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SALVATION

If you are not a believer in Jesus Christ, or aren't sure and would like to become one, then you need to believe that Jesus Christ was and is the Son of God, that he was God who became a man, that he lived a sinless and perfect life, keeping the Law of God perfect in every way, that he kept faith perfectly, and that he was crucified on that cruel cross for your sins, mine and the entire world- he died for our sins! His death on the cross paid the penalty fully, one time for all sins that we have ever committed and that we will ever commit. He died; he went down into the bowels of the earth, even into Hell, and was raised from the dead on the third day in a resurrected, eternal body. He ascended back into heaven, was seated at the right hand of God, and is now Lord over heaven and earth. He is coming again to judge the world, to raise the dead, where he will give an eternal, resurrected, glorified body to everyone that has believed on him as their Lord and Savior, and to establish his kingdom one earth.

You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *"Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved.."* [Acts 16:31a](#) And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving

your sins and saving you! *“That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.”* Romans 10:9,10 *“For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”* Romans 10:13 *“Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Romans 5:1

Living In Peace

Intro

If there was any a time in history that the people of God needed peace in their lives this is it. The developing Mark of the Beast, national governments out of control as they go into tyranny, wars all over the planet, toxic air, water and food, a nation of people who are rapidly becoming nuts with their degeneracy, selfishness, materialism, anger, rage, no love; one could write an encyclopedia about the state of affairs found in our culture. But then there is the peace of God. Peace has been bequeathed to us; it is our inheritance. One day we are going to go live in the City of Peace, with the God of Peace, whose reign over heaven and earth is a reign of peace. This study will help us understand what we already have, how important it is and how to appropriate God’s peace for our daily lives. So let us take a look at various passages in the NT to educate us on God’s peace and motivate us to take advantage of it.

A. Our Peace Comes From Christ

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:27

1. “Peace I leave with you”

The Greek word for **peace** is *eirene* and it has the same meaning as its OT counterpart, *shalom*. Both words have the same meanings of: an inner mental state of tranquility, a state of ceased hostilities and personal prosperity in the areas of health, relationships and finances. *Shalom* comes from the root *thamim*, which has the idea of completeness. This indicates that the soul of the believer is not complete without peace.

The word for **leave** is *aphiemi*, which means to send, to send forth, or to leave behind. When the believers were with the Lord they enjoyed his presence and his peace, but what were they going to do when he went back to heaven? He addresses this problem in the passage, (and others), by telling them that he was going to send to them the Holy Spirit,

who would dwell in them, and the peace of the living God would be there for them every day. The peace of God is found in the Holy Spirit.

To you is *humin* in the dative case, the dative of advantage, which tells us that it is to our advantage, to our benefit to have Christ's peace in us. It is of no benefit to the believer's soul to have fear, worry and anger present; it is only the peace of God that benefits us.

2. "My peace I give to you"

To *give, didomi*, does mean to give, but in the context of a king, it meant to grant something to someone. **It had the aspect of a legal transaction whereby somebody was given something as a gift and that it was permanent with the recipient now possessing it as his or her own property. The gift Christ has granted to us is his own peace and he has given it only to us and not the world.**

And *my peace* is so significant because it tells us that this peace he has given to us is not just a brand, or type of peace individually created and supplied to the church, but that **it is the very peace of Christ himself!** It is the same tranquility that Christ possessed and experienced on earth and still is experiencing today, some two thousand years later, and that it is the same tranquility that the Father and the Holy Spirit experience continually.

3. *I do not give to you as the world gives*

As is the word *kata* and it has the idea of vertical expression, such as down from something. Often it speaks of a norm or standard, or according to a standard, but here it is **a peace coming down from the World System**. The word peace is omitted in this passage because it has already been supplied in the first statement, "*My peace I give to you. I do not give (peace) to you as the World gives.*"

What this tells us **is that there is a concept of peace found in the world system**; it comes down from the cosmos to the inhabitants of the earth. All of us have been so focused on the concept of Christ's peace, and our own, (and remember it became our peace when he gave it to us), that we have been ignorant of, or oblivious to the fact that there is a peace found in the world system.

But make no mistake about it **the peace of Christ is infinitely superior to the peace that the world has to offer**, but there still is a concept of peace found in the world. **This peace is more along the lines of the absence of inner conflict, but the absence of something is not the same as the presence of something.** Keeping, or pushing negative things out is not the same as having a positive thing in. It's an empty dead peace, not like the peace of Christ, which is so rich, so full, and so full of life and light and energy. It's like dead water cells versus living water; it's like dead food versus food full of nutrition and energy; it's like empty dead words versus words that are full of energy, power and life! But **the absence of inner conflict is not to be confused with the presence of the peace of Christ.**

The peace from the world comes down from the world system and it does this **by means of the various religious systems that the world has to offer**. Every religious system has a peace to offer to its adherents; the New Age does, Buddhism does, Islam does, Confucianism does, Catholicism does, even various forms of legalism have a “peace” to offer. The Being at the head of this world system is Satan himself, the devil, Lucifer. He is the god of this age, the ruler of the world system, and the god that people worship in their religions. And his system of worship does provide a peace to those who worship him through these various systems. **But the peace that he has to offer is a dead peace and cannot compare to the peace of Christ that is so rich and so full of life.**

It’s an interesting phenomenon but if one has ever visited the sites of oriental temples, or Catholic shrines and churches, an interesting thing is experienced and that is there is a “peace” that is experienced as one walks through their courtyards and gardens. But this is the peace that is found in the world, that the world has to offer, a barren peace; it is not the peace that comes from Christ!

This angel, who thinks he is god, has set up his own religious system here on earth as a counterpart and substitute for the true worship of the true God. But try as hard as he can, it will never come close to approaching what God has and has to offer. But there is a peace found in his world system; it’s found in his religious systems; it’s found in music; it’s found in natural settings and it’s found in certain drugs.

But nothing can compare to the peace of Christ that he has given to those who trust him as their Savior. It is the very tranquility of soul that the Father, son and Holy spirit have had for all eternity, and we can experience it in our souls as we live by faith in the word in the filling of the Holy Spirit in the sphere of the new nature.

Peace, eirene, does refer to prosperity and ceased hostility; it even means to be quiet, but what it speaks of here and throughout the NT is **inner tranquility where the soul is so calm that nothing bothers it**; a kind of a “cheery calm” that has absolutely no fear, no worry and no mental attitude sins of any kind, giving the believer such as a sense of well-being that the present and the future to him are all one moment in time and it is all wonderful.

We can try to explain peace; we can try to define it, but all attempts are woefully lacking, for it passes all understanding. It’s a transcendental experience that one cannot really define or understand; we’ve all tried, but we can’t. It goes beyond the realm of understanding, because **peace is something that must be experienced!** You know when you have it and you know when you don’t. And you know that you want to have it every moment of your existence.

4. *“Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid”*

Christ bestows on his disciples something more than a wish for peace, which was a common expression in their farewells, but actually **bequeaths to them his peace**. He has the power to do this, to actually give them his peace. And taken as a whole his peace becomes the antidote for all of the poisonous ills of this evil world that we live in. Peace

is the antidote that we must drink to offset the ills of living in this evil world, with its stress, pressure, problems, discord, responsibility, suffering, worry, fear, emotional turmoil, relationship difficulties and apostasy of a nation.

Tarasso meant to be agitated, disturbed, confounded, unsettled, stirred up, and thrown into a state of disarray, agitation of the soul, **to stir up the heart with negative emotions.** Includes also the idea of old garbage in the soul that has died and settled to the bottom and is now stirred up muddying the calm clarity of the emotions.

In the passive voice it meant to become terrified, afraid, to be emotionally disturbed. These believers have become this way because Christ has taken them out of the world unto himself, thereby isolating them from the world, and now he is going to go away leaving them all alone in the world! Negative emotions now flood their souls, everything is disturbed, they are all shook up and fear is just one of these emotions, **and he gives to him his provision of peace.**

The word for *afraid* is *deiliao* which is one of the words for fear, but with a view toward timidity or cowardice. **Faced with the prospect of being all alone in the world without the Lord,** like parentless children, in a world that hates Christ, and having the one that you love leave you to go to another place is understandable that their hearts are fearful, agitated, disturbed with all kinds of things going on in their minds, with fear one of them. But such a kind of fear that would cause them to be afraid, to shrink back. It's like they would want to go run and hide, but Christ's antidote for the poison of fear is his peace. So he tells them to stop being agitated and afraid for his peace will take care of it all.

In the original we have the present passive imperative of *tarasso*, which is a command to stop letting their hearts be troubled, and the present active imperative of *deiliao*, which is a command to stop being afraid. Christ commands us because his peace can handle the problem and settle our hearts. **When the emotions become disturbed or agitated, due to something that threatens our safety or wellbeing, then they produce the feeling of fear. It is the peace of Christ, though, that calms them down.**

B. Christ wants us to experience peace

"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." John 16:33

1. *"I have told you these things, so that (for the purpose) in me you may have peace"*

Christ has been instructing his disciples on many things in chapters 15 and 16, one of them was on the ministry of the Holy Spirit to them when he comes to earth. The word told here is *laleo* and was used to denote instruction in a conversational tone and form. Some people think that there is such a thing as preaching and teaching, where teaching is something one does in Sunday School, and in schools, but preaching is where one modulates the voice, gets a rhythm going, cranks up the volume and throws the emotions into it to get people worked up.

