

Today's devotional was written by Anneke de Jong, a member of Visalia CRC.

Friday, July 24, 2026

God Gives Us His Peace

As you enter your time with God today, pause for a moment of silence before beginning with this prayer from Psalm 85:

Show me your unfailing love, LORD, and grant me your salvation. May I listen closely to what you say and may I hear your promise of peace to me, your faithful servant. Amen

Our church celebrates communion the third Sunday of every month. At the start of each service, we are led in this liturgy:

Leader: *Through the saving work of Christ, we are at Peace with God. A fruit of that peace is that we also have peace with one another. The peace of Christ be with you!*

Then the congregation responds with: *And also with you!*

What follows is a time of greeting and “passing the peace”. This is a meaningful practice reminding us of the peace we have with God through Jesus' sacrifice. But it also reminds us that our peace with God should lead to peace with one another.

Our text today gives us a snapshot of what this looks like for the church:

Finally, brothers and sisters, rejoice! Strive for full restoration, encourage one another, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Corinthians 13:11)

First, we see the call to rejoice! We, who are at peace with God, are called to live out the joy of our peace and reconciliation. We are no longer slaves to sin but have been set free and adopted by God as his children—members of his own family. From enemies of God to children of God! (see Galatians 4:1-4) And so we live in joyful gratitude.

Second, we are to strive for full restoration. Like any good father, God wants to see his family live in peace. As all parents know, a peaceful home does not just happen on its own. Good parents set boundaries, and they have expectations for behavior within the home and family. Each member of the family is responsible for contributing to the harmony of the household. When there is conflict between siblings, the whole family is

affected. And so we are encouraged to strive for full restoration. After conflict and harsh words, this can take patience and time. It may never be fully achieved here on earth, but we must do our part. As Jesus said in Matthew 5:9, *"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God."*

Another way we pass the peace is by encouraging one another. I had a real-life experience with this last week. A childhood friend of mine was in town for the morning. We don't see each other often and finally made good on a promise to get together and catch up. We talked about our adult children and our college-age ones. (Between the 2 of us, we have 10 kids!) We shared about our recent joys and then talked about some challenges we each were facing. We laughed, we cried, and then we ended our time in prayer. It was a balm for my soul, and I left so encouraged, filled with the peace of God. Later that afternoon, I had a conversation with someone else who is dealing with a difficult situation. Because I had been so encouraged in the morning, I was able to encourage her with God's peace in the afternoon. Mutual encouragement is vital to living out the peace that God has made for us.

Paul says next that we are to "be of one mind." Oh, this is a hard one! Does it mean that everyone always has to agree on everything? Or that we all need to think exactly the same way? Paul's letter to the Philippians is helpful here. If we look back at the passage in Philippians we considered yesterday (4:8 & 9), we get insight into what it means to have one mind. The Philippians were to think about *whatever was true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy*. Those were the thoughts of people at peace with God. In other words, we are to have the same mindset as Jesus Christ—the same servant nature, the same humility, and the same obedience. (see Philippians 2:5-8).

Only then can we live together in peace. In almost every letter Paul writes, he admonishes his readers to live in peace. Considering the peace that God has achieved for us and the peace that He so generously gives to us, how can we not do everything possible, *"as far as it depends on you, to live at peace with everyone"*? (Romans 12:18).

Through the saving work of Jesus Christ, we are at peace with God. His faithful love and peace are with us and become evident to others when we extend the same love and peace to one another.

Reflection Questions:

Think about the ways that you are "passing the peace" of God. Are there areas where you need to strive for reconciliation or work towards peace? Who might need to be

encouraged today? If it's you, reach out to someone who you know will pass the peace of God back to you

The LORD bless you

and keep you;

the LORD make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;

the LORD turn his face toward you

and give you peace.”

Numbers 6:24-26