

## The Peace of God Part 5 – When the Inside Is Stronger Than the Outside

### Key Points:

- The peace of God is an internal possession of every born-again believer, not something derived from external circumstances.
- The enemy uses external circumstances and relationships to pull believers out of the will of God, relying on doubt, fear, and division.
- Jesus explicitly promised tribulation in this life, and believers must stop allowing tribulation to disrupt their peace.
- World peace will not be fully realized until Christ returns and reigns from Jerusalem.
- Keeping the mind fixed on God, as described in **Isaiah 26:3**, is the primary mechanism for maintaining perfect and constant peace.
- Peace is not identified by feelings first but by the truth of God's Word, which serves as an anchor when emotions contradict Scripture.
- The peace of God described in **Philippians 4** surpasses natural understanding, meaning a believer can experience peace without being able to explain it rationally.
- Prayer and thanksgiving are essential practices that realign the soul and sustain the flow of God's peace.
- Meditating on things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, and praiseworthy, as instructed in **Philippians 4:8**, keeps peace dominant in the soul.
- Believers must renew their minds to God's Word over time to dismantle mental strongholds built through upbringing and culture.
- Perseverance is essential; not quitting in the face of trial is the mark of a faith-filled believer who cannot ultimately be defeated.

---

## 5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

---

### Day 1: A Peace the World Cannot Give

**Reading:** John 14:27; John 16:33

**Devotional:** Jesus did not promise a life without storms. He promised something far greater — a peace that originates from within, untouched by what rages without. The world offers temporary relief through circumstances, relationships, and comfort. But the peace Christ gives is not borrowed from your surroundings. It is deposited into your spirit at the moment of salvation. When fear knocks at the door of your heart today, you do not have to answer it. You already carry the answer. Remind yourself: the One who overcame the world lives inside you. His peace is not a feeling to be found. It is a truth to be received.

**Reflection:** What external circumstance is currently threatening your internal peace? How would your response to it change if you truly believed the peace of Christ already resided in you?

**Practical Application:** Write down one situation causing you anxiety. Beside it, write the words: "Christ in me has already overcome this." Read it aloud each morning this week.

---

### Day 2: A Mind That Is Fixed

**Reading:** Isaiah 26:3; Romans 12:2

**Devotional:** The promise of perfect peace in **Isaiah 26:3** is not unconditional. It is tied directly to where the mind is fixed. God does not promise peace to the wandering mind or the anxious imagination. He promises it to the stayed mind — the mind that has made a deliberate, sustained choice to anchor itself in Him. Culture insists you cannot control your thoughts. Scripture insists you can. The renewing of the mind is not a passive process. It is an act of daily, intentional discipline. Every thought that rises up in opposition to God's Word can be brought into submission. You are not a victim of your own thinking.

**Reflection:** What patterns of thought most frequently pull your mind away from trust in God? Are those patterns rooted in His Word or in the world's narrative?

**Practical Application:** Choose one truth from Scripture about God's faithfulness and meditate on it specifically during a moment today when anxious thoughts arise. Do not wait for peace to

come. Pursue it by fixing your mind first. We are required to submit to God and resist the devil.

---

### **Day 3: Praying Instead of Panicking**

**Reading:** Philippians 4:6-7; 1 Peter 5:7

**Devotional:** Anxiety is not defeated by willpower alone. **Philippians 4:6-7** presents a direct exchange: bring everything to God through prayer and thanksgiving, and walk in a peace that surpasses natural understanding. This peace is described as a guard — a military term suggesting active protection over your heart and mind. That means the peace of God is not passive. It stands watch. It holds the line. But it is activated through prayer. When a difficult report comes, when a relationship fractures, when fear announces itself loudly, the first response of the believer is not panic. It is prayer. Not because prayer changes your feelings immediately, but because it focuses your trust.

**Reflection:** Do you tend to pray as a first response to trouble, or as a last resort? What would it look like to make prayer your first instinct rather than your final option?

**Practical Application:** Set a specific time today to bring every current concern before God in prayer. Do not simply list your needs. Include thanksgiving, even for things that feel small. Notice how your perspective shifts.