Where what is really going on is communicating God's Word. The preferable form, which one uses when dealing with positive volition is *laleo*, a normal speaking voice. If one is dealing with negative volition it goes to a **rebuke**. And if it is dealing with strong negative volition it goes to a **chewing out**, often accompanied by warnings and sarcasm.

Now hina plus the subjunctive introduces a purpose clause. Christ has been instructing his disciples in a conversational tone on several matters and he's doing it for the purpose that they might experience the peace that he has. **Christ has peace; he has always had it; he's giving it to them and he wants them to experience it also!** But experiencing peace is not an automatic thing. There are some things involved that one must apply, if he wants to experience and enjoy inner tranquility. Certainly one would need to go back over chapters 15 and 16 again and again to understand what Christ is talking about and metabolize it by faith. What this will do is not only give the believer knowledge, but a frame of mind concerning spiritual realities. The he goes on to explain to us the reality of where we are in this world and a word of encouragement.

2. *"In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world"*

"In the Cosmos you are having pressure. But take heart (be encouraged)! I have overcome the Cosmos." **Christ is stating an objective fact to them that in this world system, on this planet they will have trouble, *thlipsis*, pressure!** (Anybody having pressure in his or her life?) Living in a world presided over by the devil, living in an hostile environment, surrounded by millions of people with sinful natures, having a sinful nature in the flesh ourselves, having to deal with harsh natural elements, having to fight just to survive, living on a planet filled with demons- yes, there is pressure! And it is not that pressure might exist; the indicative tense of *echo*, to have and to hold, tells us that we have it! And in the present tense it is a **constant reality**.

But he hits us with *alla*, the conjunction of contrast! But he says, *"take heart"*. *Tharseo* meant to be encouraged, to take heart, thus leading one to be confident, instead of fearful. When one looks at the things mentioned that are found in the world; the things that cause us pressure in life, we will be fearful. And **fear robs us of our peace**. So he tells them to take heart, to be encouraged and gives them the reason why; he has overcome the world! And because he wants us to be continually confident and courageous toward our life, toward having to live in this world "with devils filled", **we have to be continually be believing the truth that Christ has overcome all of it**. He uses the perfect tense to tell us that he had already done it prior to the time that he made this statement.

The word for *overcome* is *nikao* and it meant to overcome, to be the victor, to prevail, to conquer, to win. It was used in winning your case in the legal arena, to conquer your enemy on the battlefield and to being the victor in an athletic contest. But what's interesting here is the use of the perfect tense and not the future, for he states **that he has already overcome the world, perfect tense, and this was before his crucifixion and resurrection**. The perfect tense looks at the action of the verb from four different standpoints: the beginning of the action, its progress, its completion and the existence of its finished results. And with the use of the indicative mood it **signifies the action as having been completed from the point of view of the present time**.

So when he says that he has overcome the world it's very significant, because he's telling them that he has already overcome the world prior to him telling them that. But when did this begin and end? And how did he do it? What was it that was the concept by which he overcame the world?

The Apostle John wrote on this subject of overcoming the world. He says, "*You have overcome the evil one*", 1 John 2:13, 14, this was **because they were believers in Christ and were strong because the Word of God was in them, due to metabolizing it by faith**. It brings in the idea that you have to be stronger than the enemy to win the battle. He also talks about how they were victorious over the teachers of false doctrine, the demon spirits, the people belonging to the cosmos and the spirit of the anti-christ, because they are believers in Christ possessing the Holy Spirit. 1 John 4:4. He also writes that it is our faith in Christ that has given us the victory over the world. 1 John 5: 4,5. See also Rev. 2: 7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 5:3; 6:2; 17:14; 21:7.

At exactly what point did Christ overcome the world? It's hard to say; some say at birth due to him being God and being sinless, but the use of the word *nikao* precludes that conclusion. *Nikao*, to have the victory or to be the conqueror implies that **there first has to be a battle!** It is the contest, the court case, the battle for there to be a winner and a loser! And if faith and doing the will of God are a crucial point in all this, then there has to be a test. It could very well refer to the testing Christ went through by the devil at the end of the 40 days in the wilderness, **where the devil offered him the world and everything it has to offer. Christ promptly rejected it in his faith in the Father's provisions and his commitment to the Father's will giving him the victory over the world.**

C. Peace to positive volition

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."
Luke 2: 14

1. "*Glory to God in the highest*"

There are words in the Greek for elevation, which this idea comes from. There is that which is **high**, there is that which is **higher**, then there is that which is **higher still**, and beyond that there is the **highest**; the absolute top of it all.

In this angelic doxology they were praising God saying, not that he was the highest God, **but at the highest point of all things in the universe and heaven, the zenith, is God!** In the OT there are several references to the "gods" in heaven, the other powerful Beings that live there, with Yahweh being the highest of them all. Yahweh is El Elyon. But what these angels are praising God for is the fact that above the earth, above the universe, above the first heaven, above the second heaven, above the third heaven, on the top of Mt. Zion is Yahweh!

2. “And on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests”

This isn't, “Peace on earth good will toward men”, in fact we see the opposite! The Bible states that **God's wrath is upon the people of earth**, “Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life, but whoever rejects the Son will not see life, **for God's wrath remains on him.**” John 3: 36.

What this passage says in the original is that God has granted peace to those he is pleased with. All the way through Paul's letters you will see the phrases “grace and peace to you”, “peace to you”, “peace to us from God”, etc., showing that we, **Christians**, are the recipients of God's grace and peace. We not only are at peace with God, (no longer under his wrath), but he wants us to experience and enjoy his peace.

But what does it take to be pleasing to God? Is it the works of our own righteousness, our religion, and our morality? No! It takes faith, for **without faith it is impossible to please God**, Hebrews 11:6! And this **faith begins by faith in Christ**, and we go from that position from faith unto faith. Faith in Christ is the means by which we enter into the grace of God and into the state of peace with God. God has not granted peace to the world; it is under his condemnation and wrath. **But he has granted peace, both positionally and experientially to those he is pleased with, to those who have believed on his son as their Savior.**

D. Christ did not bring peace to the earth

1. “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth”

“To the earth” means to the people of the earth. The original has it as *epi ten gen, upon the earth*, and *epi* is used here as a universal principle for all to have and experience. **What this tells us is that Christ did not bring his peace to the earth for all the people of the earth to have. His peace is for his people; he gives his peace to his people, not the world.**

Me is used with the orist subjunctive of *nomizo* and is a prohibitive subjunctive forbidding even the beginning of an act and can be translated as, “Don't ever”. This would render it, “Don't ever think that I have come to bring peace to the earth”. And to capture it in our way of thinking today it would be, “Don't ever think for a minute that I have come to bring peace to the earth”.

The word for *thinking* is *nomizo* and *nomizo* isn't thinking based upon hard objective facts, but thinking close to assumption, where one just assumes something to be true. In every society there is a collective knowledge of things that they just assume are true. Somebody gets an idea and shares it with somebody else and they pass it on to others; and this goes on until it's commonly accepted as being the truth. Today we put it as “they”; you know what “they” say. The thinking of *nomizo* is **making assumptions without knowing the facts.**

In Christ's day many things were said about what they thought the Messiah was supposed to be like and what he was supposed to do when he came to earth. **But these were ideas not taken from the sound exegesis of the Scriptures, but from people's own ideas and opinions.** People living today in their own societies, Christians included, have their own ideas on what churches are supposed to be like, what they're supposed to be doing, what Christ is like and what he's doing. These are their ideas, their opinions that have been handed down to them by tradition from other people.

Most, if not many of the things that Christians believe today about the Christian life and God's relationship to them is not based on the hard exegesis of God's Word, but on supposition. Most Christians in America don't even attend churches that have a Pastor-Teacher who studies and teaches God's Word! How can they know the accurate facts of Doctrine, if they aren't being taught? **All they are left with is human viewpoint and the collective of supposition and assumption!**

The problem that Pastor-Teachers have in their ministries from the beginning is the tremendous negative, emotional reactions of the sin natures of these believers, who are holding to faulty concepts concerning God, Christ and the local church, when their subjective thinking is shattered by the reality of God's truth. When Paul wrote, "*Reckon yourselves to be dead unto sin*", he used the word *logizomai*, the thinking of a mathematician or accountant, people who are used to dealing with facts. But here the word is *nomizo* which deals with supposing things to be true, because somebody else said it, or because one is predisposed to assume things to be true, because of their own feelings on the subject. **What we think and how we feel on the subject does not matter; it's what God's Word says!**

But if they were really positive to the truth, the men of "good will", that is **men of positive volition to the truth, then they would readily accept what is true** instead of the falsehoods that they have accepted from society. Instead of having false concepts about the Messiah, what he would be like and what he would do, which they got from society, such as when the Messiah would come he would throw off the yoke of Rome, and that he would bring peace to the earth. But Christ knocks that erroneous idea into a cocked hat by telling them, "Don't ever think for a minute that I have come to bring peace to the earth- I haven't!"

2. "*I did not come to bring peace to the earth, but a sword*"

Some have tried to interpret this with the infinitive being the idea of result instead of purpose, that is, Christ did not come for the purpose of a sword, (judgment, war), but that it resulted in that. The problem is that in the first clause he definitely states that he did not come to bring peace, that idea is firmly established.

