

A Lord's Day Snippet!

Biblical And Southern Studies

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Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin?
The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

Peace, perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed?
To do the will of Jesus, this is rest.

Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging round?
On Jesus' bosom naught but calm is found.

Peace, perfect peace, with loved ones far away?
In Jesus' keeping we are safe and they.

Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown?
Jesus we know, and he is on the throne.

Peace, perfect peace, death shad'wing us and ours?
Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers.

It is enough: earth's struggles soon shall cease,
And Jesus call us to heav'n's perfect peace.

Edward H. Bickersteth (1825-1906)

Christ Is Our Peace

"For He (Christ) is our peace."

Christus est pax nostra—Christ is our Peace

Ephesians 2:14

One of the reasons for the terrible frustration of fallen mankind is that peace and joy are sought without righteousness or apart from God. Actually, there can be no peace without the righteousness of God. Also, without the peace of God there can be no joy. The imputed righteousness of Christ is essential to peace. How many can sing, in a heartfelt way, the stanza from "*When I can read my title clear?*"

There shall I bathe my weary soul
In seas of heavenly rest,
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast.

We know that Christ is the Prince of Peace and this passage in Ephesians helps us to see some of the extent of His principdom. Paul previously in Ephesians 2 spoke of being reconciled after having been far off, and that reconciliation is only by the blood of Christ; Christ is Himself our peace as the One who reconciled us to God (Eph. 2:13-16). When we are at peace with God it is because the sin problem has been settled, and we have been reconciled to God. Peace is not a state of inaction, but it is a state of a living child in the kingdom of God's dear Son. Peace is a sense of tranquility of soul and spirit securely saved through Christ and thus fearing nothing because our sins have been taken out of the way no matter what providence bestows.

Christ is our peace as a Person. Christ "is our peace" thus peace is in Him and Him alone. Not just because of what He did but because of who He is. "For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us" (Eph. 2:14).

"For He is our peace" which shows that our peace is in a person. No, it is not his doing that is being declared here but it is His being! Peace is wrapped up in the person of Christ. He can not only make peace and bestow peace, but He is truly peace itself. As a person of the Godhead the attribute of peace is what God is. His perfections are what He is, so if He gives peace there is a sense in which He gives Himself. He gave Himself for us in atonement to reconcile us and He gave Himself to have us in union with the Godhead. In Jesus Christ's last prayer he requested that "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.... And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them" (John 17:20-21, 26). This was also pictured in His teachings on the vine and the branches (John 15). And since He is the Head of the Church of which we are the body, it is true that He is the head who rules us, His Spirit animates us, one set of joints moves us; one food nourishes us; the robe of His righteousness covers us. It is this union with Christ, who is one with the Father. And this is why the peace of Christ is endless for He is without end and this peace cannot be lost He is our bodily Head and our Husband as we are the bride of Christ.

What characterizes this peace? *This peace is a soul at rest.* Charles H. Spurgeon explained, "The heart reclines upon God's love, and the judgment leans on His wisdom; the desires recline, the hopes repose, the expectations rest, the soul throws all its weight and all its weariness upon the Lord, and then a perfect peace follows." *This peace is a resignation to the divine will.* What a tranquil state. All things to those who love God are working for our good (Rom. 8:28).

This peace is a sweet confidence in God. “For the LORD shall be thy confidence, and shall keep thy foot from being taken” (Prov. 3:26). Meaning the swallowing up of self in the great sea of God, the giving up of all we are, and all we have, so entirely to God that henceforth we cannot be troubled because that which could make trouble is already bound over to keep the peace. *This peace is a blessed contentment.* “The Lord is my portion ... therefore will I hope in Him” (Lam. 3:24). “Godliness with contentment is great gain” (1 Tim. 6:6). *This peace is freedom from despondency.* To despond is to stop resting in the Lord.

Christ has made our peace. “He ... hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us.” There were two separations visualized in the temple. There was the great dividing wall of hostility which separated the Jews from the court of the Gentiles. The breach of this wall brought the death penalty. Then there was also the great veil which separated all people Jews and Gentiles from the holy place where God dwelt which symbolized our alienation from God. We are all familiar to some degree with this fierce hostility. Although God favored Israel that they might represent Him before the world—“in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Gen. 12:3). Also, the Lord said, “I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth” (Isa. 49:6). The Gentiles were called by the Jews the uncircumcised and the Jews called themselves the circumcision. W. Hendrikson paraphrased v. 12 in reference to the Gentiles, “Christless, stateless, friendless, hopeless, and godless.” But Christ Jesus alone provided for v. 13 said, “But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” Oh, the glorious truth of reconciliation whereby that which separates is removed. Christ dealt with the curse of the law by being made a curse for us by hanging on the tree. The two that were enemies were made one new man which made peace. Primarily peace was made between God and man.

John Bunyan in *Pilgrims Progress* wrote that “The Pilgrim they laid in a large upper chamber, whose window opened towards the sunrising. The name of the chamber was Peace, where he slept till break of day, and then he awoke and sang:

Where am I now? Is this the love and care
Of Jesus, for the men that pilgrims are,
Thus to provide that I should be forgiven,
And dwell already the next door to heaven?"