

4. The Fruit of the Spirit is Peace (1Q 2010—The Fruit of the Spirit)

Biblical material: John 14:27, Matt. 8:23–27; 11:28, 29; Rom. 5:1–11; 12:9–21; Heb. 12:14; Col. 3:13–15.

Quotes

- One of the most persistent ambiguities that we face is that everybody talks about peace as a goal. However, it does not take sharpest-eyed sophistication to discern that while everybody talks about peace, peace has become practically nobody's business among the power-wielders. Many men cry Peace! Peace! but they refuse to do the things that make for peace. *Martin Luther King, Jr.*
- There was never a good war or a bad peace. *Benjamin Franklin*
- I like to believe that people in the long run are going to do more to promote peace than our governments. Indeed, I think that people want peace so much that one of these days governments had better get out of the way and let them have it. *Dwight D. Eisenhower*
- We frail humans are at one time capable of the greatest good and, at the same time, capable of the greatest evil. Change will only come about when each of us takes up the daily struggle ourselves to be more forgiving, compassionate, loving, and above all joyful in the knowledge that, by some miracle of grace, we can change as those around us can change too. *Mairead Corrigan, Women for Peace*
- Peace is not the absence of war; it is a virtue; a state of mind; a disposition for benevolence; confidence; and justice. *Spinoza*

Questions

Why is peace such a big issue? How does the Spirit bring peace? How do we reveal peace in our own lives? How does resolving the issues in the great controversy bring peace? Why are peacemakers so specially blessed? How can we do our part in spreading this message of peace in a violent world? How do we achieve peace ourselves?

Discussion

Is 26:3, 4. There is no peace apart from God. As Augustine said, "Our hearts will only find rest when we find our rest in God." The perfection of peace is only found in God. Why? Because we know our God. We know what he is like. So though troubles still come, we have peace because we trust God. Nothing more. Nothing less. The command for us is: "Trust in the Lord forever."

If we do not trust God, we shall have to rely on ourselves. We shall have no assurance. And in the end, if we continue not to trust God, he will not be able to save us. No peace—either now, or in the future.

But if we do trust God—then God keeps us in perfect peace. Isn't that what you want? Then trust God—absolutely and completely. For that is what Jesus brought us:

John 14:27. "My peace I give you." How could Jesus say that? How could he speak about peace just before he went to Gethsemane and the Cross? Only because he trusted in God, and knew the victory he was about to bring. Jesus gives us his peace—which is the peace he won. Peace—so that we have trouble-free hearts and no fear. We are not afraid.

John 16:33. "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace." We still expect problems. But we still have peace. Because we know God, and we know what is happening, and what will happen. Most importantly, we have peace because Jesus has overcome the world. That is what Jesus tells us. That is our message too, just like the early Christians:

Acts 10:36. "Preaching peace by Jesus Christ." That's God's message we must take to the world. But it's all very well Jesus saying so, and us repeating the message. The vital question is: How does this peace come?

Ephesians 2:14 "For he himself is our peace." Jesus is our peace. We were the ones at war, at war with each other and with God. But now, through Jesus Christ, who is our peace, our hostility is ended. He reconciles us to God (not the other way around, notice!) v.17. He came preaching peace to all. He made peace v.15. How?

Colossians 1:20 "Having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things to himself."

The Cross is our peace. That symbol of violence and execution is our peace. It leads us back to God, it reconciles us to him, for until the Cross we were aliens and rebels; without God and not wanting God. Through the Cross of Jesus, by his demonstration of total love for us, we are won back to him. No longer do we wish to be God's enemies, but his friends. See Colossians 1:21-23. Enemies reconciled through the death of Jesus. *He is our peace!* In him we are brought back to God; anger and hostility and rebellion destroyed. We are brought back to God as friends once more, into absolute peace.

Ellen White Comments

"Blessed are the peacemakers." The peace of Christ is born of truth. It is harmony with God. The world is at enmity with the law of God; sinners are at enmity with their Maker; and as a result they are at enmity with one another. But the psalmist declares, "Great peace have they which love Thy law: and nothing shall offend them." Ps. 119:165. Men cannot manufacture peace. Human plans for the purification and uplifting of individuals or of society will fail of producing peace, because they do not reach the heart. The only power that can create or perpetuate true peace is the grace of Christ. When this is implanted in the heart, it will cast out the evil passions that cause strife and dissension. {DA 304-5}

"That in me ye might have peace"--peace in Christ, peace through belief of the truth. The Comforter is called the Spirit of truth because there is comfort and hope and peace in the truth. Falsehood cannot give genuine peace; this can be received only through the truth... Jesus prayed that His followers might be one; but we are not to sacrifice the truth in order to secure this union, for we are to be sanctified through the truth. Here is the foundation of all true peace. {OHC 329}

Jesus came to this earth to represent the character of the Father to the world. He said, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father." Satan had misrepresented the character of God, and placed him in a false light. But Jesus came to reveal the Father's love and compassion toward the fallen children of men... The curse of the law is not upon those who are striving to fulfill God's holy precepts through faith in the Redeemer. They are covered with his righteousness. They are at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. {ST, September 30, 1889}

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