

***Romans***  
***Message Eleven***  
***Grace and Peace 02***  
***Rom 1:1-7***

1 Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,  
2 (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)  
3 Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to  
the flesh;  
4 And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the  
resurrection from the dead:  
5 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all  
nations, for his name:  
6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:  
7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God  
our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. KJV

**Introduction:**

We are looking at the salutation of Paul as he finished his introduction to the book, “Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Last week we discussed the issue of Grace, the enabling of God for service, and today we want to finish this section by looking at what he meant by the word ‘peace.’

Words like this are easy to read over and think they are merely polite words with no real depth to them and no real need to explore them with any diligence but we have seen on many other occasions how that this is not actually true. Paul meant something with every word as did the Holy Spirit Who was inspiring him to write. Again we affirm that there are no insignificant words.

We have a general sense of the word ‘peace’ as being tranquility, absence of violence, calm, and so it is but we wonder peace concerning what?

Well, in the Christian setting there are generally four different areas in which we deal with the issue of peace. (One might make more categories with work, but these are the major ones.)

Peace with God

Peace with the world

Peace with brothers in Christ

Peace with one’s own soul

## **The greatest and most important peace of all is Peace with the Living God.**

Man is born in a state of enmity with God and unless God does something to help him he lives and dies in that same state.

He is not born innocent but spiritually dead, a rebel against God and consumed with his own self-interest.

Ps 58:1-3

- 1 Do ye indeed speak righteousness, O congregation? do ye judge uprightly, O ye sons of men?
- 2 Yea, in heart ye work wickedness; ye weigh the violence of your hands in the earth.
- 3 The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies. KJV

Ever known a baby to cry when nothing is wrong? He may scream like he is dying but there is not one thing the matter. He isn't hungry, his diaper isn't dirty and he isn't hurting anywhere. He is lying to get someone to entertain him!

And who is 'wicked'? Paul said that we all are.

Rom 3:10-12

- 10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:
- 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.
- 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. KJV

And there is no way to make peace with God. There is no religion, not moral or spiritual maneuvers one can make to quench the wrath of God concerning their wicked state.

John 3:36

- 36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. KJV

Rom 1:18

- 18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; KJV

Ps 7:11

- 11 God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day. KJV

Not only that, but there is no way even to *desire* peace with God out of true and holy motives because the heart is wicked.

Jer 17:9

- 9 The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? KJV

So, the only way to have peace with God is for God to initiate the peace, provide all of the terms

of it and then repair what is wrong with a person to get him into a place to receive it and participate in it.

John 6:44

44 No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. KJV

John 6:65

65 And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. KJV

And Paul was pretty sure that these people had this peace with God as we have seen in previous messages.

6 Among whom are ye also **the called of Jesus Christ:**

7 To all that be in Rome, **beloved of God, called to be saints**

So, this Peace is probably not that which he had in mind.

**There is peace with brothers in Christ and that is probably at least part of what Paul meant.**

The Roman church, like many of the early churches, was struggling with the various cultures represented in its' congregation. There were obviously Jews who were determined to carry on their cultural/religious traditions including keeping the dietary laws and the Sabbath commandments. It is fairly clear when one reads the end of the book that this was a place of struggle for the church.

One of the real sources of heartache for Paul was the lack of unity within the churches even the ones that had begun under his ministry. His dearest desire was for them to learn to live in harmony with God and with one another.

Eph 4:1-3

1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. KJV

Eph 4:1-3

1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,

2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love,

3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. NASU

And it pained him greatly when this was not the case.

1 Cor 1:10-13

- 10 Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.
- 11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.
- 12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.
- 13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? KJV

So, we are sure that Paul longed for there to be peace in the church at Rome and we are sure that he prayed diligently for it. This must be considered as a part of what he meant.

So this element of peace was uppermost in the mind, heart and prayers of Paul, a longing that he expressed more than once, **Peace among and with the brethren, one's fellow Christians.**

I am going to read several passages of scripture written by Paul and one by Peter which demonstrate that this is an enormous idea in the minds of the writers of our scripture.

Phil 2:1-2

- 1 If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,
- 2 Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. KJV

Rom 12:16

- 16 Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits KJV

Rom 14:19

- 19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. KJV

Rom 15:5-6

- 5 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:
- 6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. KJV

1 Peter 3:8-9

- 8 Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous:
- 9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing. KJV

I said earlier that we do not like conflict and that is generally true but one place where otherwise peaceable people have shown this not to be true is on the topic of religion. It seems that we become combative, unkind, unmerciful, and sometimes downright cruel when it comes to religious differences.

