

Peace Be With You (Isaiah 9:6-7 & John 20:19-31) 23-April-2017

Good Morning church family!

Please have your Bibles turned to John chapter 20 - we'll be looking at verses 19 to 31. There's an outline for you to jot down some notes if you wish

First, let me ask God for His help in the understanding of His Holy Word, this morning. Let's pray...

Intro/Peace?

On 30th Sept 1938 - British PM Neville Chamberlain proudly returned from Germany following peace talks with Adolf Hitler and announced:

[Powerpoint 1-Quote PM]

My good friends, for the second time in our history, a British Prime Minister has returned from Germany bringing **peace with honour**. I believe it is **peace for our time**. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts. Go home and get a nice quiet sleep.

Less than a year later, Britain and Germany were at war? WWII began on 1st September 1939

So much for peace - hey?

How would we define peace, anyway?

[Powerpoint 2-Peace Definition]

Freedom from disturbance;

Tranquility

Calmness

Or a state or period in which there is no war or a war has ended.

In the last 4000 years - there's only been 268 years of peace - in spite of many good peace treaties in place.

In the last 3 centuries there have been 286 wars in Europe alone!

Even as we think of our brave Anzacs - as Anzac day approaches in a couple of days' time - it's just over a 100 years ago - since our Anzacs in WWI - bravely lay down their lives as a sacrifice - so we could have peace in Australia. They thought that war - WWI - was "the war to end all wars". But unfortunately it wasn't - and there have been many wars since!

The world's idea of peace is short-lived - isn't it?

(pause)

Shalom?

[Powerpoint 3-Shalom?]

So as Jesus says the phrase: "Peace be with you" - three times in John 20:19-31

And as our reading from the OT - from Isaiah 9 -looks forward to the birth of a special Messiah and God - our Lord Jesus - and describes Him - as the Prince of Peace

Is it a coincidence that Jesus is referred to as the Prince of Peace?

And is it a coincidence that Jesus says "Peace be with you"?

I want to argue this morning - it's not a coincidence - because in John 14:27 when Jesus makes His farewell speech to His disciples before He goes to the cross - He says this:

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

What is this "peace" that Jesus brings?

He says it's not a peace we get from this world

And Oh boy - wouldn't we all love peace in this world

No - the peace Jesus brings is different - it's not from this world He says

And it's not just the absence of trouble or conflict - there's much more to it than that - which I hope we'll see as we look at John chapter 20 together...

In Hebrew the word for peace is "Shalom" - it can also be used as a greeting or farewell.

Even today Jews say: "**Shalom Aleichem!**" - Peace be with you!

Or "**Shalom Haver**" - meaning "Hello friend" or "Goodbye friend"

- a bit like saying peace be with you friend - but shalom means more than a greeting and more than just a lack of conflict

Shalom means:

A. Completeness (in number)

- B. Safety, soundness (in body)
- C. Welfare, health, prosperity
- D. Peace, quiet, tranquillity, contentment
- E. Peace in human relationships and especially peace in a loving and obedient relationship with God
- F. Freedom from war and conflict

[Powerpoint 4-True Shalom]

True shalom comes from God

That's why God can say through the prophet Isaiah:

Though the mountains be shaken

and the hills be removed,

yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken

nor my covenant of peace be removed,"

says the LORD, who has compassion on you. (Isaiah 54:10)

So true shalom is a peace from God that cannot be broken down or removed by what's going on in this world.

What is Jesus' Peace?

So when the risen Jesus (God's Son) appears to His disciples in John chapter 20 and says: "Peace be with you" - He's actually bringing peace (shalom) from God.

So what does this peace that Jesus brings actually look like in people's lives?

Let's face it - as we look around our world - and see many countries at war and in conflict - as we look around our world - and see terrorist strike after terrorist strike - and persecution after persecution

And as we look at our communities - even our own families - we don't necessarily see much peace there either - do we?

So what is this peace - this shalom - that Jesus brings?

I reckon there are 10 outcomes of Jesus' peace:

[Powerpoint 5a-Removes Fear]

1. **It removes fear:** In v19 the disciples are behind locked doors because they are afraid of the Jewish leaders. But with Jesus alive and in their presence - they don't need to be afraid. Jesus' love on the cross and his resurrection have removed fear. There's no need to fear punishment for our sin and no need to fear dying - if we have a believing relationship with Jesus. The verse we just quoted from Isaiah 54:10 - says there's no need to fear whatever happens because God's peace can't be removed.

The Apostle John puts it this way: [There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment \(1 John 4:18\)](#). And Jesus' love is perfect love because it's the love of God!

[Powerpoint 5b-Removes sadness]

2. **It removes sadness and brings joy:** The disciples were sad at Jesus' death - we saw that with John, Peter and Mary on Easter Sunday and the witnesses at the cross on Good Friday. But the risen Jesus - shows his wounded hands and side - and proves He is alive. It's not a time to be sad - it's a time to

rejoice - and v20 - says they were overjoyed when they saw Jesus! Jesus is alive! We should be overjoyed too! But are we? If not? Why not?

