The Peace of God Part 14 – When the Inside Is Stronger Than the Outside

Key Points:

- All Scripture is produced by the Holy Spirit and is God's direct word to every believer, not a buffet from which one picks and chooses.
- Believers are called to walk worthy of their calling, meaning the weight of their daily conduct should balance the scale of the grace they received in the new birth.
- Lowliness, or humility, is not low self-esteem but a proper assessment of oneself in Christ that also extends value to others in the body.
- Gentleness involves being even-tempered and teachable; becoming unteachable is an admission of ignorance.
- Long suffering and forbearance are graces available through the Holy Spirit, not natural traits of the flesh.
- The flesh is not born again and will consistently work against unity if left unchecked.
- The love of God within every believer gives the capacity to bear up under any circumstance.
- Unity in the body of Christ does not mean uniformity but requires intentional effort through the bond of peace.
- Obedience to God flows from love for God, and walking in the Word is an act of faith that opens the door to the manifestation of kingdom promises.
- Believers are witnesses everywhere they go, and their daily conduct either credits or discredits the kingdom.

The Peace of God Part 14 - 5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Walking Worthy: Peace, Unity, and the Bond of Love

Day 1: The Word That Speaks to You

Reading: 2 Timothy 3:16-17 — All Scripture is produced by the Spirit of God and is profitable for shaping, correcting, and equipping the believer for every good work.

Devotional: It is easy to read the Bible looking for someone else to change. But Scripture is God's direct voice to you — His breath, His heart, His intentions placed in written form. Every passage, whether comforting or correcting, is a gift aimed at your growth. Today, approach the Word with an open posture. Do not filter out the difficult parts. Ask the Lord to speak specifically to you, and trust that whatever He says, He says in love and for your good.

Practical Application: Before reading Scripture today, pause and say aloud, **"The Bible is God speaking to me."** Then read slowly, watching for anything that challenges your current thinking or behavior.

Day 2: Walking Worthy of the Calling

Reading: Ephesians 4:1-3 — Paul urges believers to conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the grace and calling they have received, walking in humility, gentleness, patience, and love.

Devotional: You have been given something extraordinary in the new birth. The righteousness of God, the love of Christ, and the power of the Holy Spirit now reside within you. Walking worthy does not mean earning your salvation — it means letting the weight of what you received on the inside show up on the outside. The scales of your daily conduct should reflect the scales of your new identity in Christ. This is not performance; it is alignment. You are not walking worthy to become something. You are walking worthy because of what you already are.

Practical Application: Identify one area of your daily conduct — at work, at home, or in your church — where your behavior does not yet reflect who God says you are. Bring it before the Lord today and ask for grace to align that area with your identity in Christ.

Day 3: Lowliness and Gentleness in Relationship

Reading: Philippians 2:3-5 — Believers are instructed to do nothing out of selfish ambition or pride, but instead to consider others as more significant than themselves, reflecting the same humble mindset that Christ displayed.

Devotional: Pride is the enemy of peace in every relationship. It convinces you that you are the smartest person in the room, that you have been wronged beyond what others deserve to be forgiven for, and that your perspective is always the correct one. Lowliness is not low self-esteem — it is seeing yourself accurately in Christ and extending that same value to those around you. Gentleness is not weakness — it is strength brought under the control of the Spirit. When you walk in these qualities, you become a builder of peace rather than a breaker of it.

Practical Application: Think of a relationship where pride has created distance. Today, take one small step toward that person in humility — whether it is an apology, an encouraging word, or simply choosing to listen without defending yourself.

Day 4: The Grace of Long-Suffering

Reading: Romans 8:9-13 — Paul describes the reality that believers are not controlled by the flesh but by the Spirit, and that through the Spirit they have the power to put to death the deeds of the body and walk in life.

Devotional: Long-suffering is one of the most misunderstood graces in the Christian life. Your flesh will resist it immediately. It feels like weakness, like you are being taken advantage of, like you are giving more than you are receiving. But long-suffering is not passive — it is patient endurance backed by the power of the Holy Spirit. You are not gritting your teeth and hoping things get better. You are standing in the strength of the One who lives inside you, trusting that love outlasts every difficulty. You have been given more than enough grace to endure what is in front of you.

Practical Application: Identify a situation or a person that has been testing your patience. Rather than reacting today, intentionally choose to respond from the Spirit. Before you speak or act, take a breath and ask the Holy Spirit to lead your response.

Day 5: Bearing One Another in the Bond of Peace

Reading: Ephesians 4:4-6 — Paul reminds the church that there is one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father of all — a foundation that makes unity not just possible but necessary.

Devotional: Unity is not uniformity. God did not make every believer the same, and He does not require you to become someone else in order to be at peace with them. What He does require is that the love within you — the very love that drove Christ to the cross for the entire world — be the force that holds relationships together. You have within you the capacity to bear up under any circumstance, to hold the structure of a relationship steady even when it is under pressure. That strength does not come from you. It comes from Him. Let love be the bond that keeps the peace.

Practical Application: Write down the names of three people in your church family or close community. Spend time today praying specifically for each one, asking God to deepen your love for them and to give you eyes to see the value He places on each of them.

The Peace of God Part 14 – Scripture References from the Sermon

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

Directly Cited:

2 Timothy 3:16 - The inspiration and profitability of all Scripture.

Ephesians 2:8-10 - Saved by grace through faith, created for good works.

Ephesians 4:1-6 - Walking worthy of the calling, unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Romans 13:14 - Putting on the Lord Jesus Christ and making no provision for the flesh.

Philippians 2:3 - Doing nothing through selfish ambition but in lowliness esteeming others.

