PEACE OF MIND

"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 afraid." John 14:27.

If there is any word which can excite pleasing sensations in the human breast, that word is peace. From time immemorial man has longed for peace, sought peace, prayed for peace and hoped for peace. Peace is an unspeakable blessing in any sphere of life, whether it be individual, family, social or national. Wonderful as is peace in any of these realms of life, it is nothing in comparison to the peace of mind and heart which comes from being right in one's relationship with God.

Peace is a state of rest or tranquility. Peace of mind and heart is a condition into which we are brought by the Holy Spirit as the result of our complete and final reconciliation with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

It is quite evident that we are living in a world and in a day of great un-rest. This unrest is manifesting itself in individual, family, church, civic, social and national life. Nowhere is there greater unrest than in the human mind and heart. The faster the pace of life becomes the less peace men have. In spite of all the increased knowledge of the human body and the rules of health, the mental and nervous diseases of the people are constantly on the increase. This is because people have exalted the external above the internal.

This world was never in a state much farther from peace than it is today. There will not be peace until the Prince of peace returns from the Glory and people are subject to Him. Those who are planning for world peace omit from their plans the only One Who can give peace. This is especially true of the world's so-called statesmen, who are planning, working and striving to obtain that which is not to be had. But, thank God! that which man cannot obtain by his finest and most devoted efforts the Lord gives to all individuals who turn in penitence and faith to Him.

Peace of mind is sadly lacking in our world today. Knowing that multitudes are longing for peace of mind, various authors have written numerous articles and books on this subject. Their writings have been read eagerly by multitudes in the hope that they might contain and offer that which so many desire. However, these writings have not afforded the peace of mind for which so many have been hoping.

There is much to be said for all human endeavors to achieve peace of mind, if only because a man at peace with himself is calculated to encourage tranquility in others. Nevertheless, it must be emphasized that the peace of man is very different from the peace of God, if only because there are times and seasons when such self-induced peace can be rudelydisturbed, if not completely shattered.

In the Word of God peace is mentioned in three ways: the peace of God (this is the peace that God enjoys Himself); peace from God (this is the peace that God gives); and peace with God (this is the peace which is enjoyed by true believers).

Salvation always precedes peace. It is the cause of which peace is the effect. As Augustine once said, "God has made us for Himself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in Him." When we, as penitent sinners, receive Christ as our Saviour, He cleanses us by His blood, which was shed on Calvary for the remission of our sins, and we have peace with God through Him. Christ paid the price for this peace, so it cannot be purchased or earned by man. It must be received as a gift.

Peace is not found in possessions. Some of the most unhappy people in the world today have enough money to buy almost anything they could wish which is purchaseable. The wealthiest people will tell you that riches will not bring happiness or peace of mind.

Peace of mind is not found in the plaudits of men. Today the world will crown you, but tomorrow it will curse you. That is the way it was when our Lord was here in the flesh. One day the crowd spread their garments before Him and cried, "Crown Him! Crown Him!" A few days later they put a crown of thorns on His head, scourged Him until His body was a mass of dripping bloody flesh, and then they nailed Him to a cross.

Peace of mind is not found in pleasure. All the pleasures men have ever invented have never brought peace of mind and heart to any person. Only the Lord can satisfy the cravings of the human heart. Things will never satisfy the soul. You will never find peace in anything that man has made. Peace comes only through faith in Christ and fellowship with Him.

Peace of mind is not something which can be achieved as the result of a carefully laid plan, or as the outcome of strenuous mental cultivation. It is a gift, and like all of God's gifts, it is without money or price. It is not the result of self-effort or arduous endeavors. It is something which God gives freely and fully, and which we are to receive with gladness and gratitude. God the Father decreed this peace, Christ the Son purchased this peace and the Holy Spirit applies this peace of mind and heart.

I. How Is Peace Of Mind Obtained?

The Bible says, "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked" (Isaiah 57:21). By the wicked He meant those who refuse to submit to God's will either in the matter of what they are to believe or what they are to do. As to the way of the wicked, Paul wrote, "And the way of peace have they not known" (Romans 3:17). No matter who they are nor where they are, the unsaved do not have any peace of mind or heart. Peace is ever the result of reconciliation with God.

In speaking to His disciples, Christ said, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me" (John 14:1). In order to obtain peace we must trust the Father and the Son. We must believe that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of men. "And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world" (I John 4:14). Christ said to His disciples, "These things have I spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33). The words, "in me ye might have peace," mean those who trust Him shall have peace. They not only have peace with God because they trust in Christ as Saviour, but they also have peace of mind through reliance on Christ's atoning work and on His exceeding great and precious promises of protection and blessing. It is through Christ that we obtain peace within as well as peace with God.

