

# My Peace I Give To You

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] Let's turn back now to John chapter 14 and we're going to focus in on verse 27 of this chapter, not by itself of course but in the context, that this chapter is a whole really points in towards one great reality, particularly verse 15 to the end points us to this great reality of the peace of Christ, the peace that He gives and how that takes place in the life of the believer. Verse 27 says, peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you, not as the world gives, do I give to you, let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. Now these words come in the context really of Jesus goodbye in a sense to his disciples, as he is bidding them farewell as he heads towards the cross. This is coming towards the end of Jesus journey through life in this world as he comes to the end of his ministry in this world but comes to the climax of that ministry to that great laying down of his life upon the cross at Calvary. Now the believers, the disciples around him don't really fully understand what is about to happen. Jesus has told them, He's told them repeatedly what's going to happen but He knows they don't quite understand this but He nonetheless teaches them things that they will understand later and indeed He tells them here in this very passage that the Holy Spirit will bring to their remembrance all things that He said to them that the Holy Spirit will teach them these things, that He will teach them all things that all that they need to understand and be taught the Holy Spirit will teach them these things bringing to their recollection the things that Jesus has already taught them that at this point they just don't get. You can see that even in this passage how Thomas and also Philip react to Jesus words, they clearly don't fully understand what he's talking about but he is teaching them these things nonetheless. But in this context he mentions to them that the Holy Spirit is going to be the helper that they need. When he departs, when Jesus is no longer physically with them, that He will send the Holy Spirit to be the helper and the comforter that they need. The one who will bring these things to their minds, the one who will work in their lives and indeed the one who will make this peace that Jesus speaks of a reality. He, the Holy Spirit, is the one who brings this peace to bear upon the lives of God's people. He is the one who brings this reality of peace into our experience, into our hearts. Without the Holy Spirit at work in us, we simply cannot know this peace.

But Jesus tells his disciples here that the Holy Spirit will work in them in this marvellous way. Now I want us to think through what we have here in this verse verse 27. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you, not as the world gives to I give to you, let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. Now I want us to think through in these three areas of thought connected with it. The first is the peace of Christ. The second is the peace of the world with which he contrasts his own peace. And the third is how this peace conquers fear in the life of the believer. So first of all let's think about this peace of Christ and what this peace that he is speaking about, leaving with them, giving to them, what that peace is, what it looks like, how we understand it, how it is a reality in our lives. Now although the New Testament is recorded in Greek, it's very unlikely that Jesus was speaking Greek. He would have been speaking either Aramaic or Hebrew. Now they're not the same language, they're two very closely related languages.

But much of the vocabulary in both languages is similar. But it's pretty much certain that the word that Jesus would have spoken here at this point when he's speaking about peace would have been the word shalom. Across all the Semitic languages this is the word that's used to speak of peace. They're slightly different forms in each language but it's the same word, shalom. This is the blessing that he is leaving with them, his peace, his shalom. Now shalom is a wonderful word because it speaks not only of peace as something that is the absence of this peace or the opposite of peace, whatever word you might use to describe that war or disquiet or whatever. Shalom is more positive than that, of course it includes that but it has the idea of wholeness, of health, of wholeness, something that we can very easily miss I suppose if we think of peace as something which is the absence of disquiet or being unsettled. So this is what Jesus is granting, gifting to his people, he's gifting them peace and wholeness. But he's not doing so in the way that we might expect because we might expect that it would be just a matter of Jesus touching our lives and that's it we have this marvellous sense of peace, a state of mind that is peaceful. But that's not actually what Jesus is saying to them. He's not giving them the gift of a state of mind, he is giving them the gift of the Holy Spirit who will bring this peace into their experience. Now that's a wonderful thing to think about because it's not just a state of mind, this is a personal reality, God coming close to his people, drawing near and ministering to them, which is a marvellous reality to consider. And it's so different from what the world might speak of. Now Jesus himself knew this peace, this very same peace in his human experience as he walked in this world because the Holy Spirit ministered this same peace to him. Now he experienced that in a sinless state. And one of the things that we might highlight, I think it's probably important to highlight is that as fallen sinful creatures, one of the most astounding things about this peace that Christ speaks of is that it is a transformed reality. Something has been turned on its head because as fallen sinful creatures who don't know Christ, we were in this world without through peace.

