



Lesson Twenty-Three

Peace

Most of our historical record is a chronology of warfare and unrest between men. Our history books divide the various epochs of history according to the time markers of major wars. Historians estimate that in the more than 3,100 years of recorded history, the world has experienced only 286 years of peace. That means for every year of peace there have been nearly eleven years of war. During those 3,100 years, more than 8,000 treaties have been broken with the average life span of less than two years.

Men and nations work night and day to achieve lasting peace. As quickly as they manage to iron out settlements and sign the treaties, however, the peace is broken. These short-lived agreements are but futile bandages applied to a never-healing wound.

Nevertheless, God's Word commands us to strive for peace. Look up the following verses and write out the commands they have regarding peace.

- Psalm 34:14

- Psalm 122:6

- Mark 9:50

- Romans 12:18

- Romans 14:19

- 1 Corinthians 7:15

- 2 Corinthians 13:11

- Hebrews 12:14

President Herbert Hoover (1929-1933) wisely said, “Peace is not made at the council tables, or by treaties, but in the hearts of men.” The root cause of all wars, conflicts, and disputes—between nations, between churches, between adults, and between students in Christian schools and youth groups—is the sinful heart of man. Yet God is the God of all peace. True peace is available in our relationship with Him.

“Men do not have peace in the world nor in their hearts,” Vance Havner wrote, “because they do not have peace with God. Nothing is settled until it is settled right, and nothing is settled right until it is settled with God. We will not have peace without righteousness. We will never get rested until we get right.”

True Christian character includes peace. Without peace our character is unstable, and we are moody, changeable, and susceptible to defeat and fits of depression. Serenity of spirit, on the other hand, indicates depth of character. Someone has said, “Still waters run deep.” How well that applies to peace and serenity of soul. The more shallow our character, the louder we babble when we must run over the rocks of trials and disappointments.

PROVERBS ON PEACE

Read the following verses and write down what each of them teaches about true peace.

- Proverbs 30:8-9

- Proverbs 15:16

PROCURING PEACE

According to the following verses, how do we gain perfect peace and contentment in our hearts at *all* times and in *all* circumstances? In the space provided beside each verse, write *C* if it deals with confession, *M* if it deals with meditation, or *Y* if it deals with yielding.

	Psalm 37:37	C. Confession
	Psalm 119:165	M. Meditation
	Isaiah 26:3	Y. Yielding
	Isaiah 48:18	
	Philippians 4:6-7	

- Read 2 Thessalonians 3:16. Where does peace come from?

Of course, these verses speak of how we have the peace *of* God and how we have peace with men. They do not, however, explain how we gain peace *with* God.

- Peace with God is obtained only one way. How does Romans 5:1 say we gain eternal peace with God?

Do *you* have this peace with God? Have you trusted Him as your Lord and Savior?

FURTHER INSIGHT INTO PEACE

The teacher’s lesson deals with the definition, basis, and principle of peace. This section includes additional information on each of these areas.

The Definition of Peace

The word *peace* in the Bible is our translation of a Hebrew (Old Testament) word and a Greek (New Testament) word. These two words and their full meanings are as follows.

Hebrew: *Shalom*—soundness, wholeness in health and prosperity. This word was used as a greeting, much as we might say, “How are you?” It meant that all was well; nothing was wrong.

Greek: *Eirene* (pronounced eye-rain-nay)—means the same as *shalom*.

The Basis of Peace

Peace for our lives is based in Christ. The teacher’s lesson deals with several areas in which Christ had perfect peace. Look up the following verses and list further ways in which He is connected with true peace.

- Ephesians 2:17
- Colossians 1:20
- Ephesians 2:14
- Isaiah 9:6
- John 14:27

The Principle of Peace

The Christian principle of peace is defined in the teacher’s lesson. We must have peace in all circumstances. This principle is in reality a command from God to all believers; it is not an option. We must possess peace. Note the command in the following verses and write down what you learn from that command.

- Mark 9:50
- 2 Corinthians 13:11
- Romans 12:18
- 1 Corinthians 7:15

Do *you* live up to this calling? Are you obedient to this command? On the lines below, write areas of your life or circumstance you face that cause you to lose peace.

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DIRECTIONS FOR THE FRUIT PRODUCTION PROJECTS

How do we achieve peace in our hearts? By observing the three steps of confession, meditation, and obedience. This project is the same as those in the last two lessons. Complete the “Producing Fruit” form and be prepared to have it checked by your teacher.

Cleansing-Confession

List the people, circumstances, or events that are a present source of irritation or that tempt you to retaliate, worry, gripe, or complain. Pray about them every day and put a checkmark by each day as you pray.

Abiding-Meditation

Read the assigned passage and meditate on what you learn about real peace and the way it responds to circumstances. Record on the back of the form all that you learned and *how you sought to practice that verse* in your life each day.

Yielding-Obedience

List a person each day who seems to irritate you and rob you of serenity, joy, or peace. State specifically what you did to gain peace (both within and without) in each situation.

TEACHER'S LESSON

Looking at Peace

- Basis of Peace: Christ's Peace in Every
- No in and
(John 4:32)
- No in (1 Peter 2:23)
- No in (Matt. 8:20)
- No in (Matt. 8:24-26)
- The Principle: We Must Have in Every

Defining Peace

- The Definition Stated
 - Peace is realizing has all I
- Three Kinds of Peace

- Peace with God—
- Peace of God—
- Peace with men—
- Antonyms and Synonym
 - Antonyms:
 - Synonym:

How to Appropriate Peace

- Confess Your Lack of
- Meditate on God's and
- Yield to in Faith

DEVELOPING THE IDEAS

1. Often, man's efforts to obtain peace for the present moment only lead to conflicts in the future. For example, many of the provisions of the armistice ending World War I actually created conditions that led to World War II. How do we sometimes create more conflicts with other individuals in our attempts to gain peace for the present moment?
2. How can the Golden Rule (see Matthew 7:12) be applied to conflict resolution between individuals? Churches? Businesses? Nations?
3. Believers must never compromise on doctrines or biblical principles and convictions. In many conflicts, however, we sometimes find ourselves becoming unyielding on matters of mere opinion or personal preference. What role can biblical compromise play in obeying God's command to live peaceably with other people?
4. Make a list of things you know about God that would encourage you in times of worry or fear. Keep the list in your Bible and pray through it when you feel a lack of peace.
5. Write a poem entitled "Peace."