

# Peace

**Text: I Peter 3:8-12**

## Introduction

1. Peace is the desire of all right-thinking people.
  - a. In times of war, no word has more meaning.
  - b. Soldiers think of days when they went about the quiet and orderly pursuits of life and enjoyed peace.
2. Peace is no less desirable in the spiritual realm. (Rom. 14:19)

## I. New Testament Usages of the Word

- A. Cessation from war or strife.
  1. National tranquility. (Acts 24:2)
  2. Cessation of persecution against the church. (Acts 9:31)
- B. Harmony between individuals.
  1. "Seek peace and pursue it." (1 Pet. 3:10-11)
  2. "Pursue peace with all people." (Heb. 12:14)
  3. "Live peaceably with all men." (Rom. 12:18)
- C. Safety or security.
  1. Security. (Luke 11:21)
  2. Safety. (1 Thes. 5:3)
- D. A form of blessing or goodwill. (Luke 10:6)
- E. Reconciliation (peace) between the sinner and God.
  1. "Being therefore justified by faith, we have peace with God." (Rom. 5:1)
  2. Peter came to the house of Cornelius "preaching peace by Jesus Christ." (Acts 10:36)
- F. The state of assurance and hope of one who has obeyed the Lord's will .
  1. "To be spiritually minded is life and peace." (Rom 8:6)
  2. "Be diligent to be found by Him in peace." (2 Pet. 3:14)
- G. The blessed state of the devout in the world to come. (Rom. 2:5-10)

## II. Things Which Destroy Peace in the Spiritual Realm

- A. Being soon angry: Some have explosive tempers which can be ignited with a very little spark (e.g. business meetings).
  1. "Put off anger." (Col. 3:8)
  2. An elder is not to be "quick tempered." (Titus 1:7)
  3. The proper way to respond is found in Proverbs 15:1.

B. Selfishness: a childish characteristic.

1. When a person is determined to have his own way, it is bound to cause trouble.
2. In matters of judgment, all will not agree, therefore, someone must yield.
3. An elder is not to be "self-willed." (Titus 1:7)

C. A desire for preeminence.

1. Some seek to be modern day Diotrophes. (3 John 9)
2. When a person is not content to be a laborer in the vineyard, it is bound to destroy peace.
3. Christ is to have preeminence. (Col. 1:18)
4. Our greatness is seen in service. (Matt. 20:20-28)

D. Self-justification.

1. It is always difficult for those with this attitude to admit wrong.
2. Sometimes mistakes are made (little damage is done) but rather than confess the error and change their life and minimize damage, these begin to justify self causing great and, many times, irreparable harm.
3. When we do wrong, we need to have the spirit of the prodigal son who said, "I have sinned."

E. Ignorance.

1. This has never built up one congregation but it has helped to tear many of them apart.
2. Peace in a congregation is based on a proper understanding of the Bible.
  - a. This understanding only comes by hard study.
  - b. Where study is neglected, ignorance prevails and peace is destroyed.

### **III. Things Which Promote Peace in the Spiritual Realm**

A. A genuine love for the Lord and His church.

1. We need the same love towards the church that Jesus had. (Eph. 5:25)
2. When problems and/or differences arise and we seek for a solution, we must:
  - a. Put self in the background.
  - b. Keep the welfare of the Lord's church in mind.
3. Since the church is the "pillar and ground of truth" (1 Tim. 3:15), we ought not to retard its work by thinking of ourselves first and foremost .

B. A sincere interest in the souls of others.

1. When discord prevails, we are not only hindered in the work of leading lost souls to Christ but we cause others to become discouraged and quit.
2. Our responsibility is to each other. (Phil. 2:3, 4)

C. Retaliation is forbidden.

1. Often when we are slighted or mistreated, we are ready to get revenge.
2. We must leave that up to the Lord. (Rom. 12:19-21)

D. An understanding of the other person.

1. In order to understand the captives, Ezekiel "sat where they sat" for seven days (Ezek. 3:15).
2. All of us are different: personalities, background, likes and dislikes, daily circumstances vary, etc.
  - a. One may be in poor health, worried over family troubles of which others do not know.
  - b. Some are babes in Christ who need patience and understanding.
3. We should give to others the same patience and understanding that we desire for ourselves.
4. The "golden rule" must be applied by Christians in their treatment of each other.
5. Always remember, as I have to put up with him, he has to put up with me.

## **Conclusion**

1. It is a sad day when brethren part over matters of faith but how sad it must be in the sight of God when brethren will divide over no more than a petty grievance or a personality clash.
2. It is always the cause of Christ which suffers when brethren do not strive for peace.
3. Let us together pursue for peace so that Christ and His church might be glorified and that we might be saved eternally.