God does not promise us outward peace. Christ expressly told believers, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." The trials of life will come, and do come, to Christians as well as to others, but we have a peace within about which the unsaved know nothing.

False teachers promise peace to the rejectors of Christ, but they say, "Peace, peace, where there is no peace." Genuine peace of mind is obtainable through faith in Christ as Saviour, and only through Him.

The poor woman who was a sinner and who washed Christ's feet with her tears and wiped them with the hairs of her head obtained the priceless possession, for our Lord said to her, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace" (Luke 7:50). The poor afflicted woman who believed that Christ could heal her and who timidly touched the hem of His garment and obtained instant healing from Him, obtained peace also, for Christ said, after she had confessed that He had made her whole, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace" (Mark 5:34). She obtained peace of mind by trusting Christ as her Saviour. There is no other way, for He taught that in Him alone can one have peace within.

II. How Is Peace Of Mind Retained?

1. **By obedience to God's commandments.**
   To maintain peace of mind we must live in accordance with God's will. This applies as much today as it did in the days when Isaiah wrote, "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever" (33:17). The surest way for a believer in Christ to lose his God-given peace of mind is to fall into sin. There is no destroyer of peace like sin. David did not have any real peace of mind from the time he sinned with Bathsheba until he confessed his awful crime and God's prophet uttered those blessed words, "The Lord also hath put away thy sin." David indicated that he did not have peace of mind while he was disobeying God, for he wrote in Psalm 51, which he penned after his repentance, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." In Psalm 32:3-5, David said that when he kept silent about his sin he was miserable, but that when he acknowledged it and sought forgiveness God forgave him and made him glad.

2. **By delight in God's Word.**
   Psalm 119:165 says, "Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them." This is true of the entire Word of God, which includes the glorious promises as well as the precepts of the Scriptures. Those who delight in and are devoted to the Bible have great peace of mind and nothing shall offend them. This means that they will not be discouraged or disheartened by anything that takes place.

3. **By concentration on spiritual things.**
   "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace" (Romans 8:6). To be "spiritually minded" is to have our minds centered on the things which the Spirit of God reveals to us and has promised to us. Those whose minds are entirely set on earthly enjoyments, pleasures and things do not have peace of mind and heart. Concentrate on the things of the Lord and enjoy peace.

4. **By trust in God for everything.**
   If one is to retain peace of mind, he must refuse to worry. Paul wrote these words to the Philippians, "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (4:6-7). This wonderful promise is certainly worth our claiming. It is God's way of telling His children that they really do not have to worry. Since they belong to Him, they should thank Him for what He has done for them, tell Him their needs and trust Him to supply them. By so doing they shall have genuine peace, and of such a nature that it passes all description.

III. Why Are Some Professing Christians Without Peace Of Mind?

1. Some of them have never been saved.
   Since they do not have salvation, it would be impossible for them
   to have peace of mind. Until the soul has received salvation through
   acceptance of Christ as Saviour there cannot be peace of mind.

2. Some refuse to let the peace of God rule in their hearts.
   In his letter to the Colossians Paul wrote, "And let the peace of
   God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body;
   and be ye thankful" (3:15).

   Letting the peace of God rule in our hearts is the opposite of taking
   counsel of our fears, which is the common practice of many. Instead
   of letting Christ speak peace to their souls, many let Satan fill them
   with doubts and questionings, and consequently they worry. Many hearts
   are ruled by influences other than the peace of God. No wonder they
   do not have peace of mind.

3. Some do not know the promises of God which produce peace.
   When trials arise, as they do inevitably, they do not know the glorious
   promises of God which apply to such situations and, as a result, they
   are in distress. God gave us the Scriptures that through them we might
   be prepared to meet the inevitable situations in life. Therefore, if
   you would have peace of mind, you must know what God says, and especial-
   ly how He promises absolute and perfect security to every one of His
   children regardless of the dangers which may confront each one. You
   will never find a person who does not believe in eternal security who
   has a real peace of mind and heart.

4. Some refuse to submit to God's will.
   The way of the transgressor is hard, even though the transgressor
   be a Christian. God will not permit His child to have real peace of
   mind as long as he or she resists the divine will. Like any children,
   the children of God can be wilful and stubborn at times. Christians
   frequently want something and struggle against God to obtain it.
   There cannot be any peace of mind for Christians as long as they are
   out of fellowship with the Lord. The child who has quarreled with
   his father does not have peace of mind until he admits his mistake
   and seeks forgiveness. So it is with the child of God. Therefore,
   if you are doing what you know to be contrary to God's will, or if
   you are persisting in refusing to do what you are certain God wants
   you to do, obey Him and you will then enjoy the peace of God which
   passeth all understanding, but not until then.