The second thing that we see is the conjunction of contrast, *alla*, which is used to contrast the second clause to the first one, "*I did not come to bring peace, but (for the purpose) of bringing a sword*". Then there is the statement of Luke 12: 49-53 where he says, "*I have come to bring fire on the earth, and how I wish it were already kindled. (v.49) Do you think I came to bring peace on the earth? No, I tell you, but division.*" (v.51)

In Matthew 10:34 the word he uses for think is *nomizo*, and in Luke 12:51 the word he uses for thinking is *dokeo*. **Both words deal with subjective thought. *Nomizo* deals with subjective thought that is influenced by the viewpoint of society and one's personal subjectivity. *Dokeo* deals with subjective thought where one's feelings have shaped one's thoughts, viewpoints and opinions.**

An example of how far down one's subjective thinking, (*dokeo*), can take them is the Apostle Paul when he was unsaved, in that he became a persecutor and murderer. "*I too was convinced that I ought to do all that was possible to oppose the name of Jesus in Nazareth.*" Acts 26:9.

Another example is how some scholars interpret that Christ came to the earth to bring peace, but it resulted in war. They can't handle that Christ came to earth with a sword because it would destroy all the sentimental notions that they have about the Lord. They take off on the concepts of him being meek, mild, gentle, a lamb, etc., with their own definitions of these terms, and use that to define the Lord in a one-sided manner and reject other concepts about him. **In other words, it is their subjectivity that defines their concept of the Lord, not what the Word teaches about him.**

In the book of Luke Christ said that he did not bring peace to the earth but division, even down to the dividing of family members; fathers from sons, mothers from daughters, in-laws against in-laws, and the same in Matthew 10:34, It was like the situation in Micah's day during the time of Israel's rebellion against God under King Ahaz. There were the prophets and believers who sided with God and there were the rest who didn't. "*Do not trust a neighbor; put no confidence in a friend. Even with her who lies in your embrace, be careful of your words. For a son dishonors his father, a daughter rises up against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. A man's enemies are the members of his own household.*" Micah 7:5,6

Now if the whole land of Israel was divided up between those who stuck with the prophets on the side of God, and the others who didn't. As major as an event that it was, **it is minor when compared to the division that Christ brought to the earth**, for he is so much higher than the prophets.

The word to *bring*, "*I did not come to bring peace, but a sword*", is *ballein* and was used often in **the context of bringing judgment**. And the idea of judgment is being referred to here because of the use of the word for sword, **machairos**. The *machairos* was the weapon of Rome's military.

When Christ came to earth he brought division where the world would be divided up into two groups, those who believe on him and those who don't. This division would go down to the closest ties we have on earth, the family unit; and would put the world against those who have believed on Christ as their Savior. **He did not bring peace to the world/kosmos, but he did bring it to those who God gave him.**

E. Guiding us into peace

“To shine on those living in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the path of peace.” Luke 1:79

1. *“To direct our feet”*

Zechariah prophesied that the Dayspring would come from heaven to earth for the purpose of leading his people into peace, which is a reference to the ministry of Jesus Christ when he came to earth.

To direct is in the infinitive of purpose, the reason for doing something, so we have **Christ coming to earth for the purpose of directing his people into the path of peace.** The word is *katathuno* and it's the intensive use of the idea of to straighten out. It has the idea of straightening out our walk in life so that we get on the path of peace and stay on it. **In the active voice it tells us that it is Christ who straightens out our feet and path in life**

2. *“Into the path of peace”*

Eis, hodos and *eirenes* all tell that there is a path that leads to peace and the Lord has put us on it; and ultimately we will arrive at the City of Peace. *Hodos* doesn't refer to a lifestyle, or manner of living, but the path that one takes in life that will arrive at a certain place. ***Hodos*, the path, is the thing that connects two points, point A where you are coming from, and point B where you are going.**

Peace is not only the goal, but also the path! The goal and journey become one. As we head toward the goal of peace in our lives, we will have peace along the way. As we live our lives in peace each day we will have peaceful lives. The straightening out of our feet is necessary because we are so prone, even moment by moment, to stray off the path.

Satan's pitfalls and traps, his distractions, the obstacles and hindrances he employs, all the allurements and enticements of the world system, the lusts and deceitfulness of the flesh nature, along with the pressures of life continually seek to pull our feet off of the path of peace every day of our lives. So the Lord has to employ so many things, even intensely so, (corrective discipline, encouragement, love, counseling, doctrinal teaching, even the rearranging of circumstances), to get us on the path of peace and to keep us there. I guess the only thing that really matters is if we're walking on this path of Christ's peace! If we have Christ's peace we're on the right path.

F. The God of peace

“The God of peace be with you all. Amen” Romans 15:33 “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.” Romans 16:20

1. *“The God of peace”*

It is simple Greek grammar, but a strong statement, *“But the God of the peace”*. The peace has the definite article with the genitive of possession bringing our attention of the

absolute uniqueness of this peace and that it belongs only to the living God. It tells us that there is no other peace like this in the entire universe; it is uniquely and different and infinitely superior to anything else remotely resembling it.

The genitive of possession describes ownership, something that belongs to somebody. What this tells us is **that this unique peace belongs solely to the God, *ho theos***. This peace belongs only to God; it is the essence of his being. The peace that is in heaven exists only because of him! Peace is in heaven because he is there.

If the peace belongs to God, and it does, as something he possesses, then **he is free to give it to someone else to enjoy if he chooses so**. So to begin with we have to understand and see that this concept of peace is not something indigenous to the universe, nor is it a phenomenon that comes with the earth, but it is something that belongs to the creator of all things- Yahweh!

2. *“Be with you all. Amen”*

The preposition *meta* denotes close association or attendant circumstances. That is to say that **the peace of God is close to all believers and is there for all of us to experience in every circumstance that we may find ourselves**.

Studying about peace will not able us to understand it any better, nor define it any clearer. What it will do, hopefully, **is to make us more conscious of its existence and to motivate us to experience it more in our lives**. Peace is the essence of Yahweh, the God of heaven and earth. It has always been with him and will always be. It permeates heaven, his city, this temple and his throne. And he has given it to his people through his Son and the Holy Spirit for us to enjoy.

G. Peace in Heaven

“Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!” Luke 19:38

1. *“Peace in heaven”*

En plus the locative refers to a place, a location, which tells us that **peace is located in the sphere of heaven**. Peace as a universal principle or dynamic is found only in heaven the domain of God. There is not presently peace on earth as a universal principle. There hasn't been since Adam and Eve sinned in the garden. Peace exists universally as a principle in heaven, but not on the earth.

Christ did not bring peace on earth in his incarnation, his resurrection, not his ascension into heaven. All the earth has seen since Adam's sin is war, strife, hatred, anger, murder, lust, fear, confusion and every conceivable sin imaginable; everything but peace! Peace can be found in the sphere of heaven; it can be found in God the Father, God the son and

God the Holy Spirit; and it can be found intermittently in the souls of believers, but not upon the earth.

Threats, fears, insecurity, worries, pressure, stress all tend to keep us in a state of anxiety, all because we live **on a planet where there is no peace**. In fact, **it is a planet at war against the God of peace!** But we can have peace as we fellowship with the God of Peace. The fruits of the Holy Spirit, of which peace is one of them, are not just qualities or spiritual phenomena created in us, but the very things imparted to us from God! The peace of God is the actual peace that God possesses and experiences, and the same for love, joy, etc..

So there is still no peace on the earth; it was lost in the Fall. And Christ did not give peace to the world, but he did give it to those who believe on him as their Savior. **At this juncture in God's eternal plan of the ages peace is not a universal principle for the earth, but it will be when Christ returns to earth to establish his reign** physically and personally **on** the earth. Remembering that his reign is a reign of peace. And peace will be there in the new heavens and the new earth forever.

H. The City of Peace

“This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, his name means “king of righteousness”; then also, “king of Salem” means king of peace.”” Hebrews 7:1,2

1. “This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High”

It is important to understand the historical background of the city of Jerusalem before God brought his people into it. Before Israel came there people who worshiped the devil had occupied it. **But before them it was ruled over by God's man whom the Scriptures call Melchizedek.**

The original name of the city was Salem, or Shalom, and before that it was called Salim, or Uru Salim, the City of Peace. Later the name was shortened down to Urusalem, very similar to the Hebrew Yeru and Shalom, the city of Peace, shortened to Yerushalem from which we get the English Jerusalem.

Melchizedek was the king of this city, the king of the City of Peace. **He was not only the king of this city**, (and remember cities back then were nation-states with walls usually built around them for protection for the inhabitants), but **he was also the priest of Yahweh in this city.**

As both priest and king he was able to control both the religious and political aspects of the city, which meant that as the priest of Yahweh and the king under Yahweh he was able to establish both the worship of Yahweh and the reign of Yahweh over the city; the result of which was peace! That's why it was called the city of peace. **When the**

laws of a nation and its worship of God are based upon the Word of Yahweh the results will always be peace for that city or nation.

His name was also very significant for **Melchizedek in the Hebrew meant king of Righteousness**, Melek>Melchi>King and Zedek, Righteousness> King of Righteousness. Which tells us that Melchizedek's reign was a reign of righteousness, as a reflection of the righteousness of Yahweh. This reign of righteousness produced peace, as we also see in the NT that the kingdom of God is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

And Melchizedek was also a type of Christ. By controlling the religion of Salem as the priest of Yahweh he was able to teach Bible doctrine to instruct and lead the people there in the true worship of God. And as the king of Salem he was able to establish laws reflecting the will of Yahweh, thus resulting in righteousness and peace throughout the city. This Christ will do when he returns to earth as its king and High Priest.

2. The irony of it all

Jesus Christ, the God of Peace, the King of Peace came down from the heavenly city of peace to the earthly city of peace and **look what happened!** Even the gospel of peace was sent to the rest of the world from this city when the Lord sent his disciples out with the message of peace, *"Repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."* Luke 24:47.

