



The Redeemed Christian Church of God  
*Living Faith Chapel, Calgary*

## Topic: **BE AT PEACE Part 1: Characteristics and Benefits of Peace**

Bible passages: Job 22:21-29; Ps 34:14; Prov 14:30; 27:9; 15:18; Isa 32:17; Job 36:11

### **INTRODUCTION**

Our theme for this year is “overflows” and our themes this year have been focusing on what we need in order to achieve and experience the promised divine overflows. I pray that this year you will be one of those of us that will experience and enjoy overflowing blessings and prosperity IJN. As we know, this month we are looking at the subject of peace. Everyone has an idea of what peace is but we want to examine what the bible say about peace. What is peace? What are the characteristics and benefits of peace? On our part, what should we do to achieve and maintain peace? What can make us loose our peace? These and many other things we will be studying this month as the Holy Spirit leads us. I pray that you and me will thoroughly experience and enjoy the peace of God that surpasses all human understanding, not only this month but throughout the rest of our lifetime (Phil 4:7) IJN

### **WHAT IS PEACE AND ITS CHARACTERISTICS?**

What is peace? In a general, peace is a state of quiet or tranquility; freedom from disturbance or agitation; applicable to society, to individuals, or to the temper of the mind. It is absence of mental stress or anxiety. How can one know whether there is peace in a home, in a town/city, or in a country? Now assess your own life, are you at peace? Can one have inner peace without external peace?

Living in peace is about living harmoniously with God, yourself, and others around you. Living in peace is both an outward and an inward process. Outwardly, living in peace is a way of life in which we respect and love each other in spite of our differences (culturally, religiously, and politically). Inner peace (or peace of mind) refers to a state of being mentally or spiritually at peace, with enough knowledge and understanding to keep oneself strong even in the face of discord or stress.

### **WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE AND BENEFITS OF PEACE?**

The following are some of the benefits of peace:

- Better concentration ability.
- A sense of inner strength and power.
- Freedom from stress, anxieties and worries.
- Falling asleep easily and sleeping soundly.
- Efficiency in handling your daily affairs of life.
- More patience, tolerance and tact.
- A sense of inner happiness and bliss.
- Ability to make clear judgments

What are other benefits of peace?

### **HOW CAN WE ACHIEVE AND MAINTAIN PEACE?**

- **Seek to love, not control or manipulate others**
  - Ceasing to seek power over people and outcomes in your life is the first major step to living peacefully. Trying to control or manipulate people is about seeking to impose your will on others without ever trying to see their side of things. A controlling and manipulative approach to relationships will keep you in conflict with others. Replacing a will to control with a broad approach of loving others instead, including their faults and differences, is the way to a peaceful life.
  - When communicating with others, seek to avoid ordering, moralizing, demanding, threatening, or excessively needling them with questions aimed at eliciting too much information. Each of these forms of communication will give rise to conflict with others who feel that you're trying to control them rather than speak with them as an equal.
  - Learn the skills of negotiation
- **Moderate your convictions, don't be judgmental**
  - Thinking in absolutes and holding to convictions without ever considering the viewpoints and perspectives of others is a sure way to live a life *without* peace.
  - Moderate your convictions would involve being ready to question and to reflect.

- Cultivate your sense of humor. Humor is a peace-lover's disarming charm
- **Be tolerant**
  - Tolerance in all that you think and do will make a difference in your life and in the lives of others around you. Tolerance for others is about appreciating diversity, the plurality of modern society, and being willing to live and let others live too. When we fail to tolerate others' beliefs, ways of being, and opinions, the end result can be discrimination, repression, dehumanization, and ultimately violence. Practicing tolerance is at the heart of living peacefully.
  - Rather than jumping to negative conclusions about other people, change your own perspective and nourish the good in others.
- **Reflect before you speak or act**
  - Reflection of thought is important – many a hasty response has resulted in a tragic outcome because time to think through all of the issues and angles has not been taken.
  - If someone hurts you physically or mentally, do not react with anger or violence. Stop and think. Choose instead to respond peacefully
  - When you feel like the need to respond to something in a manner that portrays your anger, frustration, or irritation, tell yourself "Stop". Remove yourself from the situation that is bringing on confusion and inability to reflect. By giving yourself the space, you'll have time to overcome the initial angry feelings and replace them with thoughtful solutions, including not responding.
  - Practice reflective listening. Spoken language is imprecise, and people under stress often say things that mask the real things they'd like to say. The importance of reflective listening to living a peaceful life is that you stop seeing people purely from your perspective and start trying hard to dig down into what another person is really saying and meaning. This can lead to effective give-and-take rather than reacting according to what you think you hear by inferring and guessing.
- **Seek forgiveness, not revenge**
  - Our cultural, religious, and political differences should not provide the backbone to invoke conflicts that can only bring sadness and destruction. When you feel compelled to harm another out of a perceived slight to your reputation, or because you feel that their action deserves an equally abhorrent reaction, you perpetuate anger, violence, and sorrow. Replace this with forgiveness to seek the way of living peacefully
  - Live in the present, not the past. Dwelling on that which should have been and reliving past hurts will keep the negatives of the past alive and bring constant internal conflict. Forgiveness allows you to live in the present, to look forward to the future, and to let the past settle gently. Forgiveness is the ultimate victory because it lets you enjoy life again by making peace with the past
  - Forgiveness lifts you up and frees you from resentment
- **Choose to live in joy**
  - Joy brings peace to your life because you're always prepared to see what is good in others and the world, and to be grateful for the wondrous aspects of life.
  - Do what you love. Life is more than your job. While your job needs to be something that ensures your livelihood, you also need to fulfill your life's vision. Select a vocation which helps realize your ideal of compassion.
- **Be the change you wish to see in the world**
  - Change yourself.
  - Be part of the solution. Be a person who loves every person for who they truly are. Make people comfortable around you, and allow them to be themselves with you.
  - Share ideas about ways to help create a more peaceful world and ways to embrace differences without falling into conflict.
  - Make sacrifices to help others.

What can we learn from Judges 6:1-10; Heb 12:14, Col 3:15 and Eph 4:3 about peace?

## **CONCLUSION**

Beloveth, peace and prosperity goes hand in hand. Living in peace means more than living in the absence of violence. Try to cultivate peace in all areas of your life by reducing stress as much as possible. Without peace, it may be impossible to achieve and enjoy true prosperity. There are also various types/forms of peace: peace of God, inner peace (i.e. peace of mind), external peace (i.e. calm, quietness, safety/security), etc. But you and me have a lot of role to play to achieve and enjoy peace with God, with oneself, and with others. Once again I pray that whatsoever has been troubling the water of your life, the Almighty God will put an end to them tonight IJN. The Lord will reveal to you the way of peace IJN. Your peace will last throughout your lifetime IJN.