Because our spirits were at enmity with God. And in that way you might say a war with God.

But God's spirit was not part of our experience. And indeed the wrath of God, we are told in the scriptures, was against us as those who were living in rebellion. But when we come to Christ, this amazing transformation takes place where we're brought from that state of war with God to knowing his peace. No longer do we experience his wrath against us, we experience peace with God. That's an amazing change that comes into the experience of the person who comes to faith in Jesus. It's an amazing transformation. Now, of course, it affects our state of mind, but it isn't just a change of our state of mind. It's a change in our reality. The reality of our standing before God. You know, there are lots of religions around that focus upon a change in a person's state of mind. And people do all kinds of things going into trance like states and all kinds of other things trying to change their state of mind. But changing your state of mind is not really the issue. Because that doesn't change the reality of the fact that God's wrath is against the sinner. But when we come to Jesus, and we trust in the one who has died upon the cross for our sins, when we trust in the one who has borne the wrath of God against sin, in our place, we then come to know this glorious reality of knowing the peace of God and peace with God.

[ 12:13 ] As the Holy Spirit comes into our lives, as He brings this peace as a reality into our experience, as He ministers to us all those blessings that Christ purchased for us on the cross at Calvary. It's a marvelous reality. We should praise the Lord every day that we have this glorious inheritance in Christ. And that the Holy Spirit enables us to taste of that inheritance, that He ministers these things to us. Yes, in this life we are only tasting of these things in part. And we will know the glorious reality when we come to be brought home to be with Christ. But it's a reason for praise nonetheless, because it's a foretaste of the glory that lies ahead. Now Paul writing to the church in Galatia reminds them and through that reminds us that the fruit of the Spirit, which is the evidence of God's presence, the work of His Spirit in our lives, is seen in these things. He lists love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. We see peace in there prominently, because this is part of the reality of God's, the work of God's Spirit in the life of the believer. This peace is incredibly important. And sometimes we may go through times when we are not as aware of this reality of peace, spiritual reality of peace, as we might be. There is always for the believer the reality that they have peace with God. But we don't always fully enter into that. We may drift away from the things of God to one degree or another, be distracted from these things, caught up in other things. And our fellowship with the Lord is hindered in these ways. And we no longer grasp these things in the same way. And we need to be brought back to that. But this is the reality for God's people that they already have this peace. And they have the one who ministers this peace dwelling in them. He is with his people, the Holy Spirit.

But for the person who doesn't know this reality, doesn't know this peace, then this also brings a great challenge. It brings a challenge to any person who hasn't yet come to know the peace of God that surpasses all that we might be able to grasp and understand. An amazing peace, so amazing that it is at times even overwhelming. If a person doesn't know that peace, even just a taste of that peace through faith in Jesus, then there is a great challenge to that person, to seek the Lord Jesus, to place their faith in him, and to repent of their sin and turn to Christ by faith. Not that we earn any favour with him by repenting, but that we recognise that we need to be done with sin. We need to have a dealt with that needs to be cast away, set aside. And that only happens through faith in Jesus. It's dealt with only in that way. And so this brings a word of challenge to the person who hasn't yet come to faith, to trust and to believe in him. But in a sense we could say that that challenge is always relevant for us no matter what stage we are at in terms of our faith. The challenge to trust in Jesus, to turn to the Prince of Peace, that's always relevant for every single one of us. To trust him because there is nothing more important than to live our lives in such a way. Next let's think about how Jesus contrasts this peace that he is gifting with a peace of the world around us. Now we've thought about what this peace that Jesus is giving is. It's the reality of God's spirit at work, ministering that peace that Jesus has purchased for his people into our lives and into our experience. And that's so remarkably different from the peace of the world. We've already thought about how some religions and groups emphasise a state of mind and a change in that. But you know most of the time the focus of the world in terms of seeking peace is very much about outward things. That there would be an absence of conflict, an absence of turmoil and you know these things are not bad things to seek. In a sense they're running after things that are promised in terms of the fulfilment of God's purposes. But they're seeking them in the here and now in a way that is not focused upon the gift of peace that God actually gives to us in Jesus Christ. And so there's a focus generally upon an absence of outward disquiet. And you know you can see this in all kinds of different ways. You know there's a longing for the absence of war and that's a great thing to long for. But it isn't our great hope. It never gives any lasting hope. I mean just