But let's see what the historical record shows concerning how the city of peace received the men of peace and the Prince of Peace sent to it by the God of Peace. *"O Jerusalem, O Jerusalem you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you."* Matthew 23:37. *"But his subjects hated him and sent a delegation after him to say, 'We don't want this man to be our king.'" Luke 19:14. "'What shall I do, then, with Jesus who is called Christ?' Pilate asked. They all answered, 'Crucify him!'" Matthew 27:22; Luke 11:47-51. "'We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name', he said. 'Yet you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching and are determined to make us guilty of this man's blood.'" Acts 5:28. **You have filled this city of peace with your message of peace and we want you to stop it! Can't we see the tragic irony of it all? The city of peace didn't want to hear about peace.***

3. The new City of Peace

"Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name." Revelation 3:12. *"I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband."* Revelation 21:2

This city is not only a holy city, but also a city of peace. And it is called new because it is new as to quality when compared to the old city here on earth, a new city of peace. This

new city of peace will come down, *katabaino*, out of heaven from God, *apo tou theou*. It is his city of peace and he is bringing it to us, as a gift, to live in forevermore.

But until that time, until the millennial reign of Christ here on earth, **God has provided in his grace the spiritual provision of his very own peace**, so that we can live, serve him, fight the spiritual battle and live in the kosmos by experiencing his peace through the filling of the Holy Spirit.

I. The Author of Peace

“For God is not a God of disorder but peace. As in all the congregations of the saints.” 1 Corinthians 14:33

1. *“For God is not a God of confusion”*

The word for confusion is *akatastasis* and speaks of restlessness, disorderliness and political turmoil. Orderliness, or the absence of it in this case, is very important to people for we need it in every area of our life. If one’s **job** is chaotic, no one knows what to do; you don’t know where anything is at; and it becomes very frustrating, (and many other negative factors), to everyone who works there.

If one’s **country** is in turmoil there is absolutely no stability. There is the breakdown of law and order, there is rioting in the streets, theft, all kinds of crime, a collapsing economy, etc.. And where there is no order the people become frightened, desperate, even violent.

There needs to be order in one’s **home** also. Clothes hanging in their closets, utensils in their drawers, pots and pans in the cabinets, floors not littered, a place for school books and studies, dishes washed and put away, keeping the running and hollering down to a minimum, Bible reading, prayer and quiet times are all a part of an orderly home.

2. *“But of peace as in all the churches of the saints”*

Here peace is associated with orderliness, and the lack of peace with disorder. **Therefore a peaceful home is associated with an orderly home, a peaceful work place with an orderly work place, peaceful church services with orderly church services.**

So peace can refer to inner tranquility of the soul, but also of calm, tranquil, orderly surroundings. This approaches the idea of inner peace working to the outside, and the outside becomes a buffer so as to promote tranquility on the inside. Horns blowing, kids screaming, people fighting- the house is a complete mess. Which is easier to have peace in your life, when all that is going on, or when everything is quiet, orderly and tranquil?

As peace calms the believer’s soul down, they will be able to think more rationally, calmly, doctrinally. This in turn will make them want to arrange their surroundings

in a calm, clear, orderly, organized fashion. God wants believers to live peaceful and quiet lives, both in inner tranquility and external tranquility in their surroundings.

J. God has called us to live in peace

“But if the unbeliever leaves, let him do so. A believing man or woman is not bound in such circumstances; God has called us to peace.” 1 Corinthians 7:15

1. “God has called us to live in peace”

Or, “*The God has called us to peace*”. The first thing that we need to see is that God has called **us** to live in peace- his peace! The peace that he gave us, not to the world, but to us!

Us, hemas, is the accusative plural of direct object of *su*. It denotes the object of an action. It gives the direction of the action of calling, showing that this action of calling was directed at us. And it shows the limitation of an action showing that it was limited to us. “*God has called **us** to live in peace.*” We must also never forget the subject of the action in that it was the God of heaven and earth who has called us to live in peace.

The word *called, kaleo*, had the weaker sense of an invitation and the stronger sense of a summons. When used of royalty, and one was invited to one of their functions, it was in effect a summons, **if the king had “invited” you, you better be there. When used of God it was an action that also guaranteed the results.**

Kaleo was in the perfect tense, which looks at a completed action in the past with continuing results. In the past God called us to peace, and it was a completed action with existing results. **God called us to peace and that settles it**; it still stands with the result that we have been called, saved, justified and glorified.

2. “Peace to you”

Found frequently in the Gospels and Paul’s letters **it expresses a reality, not just a wish or desire**. The dative of advantage is used here to show that it is to the advantage of the one receiving it, if they will utilize it. **We don’t ask God to give us peace, he already has! What we’re to do is appropriate it through the spiritual dynamic of the Holy Spirit.**

Christ had appeared in their midst and the disciples had become terrified thinking they had seen a spirit, (another example of the subjective thinking of *dokeo*). Their hearts, which are the seat of their emotions, had become stirred up or agitated affecting their emotional state so much that they had **become terrified and filled with fear**.

Dokeo is used of subjective thought based upon one’s emotions, (a problem that is rampant in America today). Their eyes had seen him, but they didn’t believe that what they were seeing was their resurrected Savior and friend, but a spirit. So their hearts

became troubled, stirred up, with the result that they became terrified and filled with fear. So he tells them, “*Peace to you*”. **He had already given them his peace, but they weren’t taking advantage of it. The question is why weren’t they?**

It goes back to the heart being troubled, *tarasso*, which is found in the perfect tense denoting competed action with existing results. Even though the Lord is standing there in front of them telling them he’s real and not a spirit, and telling them, “*Peace*”; they weren’t able to be peaceful because **their hearts were still all stirred up**. He then took the time to convince them and they were OK.

What this shows is how strong and influential our feelings and subjective thinking can be, even in the face of objective facts and reality. Christ was there in front of them! He was talking to them saying, “*Peace to you*”. They could see with their own eyes, (perception of reality by empirical evidence), that he was a real resurrected man. **But the troubled heart that produced fear and terror in them was disturbing their souls so much that they couldn’t enjoy the peace.**

How this sounds so much like all of us. Christ talks to us today through his Word; he says to us, “*Peace*”; we have his Spirit indwelling us to give us his peace, but we do not allow ourselves to enjoy it because our emotions are all worked up. We have fears, anger, fright, worry, the “what ifs” tormenting our souls. The reasoning of our minds, *dialogismos*, speaks of all the miserable “what ifs”, the “what about that” thoughts that go through our minds when our emotions are stirred up and we’re afraid.

But nevertheless Christ speaks the words of “*Peace to us*”. Peace is our legacy, peace is his gift to us; he has chosen us and called us to his peace, and he wants us to live in this peace. **We just have to ride out the emotional storm keeping our eyes on him** and this peace of his we can have and experience as we keep our eyes on him.

K. Peace is from God

“Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”
1 Corinthians 1:3, Ephesians 1:3

1. *“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Grace to you and peace, now compare that to works, human striving, effort and the constant inner turmoil of the soul. **Grace is all that God is free now to do for us in his unmerited, unearned, undeserved favor.** What a contrast that is to all of our human ideas, plotting, scheming, conniving, lusts, striving and trying to get things done. And what a contrast peace is to all our inner turmoil, our fears, worries, anxieties, and our insecurity!

And we notice once again that this action is for us- **believers in Christ!** Grace and peace is to us, not the world, which is still under his judicial wrath. The preposition *apo* denotes the source from which an action comes. Grace and peace comes to us, but it comes from

God! God is peace! It's his nature, his essence; he has perfect peace and he wants us to experience and enjoy it.

There are two ways of looking at the source of something, the immediate source and the ultimate source. **The immediate source of our peace is through the indwelling Holy Spirit, but the ultimate source of our peace is God the father.**

2. 2 Corinthians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2.

Both of these verses have exactly the same wording in the Greek and it would be normal for peace is such a recurring theme in the NT. We note that it says that he is "*The Father of us all*", but this is a reference only to born again believers in Christ. **He is our Father through the act of regeneration.** It is not a reference to all the people of the world. Christ said of the Pharisees, "*Ye are of your father the devil.*"

God is our Father because he has created us anew, regenerating us by the power of the Holy Spirit at the moment of our faith in Christ. And, as the God of peace, it would only follow that he would give us his peace to live in.

G. Go in Peace

"Jesus said to the woman, 'Your faith has saved you; go in peace.'" Luke 7:50 *"Then he said to her, 'Daughter, your faith has healed you. Go in peace.'"* Luke 8:48

1. *"Your faith has saved you"*

The setting for this story is the woman who was washing the Lord's feet with her tears and anointing them with her perfume. The issue involved was the forgiveness of her sins and the Lord told her that her sins had already been forgiven by the use of the perfect passive indicative in v. 47.

Her actions toward Christ were not to get forgiven by him, for that had already happened, but was a display of love and gratitude because he had forgiven her. He tells her that her faith, (in him), had saved her.

2. *"Go in peace"*

It's important to realize the significance of the perfect tense, where the action has been completed with existing, continuing results. **Once Christ has saved us we stayed saved forever!** Now, once she had been saved by faith in Christ, the Lord had a wonderful and remarkable thing to say to her; "*Go in peace*"! **He gives her a command, and us as well, that encompasses the rest of her life, to "*Go in peace*".**

The word for *go*, *poreuomai*, is used instead of one of the simpler words for going and it meant to go on a journey from one place to another. It also had the idea of following on a path, or **the journey one takes in life**. It was used frequently in the Mystery religions to

describe the journey of the dead in Hades as they journeyed through a vast wasteland across a fiery stream to the palace of the gods of the underworld.