---

### **Day 4: Guarding What You Meditate On**

**Reading:** Philippians 4:8-9; Psalm 1:1-3

**Devotional:** The mind is not a neutral space. Whatever you consistently feed it will eventually shape it. **Philippians 4:8** is not a suggestion for optimism. It is a command about the content of sustained thought. Paul wrote these words from prison, where the pressure to dwell on fear, injustice, and despair was immense. Yet he chose to occupy his mind with what was true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and praiseworthy. This is not denial of reality. It is the deliberate choice to let God's reality outweigh the visible one. The peace of God does not grow in a mind saturated with fear-based content. It grows in a mind that is intentionally cultivated with truth.

**Reflection:** What are you consistently feeding your mind through what you watch, read, and listen to? Is that content producing peace and faith, or anxiety and doubt?

**Practical Application:** For one day, consciously monitor what you allow into your mind through media and conversation. Replace one fear-producing source with a Scripture-based one and observe the difference in your emotional state by the end of the day.

---

## **Day 5: The Peace That Perseveres**

**Reading:** James 1:2-4; Romans 8:37-39

**Devotional:** Perseverance is needed when you are in a trial. As a believer you can have the presence of peace in the middle of trial. **James 1:2-4** calls believers to count trials as joy — not because suffering is pleasant, but because the testing of faith produces something that cannot be manufactured any other way. The peace of God is not only for the quiet seasons. It is most powerfully demonstrated in the most turbulent ones. You are not called to simply survive your trials. You are called to walk through them without losing your footing, without abandoning your confession, and without quitting. The peace of God in you is greater than anything that comes against you. It has already conquered all that hell could bring. Do not quit. Remember as time passes the believer who walks in faith is getting stronger, not weaker.

**Reflection:** Where in your life have you been tempted to quit? What would it look like to persevere not in your own strength, but rooted in the peace and power of God within you?

**Practical Application:** Identify one area where you have been close to giving up. Make a declaration today, out loud, that you will not quit. Find one Scripture that speaks directly to that area and commit it to memory this week.

---

## **The Peace of God Part 5 – Scripture References from the Sermon**

**Here is a list of all scripture references mentioned or clearly alluded to in the sermon:**

### **Directly Referenced:**

**John 14:27** - Jesus speaks peace to his disciples, distinguishing his peace from what the world offers, and tells them not to be troubled or afraid.

**John 16:33** - Jesus tells his disciples they will have tribulation in the world but to take heart because He has overcome the world.

**Isaiah 26:3** - The Lord keeps in perfect peace those whose minds are fixed on him because they trust in him.

**Philippians 4:6-9** - The call to be anxious for nothing, to pray with thanksgiving, and to meditate on things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, and praiseworthy, with the promise that God's peace will guard hearts and minds.

**Mentioned in Message:**

**James 1:2** - The command to count trials as joy, which the sermon connects directly to **John 16:33**.

**Job 5:22** - At destruction and famine you shall laugh.

**Colossians 3:15** - Letting the peace of God rule in hearts and minds, mentioned as the previous week's text.

**2 Corinthians 10:5** - Taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ.

**James 4:7** - Submit to God, resist the devil, and he will flee.

**Romans 8:11** - The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead dwelling in believers.

**Matthew 7:24-27 / Luke 6:47-49** - Building one's house on the rock versus sand.

**Ephesians 2:6** - Believers seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

---

## **The Peace of God Part 5 – Personal and Small Group Study Guide**

---

### **Key Takeaways**

- The peace of God is not something we earn or work up -- it is an impartation already living inside every born-again believer.
- The enemy uses external circumstances and relationships to pull believers out of the will of God. Recognizing this strategy is the first step to resisting it.
- Jesus promised tribulation in this life, and he also commanded us to be of good cheer because he has overcome the world. Both truths must be held together.

- Keeping the mind stayed on God is not passive -- it is an active, daily choice that requires practice and perseverance.
- The peace of God surpasses natural understanding, meaning we can experience peace even when our circumstances give us no logical reason to feel it.
- Prayer is a primary tool for maintaining peace. It realigns the mind and keeps focus on God rather than on the problem.
- Quitting is the only way to be defeated. Perseverance in the Word and in faith leads to victory and transformation over time.