But peace among brethren, particularly fellow members of the same church, is one of the most important and necessary items of the Christian experience and is fundamental to the proper functioning of the church itself.

While it is true that we are all members of Christ and of that great church which will one day meet in the New Jerusalem, we are, while we live here, members of local bodies, individual congregations of God's people and each of those groups is a 'body' in an of itself with members place in it by God and gifted so that the group can function as a single entity.

1 Cor 12:18-27

- 18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.
- 19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?
- 20 But now are they many members, yet but one body.
- 21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.
- 22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:
- 23 And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.
- 24 For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked:
- 25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.
- 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.
- 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. KJV

There is nothing that converted men have done that has been more injurious to the Cause of Christ than the fragmentation of the church.

I am totally convinced that if the revealed will of God were to be sought, found and carried out in this community all of the true believers in Christ would be worshiping and serving in concert with one another. There would be one church and everyone would be functioning in unity with the same goal in mind, the advancement of the Kingdom of God as defined and modeled in the New Testament. Now, it might be that there would be too many of us to meet in one building and, so, we would need to meet in smaller groups but we would interact with one another, help one another, encourage one another and labor together for unity among us.

Churches would not be trying to steal members from other churches nor competing with each other as to which would be the largest. And, the larger group would be ruled over by a body of elders, each of whom were as humble, courageous and wise as the apostle Paul himself. The church would be at peace with itself even if persecuted from without.

One of these days persecution is coming to the real Christians of America and when it does they will be happy to find other Christians with whom to fellowship and find mutual encouragement

and help. Names and labels as well as the artificial divisions created by man will disappear and the church will return to its New Testament form. How do I know this? Because this is what has happened every time the people of God have been persecuted. It is the times of ease and comfort that have given rise to the divisions.

But that is my dream world. The world in which we live has Christians divided up into separate fellowships and that is not likely to change anytime soon. What we have, then, are our duties to those with whom we have entered into a covenant relationship with and toward whom we have some really serious and profound duties. Some of them are laid out in the texts we just read. None of them are particularly easy, especially when done rightly.

“...be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind...” Phil 2:2.

The Amplified Bible reads it this way.

- 2 Fill up and complete my joy by living in harmony and being of the same mind and one in purpose, having the same love, being in full accord and of one harmonious mind and intention.

The only way this could be considered, coming as it does from the pen of the great apostle, is that all of them were to be fully committed to God, to the Lord Jesus, to the gospel, and, as an extension of all of that, to one another.

Unity with one another must ever be a functioning subset of our love for God and our full commitment to Him. I am trying to weed a word out of my vocabulary that I heard literally thousands of times in my early years and have, no doubt, used before... the word ‘submission’ as in ‘submission to God.’ As I understand God’s commands there is a call for commitment, an active and voluntary purposeful determination that, by His Grace, I will obey Him in all things. The word ‘submission’ has a connotation of passivity which I do not find consistent with the teachings of the New Testament.

Repentance brings us away from our rebellion against the Laws of God into obedience and we know what the Two Great Commandments are: Love for God and love for our neighbor, especially our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Peace that comes from any other place is not consistent with scripture nor the examples of believers in the New Testament. Enforced and mandated peace is slavery. That which is enforced by documents and covenants is arbitrary and contrived. The peace we have with one another must be voluntary and must spring first from love for God and how it flows through us to love for one another.

There is no question in my mind that this was primarily the peace that Paul was praying for and encouraging the saints at Rome toward. He spent three chapters at the end of the book demonstrating what that peace would look like.

Then, there is a peace which we all naturally crave and long for but is not possible for us if we are true followers of Christ. **Peace with the world.**

Most of all us long to live lives free from conflict. We would like to be at total peace without turmoil and upset.

The scriptures even tell us to seek peace but within certain limits.

Heb 12:14

14 Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:  
KJV

Rom 12:17-18

17 Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. KJV

God's people are not to be pugnacious people, always look and spoiling for a fight. We are to "follow peace" and "live peaceably"... "as much as lieth in you..."