One of the basic teachings of the Mystery religions was that all souls originated in heaven and went through various incarnations on their way back to heaven. Sometimes they would have to spend time in Hades to purify the soul. The practitioner began his journey through baptism and the Last Rites and would eventually end up in the sphere of heaven once again.

Poreuomai was also used of Christ's descent down into Hades, his ascent up into heaven and his entire ministry here on earth as he followed the Father's plan for his life. It was also used of the wanderings of the Apostles in their ministries. **When we think of our lives as a journey through this life**, then *poreuomai* is the word we would use to describe it, for human life is a journey that, like everything else on this planet, ends in physical death.

Once understanding this we can see the significance of Christ's statement to the woman of, "*Go in peace*". He wasn't merely saying to her, "Go", that is leave here in peace, but was referring to her journey through life. **From that time forward, wherever she went, whatever she did till the day she died, live it in peace!**

Significant also is the linking of the forgiveness of her sins to living in peace. Once her sins were forgiven she can now live in peace, that is, that her journey in life would be peaceful. Not that it would be peaceful on the outside, but that she would have inner peace. **God wants us to so live our lives that we do what we can to have peace and quiet in them, but always to have inner peace.**

3. "*Your faith has healed you go in peace*"

This has the exact same wording as the Luke 7:50 passage except *sozo* is translated as being healed instead of being saved. But this is perfectly normal because it meant to be saved or delivered from a harmful or destructive situation; the context would determine which way to use it.

But the issue with this woman was not forgiveness of sins and her salvation, for the Lord had called her, "*Daughter*", Mark 5:32. She was already a believer, but had been bleeding for 12 long years and had received no help from the doctors, (a familiar story), **so she came to Christ believing that he would heal her.**

One could ask, "Why wasn't she already living in peace on her journey in life? She was already saved and could have had peace?" But speaking as a human being, have you ever thought about the pain, the misery, the fears that one would have to deal with every day, bleeding and not knowing why, or how to stop it? We could say in conjecture that maybe she needed to get past this terrible condition so that she **could** have peace for the rest of her journey in life. It very well may be, because ask anyone who suffers how hard it is to keep from thinking about their pain. Anyway, the Lord told her that now that she was

healed, “*Go in peace*”, that is, “***Keep on journeying through life living it in the sphere of peace***”.

M. Be At Peace

“Finally, brothers, good-by. Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you.” 2 Corinthians 13:11

1. “Rejoice”

The Apostle Paul gives the Corinthian Christians five commands here. The first one is to *rejoice*. The grammar shows that this is not only commanded, but a command to be continually rejoicing in life. The active voice shows the volitional responsibility of the believer in the matter; he is to use his free will to be rejoicing.

The basis of rejoicing is not to be dependent upon external circumstances, but because of our position in Christ and our relationship to God. Human happiness comes from things working out the way one wants them to go, more money, a new car, better job, getting a house, etc.. But human happiness is not the same thing as Christian joy. **The one is emotional out of the flesh nature; the other is spiritual. The one is based upon external circumstances; the other is based upon our relationship to God, whom we will spend all eternity with.**

2. “Be perfected”

The word for *strengthened* is *katartizo* and it meant to be **strengthened, established, to be equipped for a delegated task, to restore something, to mend fishing nets**. In the passive voice it’s to receive the action of being strengthened from the Lord.

It’s more of a functional idea rather than a qualitative one dealing with the idea of being strengthened by God for whatever it is that he wants us to do.

3. “Be encouraged”

Parakaleo dealt with the ideas of hope, the will to go on, to give us heart. It came from the idea of being called alongside and had the picture of someone who is depressed and discouraged and is having the problem of not wanting to go on anymore in life, and then someone comes alongside of them and speaks the words to them that encourage them.

The world system, our sinful natures and the devil hammer us all the time and sometimes we lose heart. We get discouraged, despairing, tired of it all to the place that we don’t want to go on any more in faith, doctrine and the will of God for our lives. Sometimes our worries and fears “eat us up” on the inside, as the Old Sin Nature wreaks havoc on our souls.

What we need is encouragement, and with the present passive imperative we are commanded to be encouraged, or let ourselves be encouraged, and we’re to do this

continually. The passive voice shows that this encouragement comes from outside of us. **It can and does from the teaching of the Word of God; it can come from reading the Bible personally and from other believers who talk to us giving us the doctrines of God's Word.**

Parakaleo means to call alongside and it certainly gives us the picture of another believer coming alongside a discouraged believer to encourage him or her. **How he or she encourages is by giving the other believer the promises and teachings of God as they are filled with the Holy Spirit and operate in the sphere of gentleness.** This presupposes that the other believer is willing to accept them. **But it is the Word that encourages us!**

4. "Mind the same thing"

Or, "*Be of the same mind*". There has been a push going on in apostate Christianity for many years for the unity of the spirit, or unity of the church, which really has at its roots the move to get all Christianity back under the control of the pope. They get the phrase from the Word, but misinterpret it to mean what they want it to mean.

There is the idea of the unity of the spirit taught in the Bible; there is the idea of being of the same mind, but how we get to this place is **by finding out exactly what the Bible teaches and agreeing on it!** Careful study and exegesis of the Scriptures will reveal to us exactly what the Word of God teaches. **Minor differences of opinion, which there will always be this side of Heaven, are to be overlooked in the spirit of love and grace.**

N. Peace is to rule in our Hearts

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

1. "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts"

Once again we notice that the peace that Christ has for us is the very peace of God. And not only does God want us to enjoy his peace, but commands us to enjoy it! An interesting note, we see that when God commands us to do something it is for our benefit. The present active imperative is not only a command, but it has the idea of volitional involvement. **We have to want his peace and make the decision to go after it.** God's peace is always there for us, but we don't always avail ourselves of it. He wants us to experience it; he commands us to experience it, but we must make the decision to experience it.

They have translated *brabeuo* as *rule* here, and although it can be used, it doesn't define the concept well enough for it is the broader definition. Originally *brabeuo* was used of an umpire or referee in a game who decided the contest. **Whenever there was a conflict or disagreement between two parties it was the umpire who decided. Once he made his decision the two parties had to abide by it.**

Here peace is to be our umpire; it's commanded to be our umpire in our life, in our decisions, where we go, what we do. This emphasizes how important God's peace is to our lives. And well it should be for our God is the God of peace; he lives in the city of peace; there is peace in heaven, Christ is the Prince of Peace, and he has bequeathed peace to us! This shows that peace is to be the norm and the dynamic for the Christian community. The community of God is a kingdom of peace.

"In the hearts of you all", tells us that strife, contention and disagreements do arise among the members of a local church, but Paul tells them to let peace decide the issues between the two parties. **Whichever direction peace points us in to follow both parties are to follow.**

When it comes to making decisions for our own lives, we need to let peace be the umpire. We all know what it's like; we're worried, we're afraid; we don't know what to do; our minds are full of reasonings, over-thinking, doubts and indecisiveness- what do we do? God's answer is, **"Let peace make the decision!"** We're to follow the path of peace.

Peace is to be the determiner, the decider of all things in our lives. When in doubt, when we don't know what to do, let peace decide. The flesh nature, the devil and the world system do not want us to have peace in our lives, only the Lord does, so let peace show us the way.

Peace also gives us a choice. In fact, peace is our choice. When we become perplexed, where we don't know what to do, when we worry and our minds are drawn in different direction, when we are afraid, fearing something in our lives, when we are indecisive and can't make up our minds, when we feel trapped by guilt or responsibility, when our minds are torn by reasonings, operation over-think where we over-analyze everything, when we have doubts and are not trusting in the Father's plan, power and provisions, when some or all of things keep talking in our minds, then we must let peace come in and decide what we are to do and then do what he says.

God has called us to peace; he wants us to live in peace; he wants us to follow the path of peace in our lives. **So, when we are in conflict in our lives, we are to make the decision to stay on the path of peace.**

"In your hearts", *"In the hearts of you all"* is *en plus* the locative plural, in the sphere of your hearts, *"Let the peace of God rule in the sphere of your hearts"*. This tells us what area of the soul that God wants his peace to act as the referee, in the sphere of the heart. And this applies to all his children here on earth.

The heart is the seat of the emotions, the area from which our feelings come from. In John 14:27 he says, *"...Stop letting your hearts be troubled, (stirred up, agitated), and stop being afraid"*. And how this is done is through his peace! Worry, fear, confusion, reasonings and all the rest of inner turmoil come out of the heart and it is there in the heart that God wants his peace to rule, if not, then there is only fear and torment.

So the matter is centered around peace in the heart. Our prayers, our fellowship with God, our communion with him over his Word, the decisions we have to make, the path we are to take in life and everything else is to be centered around the idea of, “**Do I have peace about this?**” Colossians 3:15 tells us that we’re all under a mandate from God to let peace be the determiner, the decider of everything we do in life. **If the Holy Spirit is to lead us in life, and if the fruit of the Holy Spirit is peace, then it would only stand to reason that he would give us peace about what he wants us to do according to the Father’s plan!**

2. “*To which you were called in one body, and be thankful*”

Once again Paul brings out the importance of our calling by God and in this calling we were called to live in his peace. The use of the preposition eis shows actual penetration into this peace. It is ours; we have it, all we need to do is experience it. The aoist tense is simple past tense denoting that the action the action took place at some point in time in God’s history with the result that we now have entered into his peace and grace.