---

### Scripture References for Review

- **John 14:27 -- Jesus promises his peace to his disciples, distinguishing it from the kind of peace the world offers, and calls them not to be troubled or afraid.**
- **John 16:33 -- Jesus acknowledges that his followers will face tribulation in this world, while also calling them to take heart because he has overcome the world.**
- **Isaiah 26:3 -- God promises to keep in perfect peace the one whose mind is fixed on him and who trusts in him.**
- **Philippians 4:6-9 -- Paul instructs believers to bring everything to God through prayer and thanksgiving, with the promise that God's peace will stand guard over their hearts and minds. He also calls them to fill their thinking with whatever is true, noble, right, pure, lovely, and praiseworthy.**
- **Colossians 3:15 -- Believers are instructed to let the peace of God rule, or act as an umpire, in their hearts.**

---

### Discussion Questions

#### Opening

1. When you hear the phrase "the peace of God," what is your first instinct -- do you think of something you feel, something you pursue, or something you already have? How has your understanding of that phrase shifted or been confirmed by this message?

2. The sermon opened with an honest question: have you recognized times when you yourself were the problem? Without going into unnecessary detail, how does that kind of self-awareness affect the way you pursue peace in relationships?
- 

### Going Deeper

3. The pastor described how the enemy uses external circumstances and relationships to pull people out of the will of God. Can you identify a season in your life when this strategy was at work? What did it look like, and how did you respond?
  4. Jesus said in **John 16:33** that in this world we will have tribulation -- and yet he also commands us to be of good cheer. Why do you think so many believers find it difficult to hold both of those truths at the same time? What makes the second part of that verse hard to practice?
  5. **Isaiah 26:3** connects perfect peace directly to a mind stayed on God. In practical terms, what does it look like for you to keep your mind stayed on God during a difficult week? What gets in the way most often?
  6. The sermon made a distinction between feeling fear and accepting fear -- between being attacked by a thought and adopting it as your identity. How does that distinction change the way you think about your own struggles with anxiety, worry, or fear?
  7. **Philippians 4:6-9** lists a set of things we are to meditate on -- things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, and of a good report. Be honest: when a crisis hits, what do you actually tend to meditate on? What would it look like to intentionally redirect your thinking toward this list?
  8. The pastor said that prayer "realigns you" and "helps your soul focus in." How consistent is your prayer life during hard seasons? Do you tend to pray more or less when things get difficult, and why?
- 

### Personal Reflection

9. The sermon emphasized that transformation through the Word is a long process -- the pastor mentioned being in a different place now than he was 30 years ago because of

consistent obedience to the Word. Where do you see evidence of that kind of gradual transformation in your own life? Where do you see that you still need to grow?

10. The closing challenge was simple: do not quit. Is there an area of your faith life -- a promise you are standing on, a habit of the Word you are trying to build, a relationship you are working through -- where you have been tempted to give up? What would it mean for you to persevere in that area this week?

---

## Practical Applications

**This week, choose at least one of the following to put into practice:**

1. Write down **Isaiah 26:3** and place it somewhere you will see it daily. Each time you see it, take thirty seconds to consciously redirect your thoughts toward God rather than toward whatever is pressing on you.
2. Identify one area of your life where you have been looking for peace externally -- in a relationship being resolved, a situation changing, or a feeling arriving. Write a short prayer acknowledging that peace is already in you and ask God to help you access it by faith rather than by circumstance.
3. Practice the **Philippians 4:6-9** filter. When a worry or anxious thought arises this week, pause and ask: is what I am dwelling on true, noble, just, pure, lovely, or praiseworthy? If not, deliberately replace it with something that is. Keep a short journal of what you notice.
4. Increase your prayer in one specific situation. Rather than rehearsing the problem mentally, bring it to God with thanksgiving -- thanking him for who he is and what he has already done -- and then release it. Do this each time the worry returns.
5. Share your "don't quit" area with one trusted person in your group and ask them to check in with you before your next meeting. Accountability is one of the most practical ways to persevere.

---

## Closing Prayer Focus

**Close your group time by praying together over the following:**

- That each member would grow in the awareness that God's peace already lives inside them.
- That the group would develop minds that are consistently stayed on God rather than on their circumstances.
- That anyone tempted to quit -- in faith, in the Word, in a relationship, or in pursuing God's call -- would receive renewed strength to persevere.
- That the Word spoken and discussed today would take deep root and not be stolen.