

## CHURCH OF THE REDEEMER

717 North Stapley Drive, Mesa, AZ 85203 Phone: (480) 833-7500

<b>Series:</b>	<b>Scripture Memory</b>		Pastor/Teacher
<b>Number:</b>	<b>86</b>		Gary L.W. Johnson
<b>Text:</b>	<b>2 Thessalonians 3:16; Galatians 5:22-23</b>		
<b>Date:</b>	<b>October 24, 2021 (a.m.)</b>		

### TRUE PEACE (Part 1)

Thomas Goodwin (1600-1680) was one of the great Puritan theologians. He was a member of the Westminster Assembly and later served as part of the Savoy Declaration. He also served alongside of the acclaimed John Owen at Oxford University. He wrote one of the most important books on the Holy Spirit. In it he discusses in great detail (a trait common to the Puritans) the true nature of Biblical peace. "True peace is a peace that comes from without you: but the peace of all these men by natural conscience is from within. Let me say it to you, brethren, and be not offended by my inverting Christ's word, the peace that is from within the man defiles, deceives the man. It is the peace that is wholly without, that saves and comforts the man. Only it is received within us by faith, or we could not be comforted by it. It is compared therefore unto a guard; *The peace of God shall guard your minds*; a guard, it is the same word that is used, 1 Peter i. 5, when it is said, *we are kept by the power of God unto salvation*: kept as with a garrison. Now look, as the power of God is a thing without us, and a garrison is a foreign external defence, brought in to defend a place, and keep peace in it, which else would be at divisions within itself, so is this true peace, the peace of God. It is therefore termed not a peace of conscience, but of God, Phil. iv. And also peace in the Holy Ghost, Rom. xiv. 17, and that *good hope* (as the apostle calls it by way of distinction from false and untrue), Rom. xv. 13, it is from the God of hope, and through the power of the Holy Ghost. If thou hast not joy, thou mayest have peace: if not peace, thou mayest have hope. Well, but all this joy, peace, and hope come from without, from God, from the Holy Ghost, and therefore are taken in by the way of faith, which is a receiving faculty, it is all through believing. Yea, and they are brought in as foreigners are, by a mighty power, which, as it guards the soul to salvation, so it guards the heart to peace. Or if you will, take the word of Christ: *My peace* (says he), by distinction. It is Christ's peace which the soul of a true believer seeks, and which Christ in that speech directs them to, in a double respect, and both of them exclusively spoken, as to the peace we ordinarily term peace of conscience.

1. "Because he is the sole procurer and purchaser of, and matter of our peace. *He is our peace*, is the common cry of all believers, Eph. ii. 14, through his alone merit, Rom. v. 1, 11, and accordingly a soul that seeks peace by faith, eyes what is in Christ as the object matter of his peace with God, and is taken up with that in its pursuit after peace: John xvi. 33, *These things have I spoken, that in me you might have peace*. He had related in the late sermons what he was about to do for them in dying, and also what he would do for them in heaven. And let these things (says he) be matter of peace and comfort to your souls, when I am gone. And therefore *through Jesus Christ* is everywhere added, where peace is spoken of, Rom. v. 1, Phil. iv. 6.
2. "It is Christ's peace, my peace, and the peace of God, because it is such as God himself speaks and communicates when the heart is quieted by it. And so in that respect also it is a peace without us. It is not a peace which conscience speaketh (which is the speaker of the natural man's peace) but which Christ speaketh by faith to conscience, whom (Heb. xii. 25) the apostle termeth one speaking from heaven. And so in that respect also it is Christ's peace. The Scripture knows no such phrase as *peace of conscience*. It is indeed peace of conscience *subjective*,

conscience being the principle it is spoken unto. But when it is spoken, it is so spoken as that it is the peace of God, and not peace *with* God only. Yea, and as a true believer seeks for it, it is the peace of God only. He seeks not only to be at peace with God, but to have the peace of God, which God immediately from himself gives and communicates; this is that which a true believer seeks.”<sup>1</sup>