The people of the New Testament, and especially the apostles, were people who struggled to find and have peace with the world in which they lived. The problem was not that they sought to start fights but the very nature of their belief system meant that they came into conflict with others and they were finding that pagans did not take kindly to those who did not follow their belief system and those who left their belief system for Christianity.

Paul was involved in trouble almost everywhere he went but he did not cause the violence. Those who opposed him always started it.

One of the most violent episodes was the one that had propelled him to Rome.

Acts 21:26-32

26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

27 And when the seven days were almost ended, the Jews which were of Asia, when they saw him in the temple, stirred up all the people, and laid hands on him,

28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all men every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.

29 (For they had seen before with him in the city Trophimus an Ephesian, whom they supposed that Paul had brought into the temple.)

30 And all the city was moved, and the people ran together: and they took Paul, and drew him out of the temple: and forthwith the doors were shut.

31 And as they went about to kill him, tidings came unto the chief captain of the band, that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.

32 Who immediately took soldiers and centurions, and ran down unto them: and when they saw the chief captain and the soldiers, they left beating of Paul. KJV

But he had done nothing to cause this violence. He was worshiping God as a devout Jew and others had concocted a lie to charge him with profaning the temple.

He was a man who had been wounded many times by those who opposed his teaching.

2 Cor 11:24-25

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; KJV

Yet every occurrence of violence was at the instigation of someone else.

We are taught by the Lord Jesus that this is not uncommon and if we want to walk with Him we need to accept it as a reality.

John 16:33

33 These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world. KJV

John 15:18-19

18 If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you.

19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. KJV

So, though we desire peace and hate conflict we are to accept the fact that there is enmity in the world for what we Believe and the One in Whom we believe.

As much as we are able we are to live in peace but we dare not accept peace at the price of our silence or our conscience or the truth. We are to remember always that Truth is the most important of all our resources and we must not deny it for peace or sacrifice it to peace. This is the very reason that the Christians of ages past and Christians in our own time have been persecuted.

So, peace with the world for the Christian will always be fleeting and feeble. It cannot be one of those things that is a priority for him ever. So, we think this peace is not what Paul was wishing for the Roman church along with all of the others.

There is one other type of peace at which we should look here and that is **Peace with one's own self.**

This is a trait of Christian maturity but it is never perfect and can never be perfect on this side of the grave. Paul did grow to know a measure of it which he described.

Phil 4:11-13

11 ...I have learned, in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.

12 I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need.

13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. KJV



By the way, v.13 does not mean that you can win a ball game to achieve some earthly and non-spiritual goal, it meant that he could survive in personal peace no matter what life and the devil threw at him.

This contentment is a kind of personal peace and it was continually under assault as it still is. There are things which cannot be reconciled to our satisfaction in this life.

Rom 7:21-24

- 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me.
- 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man:
- 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.
- 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? KJV

Now that man is not at peace! He may have peace with God and I am sure that he did, that he was a true believer. He may have peace with his brethren and he might even be at temporary peace in the world, but his soul is in turmoil because the things that are going on in his life are inconsistent with redemption, with repentance and with obedience to God. He longs to be godly but something is fighting him within himself... and it is not the devil. It is his own nature to sin which is still present even in the life of the most dedicated believer that ever walked the planet. And it steals away his peace even when all else is well.

This is a peace for which we labor and struggle. And, we actually can know it in great abundance at times.

Rom 6:8-14

- 8 Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him:
- 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him.
- 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.
- 11 Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.
- 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.
- 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. KJV

But the realization of the Great Work of Christ and its reality in our lives ebbs and flows. There are times that it is a real to us as the sun in heaven and times when it is hidden from us behind dark clouds of every kind. During those times when it is clear, our hearts rest in peace, knowing that Christ is sufficient for all things for us, but when the clouds obscure these realities from our minds, we are unsettled, unhappy, unfruitful and miserable. We cannot be at peace until God hears and has mercy on us once again.

David wrote of this awful place and the glories of God's deliverance from it.

Ps 40:1-4

- 1 I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.
- 2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.
- 3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.
- 4 Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. KJV

I am sure that just as Paul longed for the Romans to be at peace with one another, he also longed for them to know the peace of soul that comes from resting in the finished work of Christ in all confidence that He will deliver us from "this body of death" about which Paul himself complained.

My desire for you all is that you also would know peace, peace with God and peace in your souls that you might seek and secure peace with your brothers and sisters in Christ.