Note the significance of one body here. We may be individuals, and maybe that’s the only way we think of ourselves, but we all belong to one body, the body of Christ. “*All that the Father has given me, (all this group, this one body), will come to me, and he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.*” John 6:37 God has called this whole body of believers to peace and he wants this body of believers to live in his peace. Even the head of this body, the Lord Jesus Christ, is the King of Peace reigning over the City of Peace.

“*And be thankful*” is the present middle imperative of ginomai and it denotes to become something that you weren’t before, it speaks of a change of condition or state. **God wants us to start becoming thankful, that is, to start developing a mental attitude of appreciation, an attitude of gratitude. It denotes a thankful heart in addition to thanking God with our mouths.**

There are so many things to be thankful for, things that God has done and is doing for us in his grace. We may not always remember to thank God for what he has done for us, sometimes we don’t want to if it’s a trial, **but we can become a thankful person**. And because we have to start somewhere in all this we have, “*And start becoming thankful-start it today*”! The best way is to start thanking God with our mouths and our minds for all the things around us.

In context it’s over the fact that God has called us to his everlasting peace, peace in eternity and peace now. Bringing out the fact that God has called us to his peace in one body is important to us, because it helps us to stop looking at ourselves as being all alone in this world and to start thinking of ourselves as being a part of a large body of believers in Christ who are on earth and in heaven, and that God has given his peace to all of us.

O. God wants us to seek peace and pursue it

“*He must turn from evil and do good; he must seek peace and pursue it.*” 1 Peter 3:11

1. “Seek peace”

Once again we see how pervasive and all encompassing this matter of peace is for the Church of Christ. Most of the churches today are caught up in the number’s game, in programs, entertaining people, etc.. While many Christians are caught up in making money, getting ahead, buying things, health matters, matters concerning their security and so many other things, **but where is the emphasis on peace?**

Here we’re commanded to seek after peace. This idea of seeking involves the mind, heart and the will. Our minds must want it, our hearts must want it and we must choose it, that is, we must make the decision to go after it. **Seeking involves the whole person.** It does have the idea of actually going after it, but it also brings out the idea of the whole person body, mind, heart, soul and the will.

And what’s interesting is that **God commands us to do it.** Seeing that peace is something that all of us so desperately need, why would he have to command us to do it? The reason is because we’re so involved in our own things: money, family, job, getting ahead, success, fun, lust gratification, etc., that we put peace at the bottom of the list, until we are so miserable and desperate that we then go to God for his peace.

God doesn’t want us to just come to him for his peace when we’re desperate and down at the bottom, when all the other things that we have involved ourselves in have failed us; he wants us to seek peace and live in it as a way of life all the time! The active voice shows the volitional involvement of the believer. **He must choose to seek peace,** (instead of the other things that he has chosen to do), and he must go after it.

Eirenen, peace, is in the accusative case, the accusative of direct object, which shows us that **the object of our seeking in life is not to be money, fame and fortune, but peace!** What is needed here, what is implied here, because of the totality behind the idea of peace, is that **there has to be a radical change of thinking in the believer’s mind, where he now goes off in the direction and path of peace, instead of the path that he has been on.**

2. “And pursue it”

The *kai* here, *and*, is a connective kai showing that **these two concepts are connected to each other.** The first one to *seek, zeteo*, shows the involvement of the desire and the will in the seeking. Now it’s connected to *dioko*, which has the idea of pursuing after the goal. You want peace, really want it mind and heart and you’ve made the decision to seek it, now go after it through study of the Word of God, prayer, learning and applying doctrine to your life.

It’s like pursuing after a career where you go to college to get an education, then go out and do what you have to do to get your career going. Actors and actresses do it all the time going to school, working and trying to get acting parts. People do it when starting their businesses. It may take them years before they are successful, but they still pursue

after their goals. **But here the object of our pursuit is peace!** It's like the pianist who spends countless hours of practice because he has the goal of one day performing professionally. He has a dream, a desire, a goal, something that he wants for his life on earth, so he pursues after it.

Peter covers quite a few things that, if we follow them, will give us the greatest life on earth. We're to live in harmony with each other, be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble, do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing, keep our tongues from evil, our lips from deceitful speech, turn from evil, do good, seek peace and pursue it.

Seeking after peace is to be our goal and it's an attainable goal. But it is a goal because it is the object of our pursuing. **The goal is not to have peace occasionally, which is still great, but to live a life of peace!** Peace in our souls, peace in our relationships, peace in our homes, surroundings and jobs. There will be times when we fail, times when we worry about things, or get out of fellowship, but we don't stop, we don't give up, because living a life of peace is what we're pursuing after and that's what God wants all his people to do and has commanded us to do.

P. Peace in Abundance

"Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord." 2 Peter 1:2, or, "Grace to you, and peace be multiplied."

There's a separation of the two ideas, but both of them have been given to us by the Lord. It actually says, "*Grace to you*", which was a typical greeting by the apostles to believers in Christ in the various churches, **but it's more than a greeting, it's a reality!** The very fact that they are believers in Christ tells us that they have been recipients of God's grace; they entered into this state of grace when they believed on Christ as their Savior, as we do also!

So Peter's greeting is a reminder of the fact of God's grace has been given to them and also an implied encouragement to walk in it. Then he says, "*Peace be multiplied*", using the optative mood, which expresses his wish or desire for them.

In the first case he isn't expressing as wish for them to have God's grace because they already do! **But now he's expressing a wish, his desire that God's peace would be multiplied to them.** Whatever the amount, times and numbers that they have experienced God's peace in the past he wants them to have more.

That's the idea of *plethuno*; it's to multiply or increase something, more times, greater frequency, longer periods of time, etc.. All believers have experienced God's peace at once in their lives at the moment of our salvation. From there the number of times that we have varies considerably from believer to believer. Nor can we calculate the amount of time we have spent enjoying his peace.

The point is whatever the numbers of time that we spend in God's peace each day, each week, each month, each year, Peter's desire is that it increases. And not only that we have more of it, but to the place where we experience it continually. The passive voice shows that we receive the action of the verb. The peace of God is from God and it is to be multiplied to us all. All we do is receive it. The next part tells us **how** we get it.

2. "By a full knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord"

En plus the instrumental of means denotes the means by which God's peace can be our experiential reality, **by means of *epignosis***. Once again we find *epignosis* in a very crucial position in our relationship to God, for it is by the means of the *epignosis* knowledge of God and his Son do we have peace.

As we have seen *epignosis* is that special kind of knowledge that comes through exercising faith in the Word of God, not only believing it to be true, but faith in the promises of God and in the doctrinal teaching of the Word. **It is spiritual phenomenon produced when faith mixes with the truth of God's Word.**

Regular knowledge, *gnosis*, is simple factual knowledge of the Bible, Bible facts, that go into the mind, where we can think on it, even commit it to memory. The mind being the center of thinking, reasoning, memorizing, comparing, understanding, etc..

But when faith is added to it, under the filling of the Holy Spirit, it is converted into spiritual phenomena and then is brought over into the human spirit that was created in us at the time we believed on Christ a savior. This kind of knowledge is obviously deeper and different, but it is also experiential. It's like reading a book on what fresh coffee grinds smell like compared to actually smelling them, now you know.

Now it says that we experience God's peace through an *epignosis* knowledge of God and his Son, but how do we do that? It comes through the Word of God, its teachings and promises, and by believing them! **Doctrine is taught, promises are read, the believer combines his or her faith in them; the factual knowledge is converted, similar to the process of metabolism, into spiritual phenomenon and this becomes a part of the human spirit. The human spirit begins to grow, to change; it is strengthened and it is renewed through this process.**

God has revealed himself two ways to man. One is through a **general revelation** in nature revealing through nature that there is a God, that he is all-powerful and that he created all things. Two is a **specific revelation** where God reveals himself through the Bible in its direct statements and what it teaches.

Most Christians today are unaware of the concept of *epignosis*; they are ignorant of the teachings on the subject. They will, at times, be doing it, but unknowingly so. Under pressure, in a trial, they will turn to some promise in the Bible and place their faith in it and receive help from the Lord. They are creating *epignosis* of the Word inside of their human spirit, not knowing that that's what they're doing.

That is because the churches they attend never teach on the subject, nor how to maintain the spiritual dynamic, the reason why is that their churches are too wrapped up in programs, entertainmentism, legalism, emotionalism, ritualism, or in anyone of the other manifestations found in apostate Christianity today. **And the reason for that is because their “Pastors” are not teaching God’s Word!**

Peter is making a wish that believers will experience God’s peace in their lives, but the key to turning a wish into reality is to be spending their time in the teaching of God’s Word and adding their faith to it! Not just an academic study, but concentrating on it, thinking about it (*selah*), understanding it and believing it. We will experience God’s peace through *epignosis*, and that is done through faith in the promises and teaching of the Word of God. *“Thou will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.” Isaiah 26:3*

Q. Peace in the Holy Spirit

“For the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” Romans 14:17

1. *“For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking”*

Eating and drinking would cover everything from the good life down to survival, but it really emphasizes **the idea of the “good life”**. It’s basic human instinct to want to survive; God created that in us. For us to do that we must have food and water, therefore every human being on earth is occupied with going after these basic things.

But, as time goes by, and by incorporating the ideas of diligence, efficiency, knowledge and sometimes-illicit means, people get to the place where they can have the best food and the best things to drink. They have arrived at the “good life”. Most people think that the “good life” is life! That’s why they devote their entire lives to getting there.

