

**In the Name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Grace and Peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ and may our Lord and Savior sanctify you in the truth, for His word is truth. Amen**

**The Day of Pentecost (2022)**

**The Peace that Passes All Understanding**

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***“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” (John 14:27, ESV)***

On the last night our Lord Jesus was with His apostles He told them ***“I am going away . . . [I] am going to the Father.” (John 14:28, ESV)*** This news must have upset them greatly. “What? they must have asked, what are we going to do now? He can’t leave us. If He leaves us who will protect us, who will guide us, who will teach us? Oh, no, He can’t go away!” Undoubtedly, our Lord anticipated this type of response, saying to them, ***“I have told you before it takes place, so that when it does take place you may believe.” (John 14:29, ESV)*** That is, just because He is departing this world doesn’t mean His ministry is dead. To the contrary, He intends for them to carry it on. Thus, He tells them He will send them the Holy Spirit to be their guide, saying, ***“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 that I have said to you.” (John 14:26, ESV)*** You will not be abandoned. My Father and I will send the Third Person of the Trinity to be with you to preserve you in the faith, He will assuage your fear, replacing it with a holy peace. Then, to assure them what He says is true, He says, ***“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.” (v. 27)***

It is noteworthy that the peace He gives is not the peace of the world. Indeed, we ask, is there peace in the world? Can one find true peace from the things of corrupted nature? What does corruption and peace have in common? These questions, which were relevant in the day of Jesus, are still relevant today considering modern man’s proclivity for self-identification.

Peace is a concept that seems quite foreign in today’s environment. Modern men and women are pragmatists, thinking intuitively about the world in which they live. No longer is their thinking driven primarily by what used to be the traditional anchors of identity: the church, family, and nation, but rather, it is driven by the collapse of these anchors and the rise of psychological identity. Many today are led by the notion that they can bend nature to their will, believing that the world and the identification of one’s gender are pliable, able to be molded into whatever reality one chooses. Sadly, this modern yet false reality is primarily the result of the loss of sacred order in society.

The prohibitions of Holy Scripture are no longer relevant to the modern elite or their followers. Politics, education, culture, and business have all fallen prey to this irrelevancy. Its goal is to repudiate the past while pressing home the pathologies of the modern, expressive, self. The modern world imagines the world as raw material, to be shaped according to the human will, and this includes humanity itself. This modernity has not brought peace upon the world but has simply amplified the chaotic disorder from the fall of man, that disorder which destroyed peace in the world. Oh, to be sure, many believe they have peace, but they deceive themselves believing a worldly peace is peace. It is not. There is but one true peace, that peace which is ours as a gift from our Lord Jesus Christ: *The Peace that Passes All Understanding*.

Worldly peace is an oxymoron, it is a false claim. Yet the world says it is always striving for “peace.” But a world that denies God, that denies His Son and the Holy Spirit will never find peace, because without faith in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, true peace cannot exist. Yet, there is this continuous cry of peace. Indeed, the world cries out, **“Peace, peace, when there is no peace.”** (*Jeremiah 8:11, ESV*) But God says to those who proclaim peace when it does not exist, **“Because you have uttered falsehood and seen lying visions, therefore behold, I am against you, declares the Lord GOD. My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and who give lying divinations. They shall not be in the council of my people, nor be enrolled in the register of the house of Israel, nor shall they enter the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the Lord GOD.”** (*Ezekiel 13:8–9, ESV*) God is not only against the worldly who utter falsehoods, but He is against the church that does likewise.

The loss of sacred order in society is due to the loss of sacred order in many organizations which call themselves church. Religious institutions fearing loss of membership because of societies fear of theocracy, their demand for pluralism, and their appetite for self-identity, have capitulated to worldly thinking. Rather than hold fast to the doctrine of Holy Scripture, they have succumbed to the false doctrine of the world, a doctrine that does not acknowledge God. This is the doctrine spoken of by St. Paul in his letter to the Romans, when he says, **“Since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though they know God’s righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them.”** (*Romans 1:28–32, ESV*) There is not peace in the world because the peace they seek is that which is predicated on a debased mind, and this debasement is prevalent in many religious organizations today.

These things we cannot deny. They play out before our very eyes every day. They confound and disturb godly people, people who desire to follow the commands of Holy Scripture, who desire to be given Christ’s *Peace that Passes All Understanding*, but fear that their peace will be overshadowed by the peace of the world. But fear not, for our Lord Jesus Christ has told us, **“In me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”** (*John 16:33, ESV*) The peace our Lord speaks of is given to all who have been baptized into Christ Jesus and made children of God.

The Israelites thought they had such a peace with God. They were the children of Abraham, given the opportunity to purchase peace with God through the peace offering. However, the layman who ate the meat from this sacrifice had to be in a state of “ritual purity.” This was a prerequisite for admission into God’s presence. An unclean person who touched something holy, defiled and desecrated it so it could no longer be used for the function it was intended.

But being right with God was a way of life for the Israelite. A true child of Abraham would do nothing to defile God or His holy objects. Yet on this day when the Holy Spirit was poured out on the Christian Church and the apostles were emboldened to go into the city square at Jerusalem preaching the Gospel, many of the Israelites who heard St. Peter were brought to the realization that they had profaned a holy object, and not just any holy object, mind you, but the Son of God, the promised Messiah. Frightened by their sin, they cried out, **“Brothers, what shall we do?”** (*Acts 2:37, ESV*) The peace with God they thought they had, eluded them.

What a remarkable day! How awesome is the power of the Holy Spirit! Ten days after our Lord’s ascension into heaven, He who was promised to the apostles appeared. St. Luke tells us,

***“When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:1–4, ESV)***

God had confused the language of men in Babel, now here in Jerusalem He granted His apostles the ability to speak in the tongues of others, reversing the confusion at Babel. With the divine power and infusion of the Holy Spirit, the apostles were able to proclaim the Gospel to Jews of various lands, the Gospel, that gracious and merciful message from God that speaks of His Son’s atoning sacrifice upon the Altar of the Cross for the forgiveness of sins, that sacrifice which is the final “peace offering” bringing peace between God and man. On this great and momentous day, the Holy Spirit led the Church to proclaim the peace that Christ promised, the *Peace that Passes All Understanding*.

The “peace offering” of the Israelites was a meal. Today we have another meal that is also a “peace offering,” it is the Lord’s Supper. This meal resembles yet differs from the sacrificial meal of the old covenant. Today the food we eat is the most holy food, a food of our Lord’s offering, His body, and His blood. The body of our Lord was offered up as a sin offering for all mankind an offering to repair the separation of man from God, and it is offered in Divine Service, a holy place. In this great and holy meal of the Lord’s Supper, Christ is both host and food. He is the “peace offering.” In this blessed Eucharist, this wonderful offering of thanksgiving, we receive the gift of peace from God the Father while we thank Him for this great end-time gift. As we come to the Altar rail to receive the very body and blood of Christ, we offer our sacrifice of thanksgiving while receiving God’s peace through the forgiveness of our sins for the sake of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Indeed, we are given peace, the *Peace that Passes All Understanding*.

As children of God we decry the corruption of the world and pray for its conversion that all may have true peace, peace with God. Therefore, we pray, *Most Holy Spirit lead us to remain steadfast in God’s Word that we may proclaim Christ crucified to the world so they may be given true peace through faith in Jesus Christ, whose atoning sacrifice won God’s forgiveness of our sins. We pray for this and all things in the name of God’s holy Son, Jesus Christ who with the Father and the Holy Spirit reign as one God now and forever. Amen. In the name of Jesus. Amen.*

May the Peace of God which passes all understanding keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.