think of the last hundred years of history. And really if you look around the world that has pretty much been no time when there hasn't been conflict in the world. And indeed there's hardly any year in which our own nation has not been involved in one conflict or another.

Which is a startling reality. And yet we think of having maybe some level of peace. But in fact it's a mirage. The world is a conflict with one another. And the word of God reminds us that the reason for this is in the first instance there's enmity towards God. But because of this reality of sin there is enmity one with another. And people are at each other's throats. The least thing in people maybe who wants for friends are seeking to hurt one another in various ways. Whether it's emotional heart or physical heart. People fall into this so easily because of our fallen sinful human nature. And that's why we need this redemption that Christ offers. Because otherwise the peace that this world gives and runs after is really an empty mirage. And during the time of the Roman Empire after the Empire had been established there was a time when which was described as the Pax Romana, the

Roman peace. Now it didn't last. And even whilst that existed the only way that it was upheld was through brutality as the Roman army went here and there suppressing one people after another and maintaining this so called peace. And indeed the effects of that bringing about that so called peace and maintaining it meant that actually it was the very essence of its undoing. Because there were so many people around who had a hatred for the Roman Empire because of the way that their own people had been oppressed by them. But the peace of Christ is not about maintaining a kind of inner sphere where the battles don't touch us as the Romans kind of tried to do. Keep the battles at the periphery. Rome as a place of peace. But it wasn't. Total mirage. Christ on the other hand is not the peace of Christ is not about absence of conflict turmoil or trial in this world. Indeed we can know the peace of Christ even in the midst of difficulties and turmoil in our lives. And that's such an amazing reality.

[ 23 : 18 ] Because we know very peace of heaven being ministered to us by the Holy Spirit. And God's people testify to this time and again when they go through the hard experiences in life how God's peace touched their lives in a profound way in the midst of that. When it might have appeared that everything would fall apart. But God stepped into that situation and ministered his peace to them in a way that was profound and transforming so that they were carried through that turmoil. All around was turmoil and yet God's people could see that they knew the peace of God in their hearts guarding their hearts. And you look at the New Testament and you see how the disciples and the apostles go through the various regions in the Mediterranean ministering the word of God and they face all kinds of turmoil and difficulties and resistance even to the point of death. And yet they describe knowing this peace of God filling their hearts.

Yes they may also describe being fearful and being on the verge of being overwhelmed in a certain sense but knowing his peace coming in and enabling them and carrying them through the midst of these things. They weren't super Christians. The super Christians were the ones who weren't real Christians. They had a false understanding of things. They were the ones who put down on the apostles who tried to suppress their work and tried to hinder their work. The apostles describe honestly what they go through. Read the letter of James and the letters of Paul and in no way can you say that they are having an easy time. Paul is particularly honest about how at times he faced fear and trepidation. Nonetheless he speaks of the peace of God guarding his heart and in guarding the hearts of God's people.