2. *“But of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit”*

But the good life isn’t life, or what life is all about, and it certainly isn’t the spiritual life ordained by God for all his people here on earth. The emphatic no, *ou*, is used in the passage, with *alla*, the conjunction of contrast, to **tell us that true life, the really good life is righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.**

En is also used here, plus the instrumental of means or causal, to tell us **that it is the Holy Spirit causes it to happen.** Yes, righteousness, peace and joy are in the Holy Spirit, who indwells us, but it is he who causes it to happen. **It is the indwelling Holy Spirit who causes the concepts of righteousness, peace and joy to occur in the spirits of believers.**

We notice that **righteousness is first on the list to denote its importance in the matter.** God’s kingdom is a kingdom of righteousness because he is righteous, and because

righteousness is the basis for peace and joy. Next we have peace which sets the stage for joy, all of which are brought about in the believer by the Holy Spirit. All of these are spiritual dynamics produced by the filling of the Holy Spirit in our new natures.

Even Christians get caught up in pursuing the good life; we certainly see it going on all around us in America, falsely equating prosperity with God's blessings. They erringly think that the "good life" will give them what they need. But what we really need, and the only thing that can help our souls is righteousness, peace and joy.

R. The Lord of Peace

"Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you." 2 Thessalonians 3:16

1. "And may the Lord of peace give peace to you"

Again the use of the optative mood expresses a desire or wish, by the Apostle Paul, states that it is Paul's desire for them for the Lord to give his peace to them so that they can experience it every day. But it's only a desire; the believer will have to make the right decisions for it to become a reality.

The term "*The Lord of peace*" shows that Christ not only possesses peace, but also controls it; he decides to whom he gives his peace. We note also the use of the definite article with it; he is the Lord of peace, there is no one else but him who has this peace. **But there is a manner in which his peace is channeled to us.**

2. "Continually in every way"

Dia plus pantos denotes an activity extending over an entire period of time unto the end. What this tells us is that it is Paul's desire for us to be experiencing God's peace continuously in our lives all of our lives. *Tupos* refers to the kind of life we live, where we go, what we do, where we live, etc.. So we have, may the Lord of peace give peace to all of you continually in any and every way.

What this shows is that it is God's desire for his people to experience his peace, not just once in awhile, but continuously everyday, no matter where we are in the world, regardless of what we do to support ourselves and regardless of the situation we may be in. **But there is a procedure that we must follow if this desire is to become a reality in our lives.**

God wants us to have peace; he has granted his peace to us; he has provided us new natures and he has provided the indwelling Holy Spirit for the operation of peace inside of us. **But for us to experience peace we have to get out from under the control of the sin nature found in our bodies.** So this means that we must follow the procedure of confessing our sins to God, 1 John 1:9, getting back into the Word of God, prayer, the filling of the Holy Spirit and trusting the Lord.

We have peace **with God**, now we need to experience the peace **of God**. God will provide his peace to us when we go through various crises, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10, but he also wants us to experience his peace in our everyday lives and has provided a way we can through the spiritual dynamic.

S. Application Bible Doctrine Brings Peace

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable- if anything is excellent or praiseworthy- think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me- put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.”
Philippians 4:4-9.

1. “Rejoice in the Lord”

What we see here is a formula for peace, all of which is important to enjoying God’s peace in our lives. **And it’s important that we do not leave out anyone of these matters, for the application of every single one of them is crucial to the matter of enjoying the peace of God.**

Rejoicing is first on the list, but rejoicing is not happiness based upon external circumstances, or getting your way, but upon the believer’s relationship to the Lord. “Rejoice in the Lord”, in the sphere of the Lord, due to our relationship with him. Because of him our sins are forgiven; we have been adopted into the royal family of God; we will be resurrected and given a new, eternal body and live with God and his Son forever. Definitely that is a reason for rejoicing and becomes the basis for peace.

2. “Let your reasonableness be know to all men”

Some translations have this as *over reasonableness*, but the idea is one of tolerance, a “live and let live” attitude. In life there are all kinds of people, some pleasant, some not so pleasant, and some easy to live by, some not so easy. With such a hodge-podge of old sin natures there will always be people that we don’t like, or something about their behavior that irritates us. Therein lies the problem, with all that irritating, selfish, sinful behavior going on around us, it is easy to get irritated ourselves over it.

Punks swaggering down the street, rude drivers, inconsiderate neighbors, music being played too loud, so many things to get “out of it” over, so what do we do? Here’s where having an over reasonable mental attitude come in. **People have the right to live and the right to live their own lives, even if they do it stupidly.** If they aren’t doing something illegal to you or your property, then that’s where the “live and let live” mental attitude comes to play.

Maybe they've been traumatized in their lives, maybe they're going through a hard time, whatever it is we need to remember that all of us only have a short time to live on earth and we need to get along with each other. We need to have the relaxed mental attitude of agape love and cut them a little slack. Maybe they are unsaved looking at a Christ less eternity and this life is the only things they have. In that sense we can feel sorry for them instead. **But better yet, why not share the Gospel with them?**

3. *"The Lord is near"*

Dispensationalists have misinterpreted this to mean that the Lord's return to earth in a pre-tribulation rapture is near at hand. But the word *engus* speaks of **near as in the sense of proximity**. The Lord is close to us; his omni-presence fills the universe.

The Lord is always there for us. His nearness tells us that he can handle any problem that we might have, to comfort us, to strengthen us, protect us and provide for us. The knowledge of this should give comfort and encourage our faith and help us stay in the sphere of peace.

2. *"Be anxious for nothing"*

We have a command here to not worry. Actually it's to stop worrying. **Worry is the activity or work of the mind that we resort to when we can't handle the problem.** We have a problem, we're not solving it, we don't have the answers, we don't know what to do, we feel threatened, we're insecure, we're afraid and we worry, worry, worry.

And when we worry, there's no peace, for the underlying dynamic in worry is the absence of faith and the feeling of fear, and fear brings mental torment. And when we're being tormented in our minds, emotions and our bodies, you can be sure there is no peace! **So to have God's peace in our lives we have to stop worrying, hence the command "top worrying"**.

3. *"But in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving let your requests be made know to God"*

Alla, the conjunction of contrast is used here **to contrast what we are doing, worrying, with what we should be doing instead, praying**. Praying to God and placing our requests before God is what God wants us to be doing in our priesthoods. **Prayer** is where we talk to God about anything and everything, while **requests** are where we ask God for something specific.

Some believers worry about everything under the sun and pray about nothing, but God wants us to pray about everything and worry about not one thing. But in our prayers they are to be accompanied with thanksgivings for what we have and what he has done for us.

6. *"And the peace of God which passes all understanding"*

Once again the Scriptures point out that the peace that has been provided for us is the very peace of God. The credibility of this concept is beyond any question. If God had wanted to create a separate peace for his people that they could have for time and eternity, then it would have been perfect for God is perfect. **But to give us his very own peace is mind boggling, and a tremendous reassurance as to its perfection and endurance, for after all, he has had it for all eternity! And, if it has lasted that long, then it can last for all eternity!**

This clause is connected to the ideas preceding it, and if we follow what God has commanded us to do: stop worrying, start praying; thanking God for all things, etc., then we will experience God's peace in our souls.

"Passes all understanding" is designed for human beings. **As humans we want to try to understand how something works**; it's probably due to the way we were created, but there are many things in life that we will never understand and this is one of them. The peace of God is beyond our ability to comprehend. But we don't need to understand it to be benefited by it; all we need to do is experience it!

This is especially applicable for those educated in the Western school of thought where everything must be examined, evaluated, dissected, categorized, analyzed, observed and understood. But how does that help us? It doesn't! The only benefit to God's peace for us is experiencing it. Knowing that it exists doesn't help us; understanding it doesn't help us. Only by experiencing it are we helped.

For the peace of God to benefit us, help us, profit us we must experience it, and we can if we follow God's protocol in the matter. We're to, **one**, constantly be rejoicing because we belong to Christ, our sins are forgiven and we will live forever. **Two**, we need to realize that the Lord is always there with us as we go through this life. **Three**, we need to practice a "live and let live" attitude toward all people. **Four**, to stop worrying, even about one thing. **Five**, we're to start praying about everything. And, **six**, we're to be thanking God for everything.

7. *"Will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus"*

The word to *guard, phroureo*, was used of a soldier guarding his garrison, or a jailer guarding his prisoners. The idea of guarding was to protect something, to keep something from harming something else. In the case of the **soldier** he was to guard the garrison, to protect the men on the inside from the enemy on the outside. In the case of the **jailer** he guarded to keep them, the harmful element, from getting out where they could hurt the people on the outside.

So, in the case of the soldier, **he was protecting that which was on the inside**, while the jailer **was protecting that which was on the outside!** In our case both apply. For the peace of God will **protect us from the harmful influences on the outside contained in the world system and all the demons of Satan in the Angelic Conflict**, all the things outside of us, but it **also protects from the harmful influences found inside us in the sin nature**.

The idea is that there is something important, something valuable that we want to protect from something that would hurt it, harm it, or destroy it. **In the idea of protection we need to keep something that is bad away from that which is good.** This is what the peace of God does; it protects the soul, the heart and the mind. It protects it from all the destructiveness found in the world system; it protects it from rage, anger, worry, fear and whatever else the devil can throw at us, and it protects our souls from the mental and emotional sins of the old sin nature.

