

# Peace

## Fruit of the Spirit--part 3

April 19, 2015

*Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **peace**, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.*

### **DAY 1: Human "peace"**

1. My first two years in college were a blast. But by my junior year something wasn't right. Friday and Saturday nights were great. It was the other five days where there was a lot of "blah."

2. It then hit me: "My life is a roller coaster." My sense of peace is directly tied to my circumstances. I was trading two nights of fun for five(+) days of blah. I didn't like the trade!

3. I was not alone. The peace that human beings experience is related to the following:

- ☐ The absence of big problems,
- ☐ The absence of problems that are bigger than I can deal with,
- ☐ Problems that I can handle,
- ☐ The absence of even "middle-sized" problems,
- ☐ Peaceful feelings, however they come.

4. Place a check mark next to the ones that *you depend on* to experience peace.

*Isaiah 48:22 There is no peace for the wicked.*

5. God warns us sinners that no matter how "good" and pleasing a course of action may be, if it is driven by "self" we can be sure of the eventual outcome! What outcome can we expect?

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6. The absence of peace may have different expressions.

- ☐ Inward anguish
- ☐ Inward guilt
- ☐ Outward trouble we never anticipated,
- ☐ God's discipline (or wrath for unbelievers) to teach us sin is a terrible idea!

7. Place a check next to any consequences of sin you have experienced.

8. God offers a different way to peace.

*Romans 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,*

9. How can sinners like us come to have peace with God?

## **DAY 2: Peace and feelings?**

1. If "peace" is defined by good feelings, we will wonder "What's wrong with me? How come others have peace and I don't?" Have you wondered this?

2. What conclusions did you draw about God, yourself, or peace?

*John 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

3. Jesus makes several promises in this verse.

a. What does He promise to make available to us?

b. What kind of expectations can we have for living in this world? What will this world be like?

c. What does He promise about His ability to see us through troubles?

d. When peace is absent is God also absent?

4. You wrongly assume you will be at peace when:

a. Your circumstances are "peaceful."

b. You have rid ourselves of "stress."

c. You are "in control" of your lives.

d. The "world" is treating you the way you believe you "deserve" to be treated.

5. If these things are our real source of peace, what have we set ourselves up for, especially in light of John 16:33?

### DAY 3: Root cause of anxiety.

1. What are some ways you've tried to handle anxiety?

2. Anxiety naturally occurs when what we're really trusting in to make "life" happen becomes uncertain. We may get what we believe we need and we may not. Thus, anxiety.

3. We end up trying to address the symptom of anxiety instead of the cause of the anxiety-- misplaced trust!

4. One of the biggest sources of misplaced trust is trusting how people or some people treat us for our deepest needs to be met. Our deepest needs are things like being loved, understood, cared for, heard, feeling important, respected and a sense of value, that we matter to someone.

*Proverbs 29:25 Fear of man will prove to be a snare, but whoever trusts in the LORD is kept safe.*

5. "Fear" of man means we are trusting how someone treats us. Fear and anxiety are twins separated at birth.

a. When we are really trusting how people treat us, what does the author of Proverbs say we can expect to have happen?

b. What is Solomon's alternative to the "fear of man?"

c. What outcome can we bank on if we opt for the second approach?

6. Who are the people in whom you're banking on for how they treat you for your deepest needs to be met?

\_\_\_ Spouse

\_\_\_ Boss

\_\_\_ Children

\_\_\_ Others

\_\_\_ Friends

\_\_\_ Parents

\_\_\_ Leaders

7. How would trusting how God thinks of you begin to be a game-changer for you?

#### **DAY 4: Misplaced trust for peace: circumstances**

1. Yesterday, we looked at how we trust people to come through for us as a source of anxiety. Another way we create anxiety for ourselves is to trust our circumstances. We hope for peaceful "outcomes."

2. The irony is that we don't live in a world that guarantees peaceful outcomes. Instead, Jesus promises that in this world we will have trouble.

3. We will experience anxiety to the direct extent that we are trusting something other than God for our sense of well-being. If we are trusting our circumstances or the events in our lives to give us peace, we are in for a rocky road, and I'm not talking about ice cream!

*Isaiah 54:10 Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you.*

4. What kind of world does Isaiah tell us we live in?

5. What does God offer us in a troubled world?

*Matthew 11:28 "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.*

*<sup>29</sup> Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.*

*<sup>30</sup> For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."*

6. What two groups of people does Jesus invite in Matt. 11:28?

7. What does He promise to give them?

8. What is our responsibility to move from anxiety to rest, in Matt. 11:29?

9. What does Jesus tell us about Himself?

10. Why are these things important to know about Jesus? How does knowing Him give us rest?

## **DAY 5: Peace comes from centering your heart in God.**

1. We wrap up this week with some of my favorite verses on peace. Underneath each one, jot down what strikes you most about peace.

*Isaiah 26:3 You will keep **in perfect peace** him whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.*

*Isaiah 32:17 And the effect of righteousness will be **peace**, and the result of righteousness, **quietness and trust** for ever.*

*Philippians 4:6 Have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

<sup>7</sup> *And **the peace of God, which passes all understanding**, will keep your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

<sup>8</sup> *Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.*

<sup>9</sup> *What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, do; and **the God of peace** will be with you.*

*Colossians 3:15 **Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts**, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.*

<sup>16</sup> *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.*

*Romans 8:6 To set the mind on the flesh is death, but to **set the mind on the Spirit** is life and **peace**.*

<sup>7</sup> *For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God; it does not submit to God's law, indeed it cannot;* <sup>8</sup> *and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.*

2. Which verse(s) struck you the most? Why?

3. What can you do to make peace a greater part of your life?