These are testament, testimony that they're testament to the wonder of God's peace. They're testimony to the wonder of his work in the life of his people. And we also can know this reality and I'm sure we can testify to this reality if we are believers. We can testify to times when we have experienced such a thing. God's peace carrying us through situations that we felt would undo us. We don't always experience that kind of level of the peace of God in our experience because of our drifting this way and that and our focus going away on to other things. But this is the reality that God gifts to his people. When we're striving to deal with these kinds of issues that can come out of way, the things that affect our lives and bring disquiet into our experience and fear and a lack of peace, we need to remember the promise that God has given us, the promise that Jesus sets before us here. And we need to bring these things to him because he is the one who makes the difference. He is the one who works in us to work in our lives in such a way that we lay hold of this peace and increases our awareness of this peace. We don't get it by trying to make sure that our finances are all in order, that everything is just so in terms of how we've set up our pensions or whatever it might be. This isn't how we have peace in this world. And because the world around us rushes for these things and tries to tell us that this will give us peace of mind. We sometimes fall into the trap of thinking in the same way as the world.

What we actually need is to bring these things to God and ask him to bring his peace into these situations so that we will know that peace and live with that peace. And this peace is, this is the last point, this is the peace that conquers fear. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. Now this peace isn't exclusively about our feelings, yet our feelings are most certainly part and parcel of our experience of it. We are after all whole beings created whole by the Lord as body, soul and mind. And our emotions are part of that. So yes, of course, our emotions are part and our feelings are part of that experience of it. But our experience of the peace of Christ, our feeling of it is not to be all and end all of it. Because sometimes we can for various reasons lose a sense of our peace without there being any real reason for that to be the case. And Christ himself acknowledges that the believer may experience fear yet he assures us that his peace is a reality. That's a marvelous thing for the believer to lay hold of that the peace that

Christ speaks about, you know, it's really, it's heaven touching earth, it's the reality of the heavenly sphere touching our experience. It's the reality of the spiritual blessings that we have in Christ touching our experience now. But you know, whether we are aware of it or not, it's still a reality, which is something that should give us great encouragement so that even if our feelings don't necessarily say to us, there is peace in this situation, our faith can still lay hold of the fact that Christ's peace which he ministers to us is unchanged. And it's still the reality in the heavenly realms. And that is why we lay hold of these things by faith, not by feelings, our feelings come and go. Sometimes they can betray us. Sometimes they don't reflect the reality. But the spiritual reality remains unchanged. And that's a great comfort to us. And so this word that Christ speaks into our experience is a word that should give us encouragement, encouragement to lay hold upon the spiritual blessings that he has purchased for us by faith, to trust and to look to him above all others.

[ 32 : 12 ] And to look to him in the midst of the turmoil and the difficulties and the fears and to trust that what he has said is true, that his word never fails and that he is always with us by his spirit to minister into our lives in the way that only he can. Let's pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you and we praise you this evening for the wonder of the Gospel and all the blessings that flow to us in Christ, that all the riches of heaven are ours in him. Oh Lord God, we do pray that you would minister to us, that you would work in our hearts and lives in the midst of the experiences that we face, the things, the difficulties, the turmoil that we may encounter, and that you would minister your peace to us. Help us to trust that this is so, to trust that this is indeed the gift that you grant us and to look to you for that peace, to guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. We do pray then that you would bless each one of us and grant us your grace and your forgiveness, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Let's draw our service to a conclusion singing from Psalm 85 in the Scot's List, sing Sam's version on page 113. We're going to sing from verse 8 down to verse 13, end of the Psalm.

I will hear what God the Lord says, to his saints he offers peace, but his people must not wander and return to foolishness. Surely for all those who fear him his salvation is at hand, so that once again his glory may be seen within our land. Love and truth have met together, righteousness and peace embrace, righteousness looks down from heaven, from the earth springs faithfulness. What is good the Lord will give us and our land its fruit will bear, righteousness will go before him and his royal way prepared. These two stands us in conclusion to God's praise.