[Powerpoint 5c-Mission]

3. **It continues Jesus' Mission:** The Father sent Jesus, the Son, to do a Mission. See v21 - it will now be the job of his disciples to continue Jesus' Mission and go out and bring the message that Jesus brings peace between God and Humankind. And they won't be alone - in Matt 28:20 (when Jesus gives the disciples this mission) - Jesus says He will be with them always in this job. And that promise is for us too! That Jesus will accompany us as we bring the message of peace through Jesus

[Powerpoint 5d-Holy Spirit]

4. Jesus' peace also brings with it - **the Holy Spirit** - which He symbolically breathes on them in v22 - it's the Holy Spirit they will receive in Acts 2 at Pentecost - and it's the Holy Spirit that changes these timid followers - afraid of their own shadow - into bold apostles - within the space of a few days. The peace of Jesus brings the Holy Spirit - to live inside each one of us as we believe - and the Holy Spirit can transform us into bold Christians too. This same spirit - teaches us more about God/Jesus as we read His Word, this Spirit guides, encourages, equips, helps, rebukes and challenges us - as we live out our lives

[Powerpoint 5e-Forgiveness]

5. Jesus' peace brings His Good News - the Gospel - that has the power to forgive sins. See v23 - as the apostles are sent out with the message of

peace through Jesus. It's this message of peace - that allows the broken relationship between God and humankind to be fixed - Jesus' words on the cross - it is finished - finished the work of reconciling humankind to God - and bringing about the possibility for people to repent from their sin and rebellion against God - and be forgiven of their sins against God. Rather than God waging war on humankind because of their sin - like countries do today. God allowed Jesus to die for everyone's sin - and bring peace that way - and it's lasting peace. God's not going to wage war on people who believe in Jesus - and have had their sins forgiven. Jesus paid the price for sin once and for all!

[Powerpoint 5f-Doubts]

6. Jesus' peace **removes any doubts** we might have! In v24 - we see Thomas doubting the resurrection of Jesus. As far as Thomas is concerned - unless he sees Jesus' wounds for himself - he's not going to believe. Thomas is in the Bible for all of us. We all have doubts as to whether God is acting in our lives - or will act in our lives? We all doubt His promises? But what we need to take from Thomas is that - Jesus knew He was doubting - so the risen Jesus made a special appearance for Thomas. Jesus must have heard Thomas' complaints and doubts - and a week after He had appeared to the other disciples, He appeared especially for Thomas. Doubting God is normal and understandable - but it's also totally unnecessary. Jesus said he would die and be raised 3 days later - and He did! We have no need to doubt

anything God says in His Word and we have no need to doubt any of God promises

[Powerpoint 5g-God with us]

7. Jesus' peace not only removes any doubt - as it did for Thomas - it replaced that doubt - with a remarkable declaration - see v28 - Thomas declares that Jesus is "**My Lord and my God**". If we wanted any evidence that Jesus is not just a great man and great teacher - and that He is Lord and actually God in flesh form. Here it is! The risen Jesus standing before Thomas saying "Peace be with you" - is actually God! We should get great comfort and peace in knowing that Jesus is God, He is alive, and He's acting in our lives - and His Holy Spirit is living inside us - We basically have God **with us all the time!**

[Powerpoint 5h-Blessing]

8. Jesus' peace also brings blessing - see v29. Jesus says to Thomas - basically - it's great you believe - but it's even better and more amazing that people without having physical proof like you, Thomas, and the disciples have - yet they believe! In fact that is why John wrote down his eye witness account - that through the doubts of Thomas, the questioning of Peter and the sorrowful Mary Magdalene - that people would be blessed by believing in Jesus by having **faith without sight but faith in the Word heard and read!**

[Powerpoint 5i-Leads to repentance]

9. Jesus' peace led the apostle John and other writers to write down what they had witnessed, all the things Jesus did and said and taught - and this John

says - in verse 31 - is all written down to enable people to believe in Jesus' death and resurrection. Because by writing it down - it leads people to realize and admit they have sinned against God - and then repent - and do a U-turn in their lives - and to turn in the direction of God - and believe in Jesus and follow His example and teaching

[Powerpoint 5j-Brings final peace]

10. Jesus' peace **brings final peace** - because believing in the name of Jesus - brings that final peace with God - it starts with a new life - following God's way, which is Jesus' way and not the world's way and leads to hope of eternal life - living with God forever - one day. This means that whatever is going on for us in our lives right now - we have that peace - that shalom - that eternal hope of being with God forever - where there are no more wars, no more terrorism, no more persecution, no more refugee crisis, no more fighting, no more arguments, or relationship breakups, no more sickness, or hurting or grieving. Nothing in this world can promise an end to all of that. Jesus can!

Which is why our OT reading from says of Jesus' great government of Heaven and Earth and the peace He brings - will have no end. It's final everlasting peace!

Conclusion

[Powerpoint 6-Conclusion]

So the peace or shalom that Jesus brings is a peace that He says back in John 16:33 - **overcomes the world**. It's a heavenly peace

That is why Jesus can say on the cross: **It is finished!** (John 19:30)

Because He was sent by God the Father, with the purpose of bringing peace between God and humans and He completed that job once and for all.

And that's why the Apostle Paul can advise us in Philippians 4:6-7 to:

⁶ ...not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷ **And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

That's the peace Jesus gives us - it surpasses our human understanding - and it guards our hearts - because we're confident we're saved for eternity to be with God- and it guards our minds - so that our minds don't play tricks on us - and so we don't have to fear anyone or anything or doubt anything God says.

That's true peace - true shalom - where our hearts and minds are completely guarded with the confidence - that we are in Jesus' arms for all eternity.

Jesus loves me this I know for the Bible tells me so!

Let's pray...