

THE MISSING PEACE — WEEK 1

Peace with God

SERMON SUMMARY

Christmas is filled with images and promises of *peace*—from classic movies to beloved carols to the shepherds' announcement in Luke 2. The angels declared that the birth of Jesus would bring **glory to God** and **peace to those on whom His favor rests**. Yet the world often feels anything but peaceful. Nations rage, cultures divide, families struggle, and personal lives carry stress, fear, and pressure.

So what peace did the angels mean?

The most foundational peace Scripture speaks of is **peace with God**—being in a right, unhindered relationship with Him. Romans 5:1 declares:

“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

True peace begins with restored relationship with God. And the only path to that relationship is Jesus Christ.

Paul teaches three essential truths:

1. WHAT PREVENTS ME FROM HAVING PEACE WITH GOD?

The obstacle is **sin**.

From Adam and Eve to the nation of Israel, peace with God is always disrupted by humanity's choice to rebel. Sin doesn't just trouble us—it **separates us**.

“Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior.”

— *Colossians 1:21 (NIV)*

Sin makes us *hostile* toward God—sometimes actively, sometimes passively. Even if we say we want God, our actions can oppose Him.

Like choosing fried food while saying we want good health—we may not *intend* to oppose God, but our choices can place us against Him.

Unrepentant sin keeps us from peace with God.

2. HOW CAN I HAVE PEACE WITH GOD?

If sin is the obstacle, it must be removed.

But Paul says in Romans 5:6 that we were *powerless*—unable to remove it ourselves.

This is why Jesus came.

On the cross, He became our **substitute**, taking our place and paying the full price for our sin. Scripture calls this *substitutionary atonement*.

Jesus removed the obstacle between us and God.

Forgiveness is offered to everyone, but it must be **received** personally—like a gift. God does not force it into your hands.

To receive it is to:

- Repent of your sin
- Believe in what Jesus accomplished
- Trust Him as Savior and Lord

Then peace with God becomes yours forever.

3. HOW CAN I EXPERIENCE PEACE WITH GOD DAILY?

Romans 5:2 gives two powerful truths:

A. We now ***stand*** in God's grace.

Our relationship with God is not based on performance, rule-keeping, or scoring high on some spiritual scale.

It is anchored in His grace—steady and unchanging.

B. We rejoice because our future is secure.

“My sins are forgiven; my future is heaven.”

This gives present-tense peace.

Fear is replaced with confidence. Anxiety is replaced with hope.

Draw near daily.

Just like gravity's pull increases with proximity, the closer we stay to God, the more His peace shapes us.

Spiritual habits—Scripture, prayer, obedience, worship—keep us close enough to experience His peace in real time.

KEY SCRIPTURES (NIV)

- **Romans 5:1–2**
- **Luke 2:14**
- **Colossians 1:21**
- **Numbers 6:24–26**
- **Romans 5:6**
- **1 Peter 2:24**

DISCUSSION GUIDE

Opening Reflection

When you hear the word *peace*, what images or feelings come to mind?
How have you experienced a lack of peace recently?

1. What Prevents Peace With God

Read **Colossians 1:21** and **Romans 3:23**.

- How does Scripture describe the natural human condition before knowing Christ?
- Why is sin more than just “breaking rules”?
- How have you seen unrepentant sin affect your peace (with God or others)?

2. Peace Through Christ Alone

Read **Romans 5:1**, **Romans 5:6**, and **1 Peter 2:24**.

- Why could we not remove the “obstacle” of sin ourselves?
- How would you explain “substitutionary atonement” to someone unfamiliar with the term?

- Have you personally received God's gift of forgiveness through Christ?
 - If yes, when?
 - If unsure, what questions remain?

3. Living in Peace Daily

Read **Romans 5:2**.

- What does it mean to *stand in grace*?
- How does believing "my future is heaven" change your daily perspective?
- What habits help you draw near to God consistently?
- Where do you sense God inviting you to return or move closer?

4. Christmas and Peace

- Why do you think nativities feel peaceful even when life around us is chaotic?
- How does peace *with* God open the door to the peace *of* God?

CLOSING APPLICATION

- Is there any sin you need to repent of today?
- Is there any distance in your heart from God that needs to be closed?
- What is one step this week that moves you closer to Christ?

PRAYER

"Father, thank You for sending Jesus—our Savior, our substitute, our peace. Thank You that through Him, my sins can be forgiven and my future secured. Draw me closer to You each day. Help me walk in Your grace and rest in Your peace. In Jesus' name, Amen."