Romans 8:13 - Putting to death the deeds of the flesh by the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 13 - The nature and endurance of love (referenced as upcoming content).

Alluded to without direct citation:

Hebrews 12:6-8 - God chastens those He loves, and those without chastening are illegitimate children.

Galatians 5:19-23 - The works of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit, including the absence of hotheadedness.

John 14:15 - If you love Jesus, you will keep His commandments.

2 Corinthians 5:17 - If any man is in Christ, he is a new creation.

Ephesians 6:10 - Being strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

The Peace of God Part 14 – Personal and Small Group Study Guide

Small Group Guide

Peace in Relationships -- Ephesians 4:1-6 (Series Part 14)

Overview

Drawing from **Ephesians 4:1-3** and supporting passages, the sermon calls believers to walk worthy of their calling by practicing lowliness, gentleness, longsuffering, and love -- all for the purpose of maintaining unity through the bond of peace.

Key Takeaways

- The Bible is God speaking directly to each believer -- not just to others around them.
- Walking worthy of our calling means balancing the scales: our daily conduct should reflect the grace we received in the new birth.
- Lowliness, gentleness, longsuffering, and bearing with one another in love are not optional personality traits -- they are Spirit-empowered characteristics available to every believer regardless of temperament or background.
- Unity in the body of Christ does not mean uniformity. It means walking together in the Spirit with peace as the bond that holds everything together.
- Our flesh is not born again. Walking in the Spirit requires intentional, daily choices to put on Christ and make no provision for the flesh.

- Every believer carries within them the love that died for the whole world -- that love is sufficient to hold up under any circumstance.

Discussion Questions

Opening -- Getting Honest

1. The pastor admitted that he has had moments where he read Scripture and thought, "I wish someone else would get this," rather than receiving it for himself. Can you relate to that? What does it reveal about how we sometimes approach God's Word?
2. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt the Word of God was correcting you in real time -- while reading, during a sermon, or in prayer? What was that experience like?

Digging In -- The Text

3. **Ephesians 4:1** calls believers to walk worthy of their calling. The word "worthy" carries the image of balancing a scale. On one side is everything you received in the new birth. On the other side is your daily walk. How does that image challenge or encourage you personally?
4. The pastor described the Amplified Translation of **Ephesians 4:1**, which speaks of behavior that is "a credit to the summons to God's service." In practical terms, what does that kind of behavior look like in your everyday relationships -- at home, at work, and in the church?
5. Three reasons were given for why a believer should walk worthy:
    - Because you love God.
    - Because faith opens the door to the manifestation of God's promises.
    - Because you are a witness everywhere you go.

Which of these three resonates most with you right now, and why?

Going Deeper -- The Characteristics

6. Lowliness was described not as low self-esteem but as seeing your value in the Lord and extending that same value to others. **Philippians 2:3** instructs believers to esteem others above themselves. Where do you find this most difficult to do, and what makes it hard?
7. Gentleness was connected to being even-tempered and teachable. The pastor said, "If I become unteachable, I have just admitted my ignorance." Is there an area of your life -- a relationship, a ministry role, a long-held opinion -- where you may have stopped being teachable? What would it look like to open that area back up?
8. Longsuffering is described as patient endurance with people and in all circumstances. The pastor acknowledged that the flesh has no desire for longsuffering. How do you personally distinguish between the Spirit's leading to endure and your flesh's tendency to either give up or react?
9. Bearing with one another in love was described as being strong enough to hold up under the load -- like a structural support. The pastor made the statement: "I have within me the love that died for the whole world." How does that truth change the way you think about a difficult relationship you are currently in?

Bringing It Home -- Reflection and Application

10. The pastor said that if you want to break unity, just operate in pride all day. And if you want to maintain peace, walk in lowliness. Think about a relationship in your life -- in the church or outside of it -- where unity has been strained. Which of the four characteristics from **Ephesians 4:2** (lowliness, gentleness, longsuffering, bearing with one another) is most needed from you in that relationship right now?
11. **Romans 13:14** calls believers to put on the Lord Jesus Christ daily and make no provision for the flesh. What does "making provision for the flesh" look like in your specific life -- the habits, thought patterns, or environments that feed your flesh rather than your spirit?

Practical Applications

Choose at least one of the following to put into practice before your group meets again:

- **Scripture Audit:** Spend time this week reading a passage of Scripture with the intentional posture of asking, "Lord, what are you saying to me?" rather than thinking about who else needs to hear it. Journal what you receive.
- **Worthy Walk Check:** At the end of each day this week, briefly reflect on whether your conduct balanced the scale of what you received in the new birth. No condemnation -- just honest awareness and a fresh commitment each morning.
- **Targeted Practice:** Identify one relationship where you need to apply one of the four characteristics from **Ephesians 4:2**. Write down the person's name, the characteristic needed, and one specific action you will take this week.
- **Declaration:** Begin each morning this week by saying aloud: "I have within me the love that died for the whole world. I can bear up under any circumstance. I choose to walk worthy of my calling today."
- **Teachability Step:** Reach out to a group leader or trusted believer and ask them one genuine question about an area where you want to grow. Approach the conversation with the posture of a learner.

Closing Prayer Focus

Close your group time by praying together over these specific areas:

- That each member would receive the Word of God as God speaking directly to them.
- That the Holy Spirit would produce lowliness, gentleness, longsuffering, and love in each person's daily relationships.
- That your church family would be a living example of **Ephesians 4:3** -- unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- That each group member would be strengthened in the inner man to bear up under whatever circumstances they are currently facing.

This guide is based on Part 14 of the Peace of God sermon series, covering Ephesians 4:1-6.