

Benefits of Christ' Peace

A Study through the book of Ephesians
Ephesians 2:17-20

The peace that Jesus shares with us is one of the most needed and precious inheritances of our Christian life. Let's talk about this today.

There are many benefits to the peace Jesus brings to our hearts. Jesus' peace serves as a governance to help direct our lives. It tells us in *Colossians 3:15*, "*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as member of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.*"

Jesus' peace also keeps us centered on Him as we live in this world filled with so much distress and trouble, He said in *John 14:27*, "*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*"

And as we have been learning from Ephesians 2: 11-16, Jesus' peace also provides the basis to resolve relational conflicts between fellow believers.

But there is another, even deeper spiritual benefit of peace that Jesus provided. In Jesus we have a lasting peace between us with our many imperfections, flaws and failures and our Holy God.

Our text today is going to show us that because of this peace that Jesus provides us, we now have the ongoing benefit of access to Father God, membership in God's household and a foundation for life.

Ephesians 2:17, "He [Jesus] came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near"

By the context of this passage, this term "far away" was not about physical location but rather about spiritual distance from God that typified the unsaved Gentile person (see Eph. 2:11-13). Those who were "near" referred to the unsaved Jews. Jesus preached peace to both.

We see in the Gospels, Jesus preached peace to those spiritually far away as He ministered to Samaritans i.e. the woman at the well, bringing salvation to a whole Samaritan town, and by healing a Samaritan leper.

Jesus also preached peace to those spiritually far away as He ministered to Greeks i.e. the demoniac of Gadara and the Syrophenician woman whose daughter was demon possessed. Plus, He ministered to a Roman i.e. by healing the Centurion's servant.

Jesus' actions preached there is now peace with God when He healed, delivered, pronounced forgiveness. For all of it was a precursor that pointed to God's ultimate and loving solution for our offense against Him, which is the sacrifice, death and resurrection of Jesus.

As Jesus said in John 12:32, "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to

myself". He was referring to His sacrifice on the cross, taking the sins of all upon Himself, giving His life to satisfy both God's justice and love, bringing our redemption. This peace we now have with God by the sacrifice of Jesus is beautifully affirmed in two passages.

In Colossians 1:19-20, "For God was pleased to have His fullness dwell in Him [Jesus], and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through His blood, shed on the cross."

And in Romans 4:25-5:1, "He [Jesus] was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification. Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Because of this peace between us and God that Jesus provided between us through His sacrifice, we have three amazing benefits, Access to Father God, Membership in God's Household and A Foundation for Life.

Access to Father God:

Ephesians 2:18, "For through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit."

Through Jesus and the peace that He secured for us with God, the saved Jew and saved Gentile now have access to the Father by the same Holy Spirit.

This means, we can now approach our Father with confidence that we will receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need (see Heb. 4:16, John 14:6).

Membership in God's Household:

Ephesians 2:19, "Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household."

Because of this peace between us and God through Christ's sacrifice, we now are in God's eternal family, where we find full rights as sons (see Gal. 4:4-5) and are heirs according to the promise (see Gal. 3:29).

This means as citizens of God's Kingdom and members of God's household we have full access in Jesus to all the blessings and promises found in the Bible (see 2 Cor. 1:20).

A Foundation For Life:

Ephesians 2:20, "Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone."

Because of this peace between us and God through the cross of Jesus our life is now being built on the foundation of the apostles teaching comprising the New Testament, and the prophets teaching comprising of the Old Testament. In other words, the Bible is growing us up!

Jesus being the "chief cornerstone" means Jesus, His heart and His truth forever serves as our true alignment of what God wants and is building our life to be like.