian to live without fear of death or eternity. Our hope is secure in the knowledge that Jesus has done all that was necessary to make us right with God.(MAT5:17) Those who walk uprightly enter into peace; they find rest as they lie in death. Our last breath on earth will be our first breath in heaven.(2CO5:6–8) Holy Spirit has been given to us like a promise ring, a certainty that a greater event will surely take place.(2CO1:22) Holy Spirit lives within us to guide, convict, comfort, and remind us of Jesus' completed sacrifice on our behalf.

How do you get peace in a really bad situation? God tells us how to do just that in Phi 4:4-9. The first thing you have to do is focus on God instead of your situation or problem. "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say rejoice" He's saying rejoice in the Lord, and that's something altogether different. As you rejoice in God, that should move you to then focus on others and situation. Let your gentleness, kindness, patience, meekness and heart be known to others. Bible says the Lord is at hand; God is near and will help you. Biblical joy and peace is the knowledge that God is in control of your circumstances and allows only that which is good for you into your life. Bible says to consider it joy when a trial comes your way.(JAM1:2) It's what God is doing for us through the trial; His good work is coming into our lives. We consider the trial joy; we rest in the Lord. In essence, we worship Him. Job did when he lost his possessions and his family; he said, "*Blessed be the name of the Lord*"(JOB1:21)

But what happens when we're alone or when it's time to go to bed? We have to give our trouble to God through prayer. *Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God*"(v.6) Instead of anxiety, believers are to humbly approach God. This means for us to tell Him what's burdening our hearts and give it to Him so we can rest. He wants us to stop thinking about our problems and let God deal with them. When we do that, He gives us the peace. If we pray and leave our burden with God, God's peace, will guard our hearts and minds. God is telling us to focus on Him in the midst of a troubling state of affairs, to meditate about Him, to pray to Him, to meditate about Him again, give thanks in all circumstances;(1TH5:18) and faith on Him. He commands, "Be still, and know that I am God"(PSA46:10) trusting God to be source of strength. Once we pray, we're to force ourselves to think about the things of God. The way we fight is to change what we're thinking about. Re-orient focus of your thoughts, if there is anything praiseworthy--meditate on these things.

Take it one step further. The more you meditate on the things of God, the more you'll know God and His ways. You get peace because you have the God of peace walking with you through the fire. Lord was with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the fiery furnace, and He'll be with you in your fiery furnace as well.(DAN3:25) All they knew was God was with them and would see them through one way or the other. God has a plan for you and it's good. You walk with Him because He's walking with you. And to those whose minds are steadfastly fixed on Jesus, He gives the gift of peace. *Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times in every way.*(2TH3:16)

Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation.(2CO5:18) The ministry of reconciliation refers to the work believers have been given to do and the message declare: you can have a restored relationship with God through Jesus. The ministry of reconciliation involves proclamation of the gospel and its assurance that forgiveness of sin is available in Christ. As we proclaim the gospel, we act as peacemakers and God blesses. We tell and live out His message of reconciliation, lives are changed, and God gets the glory. Sin prevents us from having a relationship with God, but Jesus' perfect sacrifice on the cross made atonement for sin and brought harmony to mankind's relationship with Him. Jesus reconciled us to God. Now we can proclaim people can repent of their sin and be right with God again through faith in Jesus.

The Greek word translated "reconciliation" literally means to change completely. Reconciliation, in theology, is an element of salvation that refers to the results of atonement. Reconciliation as the peace between humanity and God that results from the punishment of sin and the propitiation of God's wrath. Colossians 1:20-22 says that Christ "made peace through the blood of His cross.... And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach" This is the only way a person can be reconciled to God.

Mission as ministry of reconciliation takes place in a context of brokenness—the broken relationship between God and humanity, the distortion and destruction of the bond between humanity and the rest of creation, brokenness in the area of human relationships, and often brokenness within today's church. Jesus told the Parable of the Prodigal Son to help Christians understand that they can receive the gift of forgiveness from God. the sacrament of reconciliation gives confessors the gift of forgiveness and lets them know that God will help them to change.

We need reconciliation with God because our relationship with Him was broken. God is holy and righteous, and our sin separates us from Him.(ISA59:2) Sin made us His enemies.(ROM5:10) On the cross, Jesus took our sin upon Himself, satisfying God's justice. Jesus' death made possible for us to have peace with God. God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them.”(2CO5:19) Now we can be called God's friends.(JOH15:15) Jesus' brothers and sisters.HEB2:11) no longer have sins counted. They are reconciled with God.

God has given believers the ministry of reconciliation; that is, He uses us to tell the world that they can be reconciled to God through Christ. In this way, we become “Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us” This ministry as proclaiming “the message of reconciliation.” is a big responsibility. We've been given to turn hearts toward God is urgent and it is vital—it's truly a matter of life and death. Jesus paid the price for our reconciliation because God loves us, so we must share this message of reconciliation in love, and our lives need to reflect our message.(EPH4:1) Jesus is the One who saves, and the Holy Spirit is the One who convicts the world of guilt in regard to sin and righteousness and judgment (JOH16:8), yet we have been given the privilege of being ambassadors for Christ. The message we are to share with the world is this: “Be reconciled to God” We are to tell people of the wonderful opportunity they have to be made right with God through Jesus. Reconciliation requires honesty. Your desire, willingness to reconcile shows your strength. with the great gift of His love and mercy and reconciliation comes a mandate to be reconcilers to other. You plead them to believe in Christ. By restoring our right relationship to God, God opened the door for us to live in harmony with each other.

God said to the prophet Ezekiel, *"Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me"*(EZE3:16-21) Ezekiel was commissioned as a watchman. The warning comes from God, designed to bring people to repentance. The prophet had duty to deliver sobering message: Unless the people acknowledged their sins, turned from them, repented and began again to obey God's law, they would die in their sins. If they heard the message, the prophet had done his job and was no longer responsible. Only if the prophet did not deliver the admonition would he be judged along with the wicked. If a righteous person turned to sin, he would suffer the penalty, but the prophet would be held liable for not giving him instruction. If the prophet gave adequate warning, instruction, positive teaching, righteous could understand the consequences of turning from the right path. The role of a watchman is not limited to speaking only about the sins and problems of the society. The watchman was also charged with proclaiming good news about salvation.

But watchman also have insight into the world at the end of this age. They see the dark gathering clouds on the world's horizon that spell the end of Satan's reign as the god of this world and author of all its evil. This leads them to mount the walls of society and shout a warning to any who will hear. To say: "God is sovereign. He will bring a time of judgment on the world to prove that He alone is God. All other gods erected by people to hide His truth will be destroyed." This message will show the true teaching of God and the way to salvation, and of how one can choose to escape the time of judgment God will bring on the world. *“So it will be at the end of the age; the angels will come forth and take out the wicked from among the righteous, and will throw them into the furnace of fire;*(MAT13:49–50) Bible records Satan saying to Eve, “You surely will not die!” Unfortunately, many feel the same way and deny that an eternal separation from God is a reality for anyone who refuses Christ as their Savior. Scripture teaches that beyond this life, there are no second chances. Bible declares, “Today is the day of salvation”

Heavenly Father, You are a God of reconciliation. We pray for all those from whom we are alienated. Bring healing to strained or broken relationships. Forgive us for the times we have wronged others by ignorance. In Jesus name.