How many times have we allowed our souls to be ravaged by these three evil forces of the world, the flesh and the devil, by not appropriating God's peace which could have protected us from all that? Yet here is the answer for all of us, the peace of God! It's always there and it will always do the job, that is, it will always protect our souls perfectly.

It is no accident that both the mind and heart are mentioned here, for the peace of God protects them both. And this is especially important to us because that means that both our thought life and our emotional life, (our feelings), will be protected from the insidious, destructive evil of sin, the world system and the devil by the peace from God.

Peace is the guard that stands by the doorway to prevent the destructive effect of our sin natures from coming into our minds and emotions; the influence of the sin nature that brings fear, guilt, worry, anxiety, anger, etc.. God's peace is found within the sphere of the spiritual dynamic as the believer exercises faith in the Word of God under the filling of the Holy Spirit.

It is the soldier that protects and prevents the evil thoughts and influences of demons from affecting our minds as well as our emotions, with their great burning rage, with their thoughts of unbelief, fear and worry.

To understand how demons work and how they attack our minds we have to see how it is that they do that; they do it through the power of suggestion! To suggest is to put forth an idea for consideration. It is also a psychological process by which an idea is induced or adopted without coercion or argument and without being aware of what is going on. It is the sequential process by which one thought or mental image leads to another. It is an insinuation, a leading to a secret enticement. Insinuation is to suggest ideas without stating them directly.

This is how the demons work. This is their power, the power of suggestion. They put forth an idea into our minds to consider, an idea that is designed to ultimately lead us away from trusting the Lord and believing what he has said. They want us to start thinking down the lines of their suggestions, to follow their ideas. The purpose of their suggestions and insinuations is to lead us away from what God has said in his Word.

Think about how they use TV, music, news, the radio, newspapers, and magazines to bring this about. Think about the suggestions made to us from unbelievers and negative

believers everyday. Once we buy into it, then we are led down the road from one idea to another, one thought to another, one emotion to another, **all designed to get us away from, “Thus saith the Lord”!** And when we start considering their ideas, the old sin nature acts on our emotions and we become afraid and worry.

Basically demons are powerless against because **one**, we are the Royal Family of God and have the Holy Spirit living in us, and **two**, they are limited by the will of God. **The chief power that they have is the power of suggestion and they use it quite effectively** because we do not take our stand on what the Word of God says, and because we are ignorant of exactly how they do operate using the power of suggestion. Our weak area is our emotions. They know that if they can trigger fear, worry, guilt, anger, self-pity, or any other negative feeling produced by OSN activity upon the heart, which is the seat of our emotions, and then they can incapacitate us!

There are two ways they can do this. **One**, by suggesting ideas into our minds that they know will lead to doubt, which will in turn lead to fear, worry and the loss of the filling of the Holy Spirit, which in turn will open the way for the sin nature to act on our hearts and minds, **two**, by acting directly on the emotions to get them to react sinfully with anger and fear. The effect of all this is that we lose our peace.

There are three sources that they use to do this. **One**, by themselves acting directly against us; **two**, the world system to frighten, anger, or allure us; **three**, the sin nature resident in the flesh. But if we know what their secret is, what they use to defeat us, the power of suggestion, then we can watch out for it and stick with, “*Thus saith the Lord.*”

In the garden Satan used the power of suggestion to make an insinuation all designed to lead the man and woman astray when he said, “*Hath God said?*” He wanted them to think about something; he didn’t state it directly, but his point was to be that the tree wasn’t poisonous, therefore it was edible, and therefore there was no real reason not to eat its fruit! He had no power then and he has no real power now, only the power to suggest, to insinuate, and that’s how he defeats us. **He makes suggestions, designed to get us away from the Word, then he leaves us in our faulty, limited reasoning abilities to come up with the wrong conclusion, when we just should do what God says.**

In Matthew 4 and Luke 4, where we have Christ being tempted by the devil, where he told him to turn the stones into bread, to cast himself down off the temple and to worship him, what he was doing was suggesting these things to Christ! He was giving him ideas to consider. **But Christ rejected his suggestions and stood on the Word of God.**

And isn’t this what Satan does to us, gives us ideas to consider? “If you do this, then what about that?” “What will happen if you decide to do it?” “Did God really say that?” “Is that what God really meant?” “Doesn’t God want us to use minds?” “Is it really wise to do that?” “Shouldn’t one be cautious, after all God did give us a brain?”

How many times have we been led away from faith, faith decisions and faith living all because we have listened to the suggestions of Satan? We have listened to them

either directly in our own minds, **or through other people**, as Satan tried to do with the Lord through Peter.

He suggests that you consider A, not because he cares about A, but because he's attempting to lead us away from faith through suggestion and insinuation. Now the point of A, (its real point is unbeknownst to us), is so that we will **consider the next point B**, whose only purpose is to take us to the next point C, etc., etc.. **And the real purpose, the only purpose is to get us away from faith in the Word of God.**

Knowing this; **knowing that Satan and his demons work through the power of suggestion**, deception and insinuation will help us to see what is really going on when all these ideas come into our minds, and therefore to keep our minds firm in the Word. **Doctrine keeps us on track; it prevents us from being deceived and led astray by the tactic of suggestion.**

This deals with us being on guard and knowing what to look for! But God has also given us another gracious provision to protect our minds and hearts and that is his peace! The importance of this should not be overlooked for **his peace will protect our souls. It is the barrier that no evil thing from Satan can get past!**

We need peace; our minds and hearts need his peace. Quite frankly we can't make it without it. We can go on for a while, until we're totally miserable, but eventually we have to come back to God to get his peace. The key is to have peace everyday in our lives. For the stability of our minds and hearts we need his peace.

To show the insidious power of suggestion that Satan employs to get believers off track, we look at the example of David in 1 Chronicles 21:1, "*Satan rose up against Israel and incited David to take a census of Israel*". **Satan incited David, saweth, to number Israel**, that is, to take a census of the military personnel in the nation.

This reflected a subtle, but dramatic shift in David's thinking and trust. **Instead of relying upon the promises Yahweh's protection he was now looking to the might of his army.** The change was now his faith was shifted from Yahweh to his army for protection. Even Joab told him that, if necessary, the Lord could multiply his army a hundredfold.

It wasn't just that David was bringing guilt to Israel, in form of a guilt complex in the men who did not serve in the military, as Joab said, "*Are they not all my lord's subjects?*" **But what it showed that David was in the state of transition from totally relying upon the power of Yahweh to protect him and Israel, regardless of how small Israel's army was, to relying upon a large, well-equipped army!**

We too run the same risk! After we get the large bank account, the retirement package, the home paid off, full medical coverage, we too can go through the same transition of looking at those various things as our objects of security, instead of looking to the Lord as our security, regardless of whether we have those things in abundance or not at all!

Saweth, to incite, meant the transition or conversion from one condition to the opposite. To be changed or converted from one course of behavior into the opposite one, to move or mislead someone into doing something against one's original will or intentions, to delude them.

Usually there are extraordinary circumstances attending it: unlimited abundance, boundless well-being, such as, one can be without money all throughout their Christian life, no home, no insurance, no money in the bank. Such a condition compels the believer to live each day by faith in the Lord's promises and provisions; Doctrine plays a vital part in their day-to-day life; and the Lord takes care of them year after year. **Then they inherit wealth or their business takes off and money is no longer an issue for them.** They have everything they will ever need for the rest of their lives.

Then Satan enters into the picture with his *saweth*. The believer now shifts his thinking from simple trust in the Lord and his promises, the faith-rest life, to his money. Now he's counting his money, watching his investments, trying to get the best rate of return; **he's building up his "army of money" now to protect him and give him security.** He is now doing what David did back then.

***Saweth* does not imply force or pressure, but rather persuasion. It entices secretly;** it whispers as Jezebel did to Ahab, I Kings 21:7, 25. Words and/or seductive circumstances are used to mislead the believer away from their original intentions, not just into some personal sin of the flesh, which occurs anyway, but away from Doctrine, away from the spiritual dynamic of simple faith in the Word. Moses warned the Israelites against allowing themselves to be persuaded by apostate family members. Deuteronomy 13:6.

The power of suggestion and insinuation are very powerful tools that are very effectively employed by Satan against God's people. He used it against the woman in the Garden, Genesis 3: 1-5; he used it against David; he uses it against us today; he even used it against Yahweh with Job as the subject, Job 1:8-11; 2:2-6. But Yahweh saw right through Satan's insinuations.

Satan even used it against the Lord through another believer, Matthew 16:21-23. The Lord had been teaching Doctrine on what was going to happen to him in Jerusalem and that he was going to die. The Peter takes him aside and begins to rebuke him! **Rebuking any communicator of God after a class is bad enough, but rebuking the Son of God is unthinkable, yet Peter was doing it! Satan was trying to change the doctrinal thinking of the Lord by the power of suggestion using another believer, (something that goes on everyday in Christendom), but Christ saw right through it and rebuked the devil.**

Now that we know that Satan's main power against us is by utilizing the power of suggestion, and by using other Christians, (makes you wonder how many of them are being used by the devil as the devil used the Apostle Peter in this instance), it makes us ask the question, **"How many of us have been led away from doctrinal teaching and**

faith living by the words and suggestions of other believers?” “How many of us have lost our peace through the words of other people?”

Nevertheless, the peace of God has been given to all true believers in Christ. It is ours now and for all eternity, and we need to appropriate it constantly for our own benefit. We also need to keep away from negative people, either through isolation or insulation, that can and do influence us away from the Word, faith rest living and God's peace.