I. **BIBLICAL TERMS.**

- A. **“The Hebrew Concept of Peace.** The Hebrew word for *peace* is *šalôm*. It is derived from a root that conveys the image of wholeness, unity, and harmony – something that is complete and sound. Although *peace* is essentially a relational concept in the OT, it also conveys the idea of prosperity, health, and fulfillment. The word *šalôm* occurs two hundred times in the OT. In fifty or sixty of these occurrences, the emphasis lies on the absence of strife. Peace takes on its deepest significance as we move into the Psalms and the Prophets. Through the OT, some two-thirds of the uses of this word express the fulfillment that comes to human beings when they experience God’s presence. The sovereign God of Israel will bless *his people with peace* (Ps. 29:11). But more than national blessing is involved in the peace that God gives. David, fleeing from Absalom during that son’s rebellion, felt intense pressure (Ps. 4:1-2). But David fixed his thoughts on God and remembered the joy that came with trust in him. Comforted and at rest despite overwhelming danger, David concluded, *I will lie down and sleep in peace, for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety* (4:8). For us as David, peace in difficult circumstances is a result of our relationship with the Lord. *Great peace*, David says, *have they who love your law* (Ps. 119:165). The one whose life is in harmony with God’s revealed will experiences inner harmony as well. It is not surprising, then, to find Ps. 37 contrast the wicked and ruthless with *the man of peace* (37:35-37). The man of peace lives in a right relationship with God, for God alone is the source of human rest and fulfillment. For those who have missed the way of faith and are struggling to find fulfillment apart from God, there is no such blessing. As Isaiah warns, *The wicked are like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waves cast up mire and mud. There is no peace*, says my God, *for the wicked* (Isa. 57:20-21).
- B. **“The Greek Word.** The Greek word *eirēnē* originally referred to that orderly, prosperous life that is possible when there is no war. Only much later did philosophers begin to apply the concept to an inner, personal peace. But the NT use of *eirēnē* (90 occurrences) does not reflect the culture of the Greeks. Instead, *peace* in the NT is defined and enriched by the OT’s *šalôm*. In every theologically significant use, *peace* is something rooted in one’s relationship with God and testifies to the restoration of human beings to inner harmony and to harmonious relationships with others. Our once-shattered lives are again made whole, and we become in Christ what God originally intended us to be. The vital health and wholeness of a restored humanity is available in Jesus.
- C. **“The Peace that Jesus Brings.** Multiplied greetings and farewells in the Epistles are wishes that the believing readers will receive grace, mercy, and peace. This peace is *from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ* (Ro. 1:7; cf. 1 Co. 1:3; 2 Co. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Php. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 2 Th. 1:2; 1 Ti. 1:2; 2 Ti. 1:2; Tit. 1:4; Phm. 3; 2 Jn. 3). As in the OT, the NT affirms that the Lord is *the God of peace* – the source and bringer of peace (Ro. 15:33; 16:20; 1 Co. 14:33; Php. 4:9; 1 Th. 5:23; Heb. 13:20). First and foremost, the peace human beings need is peace with God. This is ours in Jesus; *since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ* (Ro. 5:1). Eph. 2:14 adds that Jesus *himself is our peace.*”<sup>2</sup>

II. **LOOKING AT THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT - THE CONTRAST BETWEEN THE FRUIT AND WEEDS.** Note how this contrast is drawn in Jeremiah 17:5-8. Living apart from God is likened unto a worthless dried up desert bush. The important point in the contrast between the “works of the flesh” and the “fruit of the Spirit” is the emphasis on a change in nature. The word “fruit” strongly suggests that the good deeds of the Christian are characterized by a certain spontaneity. They are the natural outcome of a transformed nature rather than the laborious attempt to conform to an external code.<sup>3</sup>

III. **SPECIFIC FRUIT AND SPECIFIC WEEDS.** Galatians is not the only place in Scripture where we have lists of genuine fruit. Note the others.

<b>Romans 5:3-5</b>	<b>1 Timothy 6:11</b>	<b>2 Timothy 3:10</b>	<b>2 Peter 1:5-7</b>
steadfastness	righteousness	teaching	faith
approvedness	godliness	conduct	virtue
hope	faithfulness	faith	knowledge
unashamedness	love	long-suffering	self-control
	patience	love	patience
	meekness	patience	godliness
		persecutions	brotherly-kindness
		sufferings	love

**NOTE:** You will also note how many of these things are listed by Paul in 1 Corinthians 13 but are expressed in the negative (Love is not . . . ).

“Satan’s tactic,” writes John Sanderson, “is to give some people so light a case of Christianity that they will never get the real thing. Hence, it is imperative for us to discern true fruit from artificial fruit, and thus deliver ourselves and others from the judgment, *I never knew you.*”<sup>4</sup>

<b>The Weed</b>	<b>The Artificial Fruit</b>	<b>The Fruit of the Spirit</b>
hatred	limited love	love
sorrow	temporary joy	joy
anxiety, strife	numbness, carelessness	peace
impatience	laziness, insensitivity	patience
pride	manipulation by kindness	kindness
evil	hypocrisy	goodness
infidelity	half-heartedness	faithfulness
self-seeking	false modesty	meekness
lack of control	choosing lesser gods	self-control

**CONCLUSION:** The Spirit of God will never fail to produce fruit in the life of a believer. Note carefully how the fruit listed in Galatians 5:22 is properly identified as *attitude* fruit. “If (these) attitudes are characteristics of a believer’s life, the fruit of active works will inevitably follow.”<sup>5</sup> How do we develop our attitudes? They are shaped and formed in our minds. We cannot, therefore, hope to be fruitful in our Christian life if we are unfruitful in our minds. We must have our minds<sup>6</sup> renewed in order to be transformed (Romans 12:1-2) and we must, therefore, be people who are deeply involved with the Word of God. Contrary to popular opinion, *doctrine and practice* cannot be separated. They are bound together. Practical Christian living, if it is to be genuine, must be the outgrowth of *applied* Biblical truth. Christian theology, which properly speaking is nothing other than the true knowledge of God, leads to holy living because it leads to Jesus Christ, and if Galatians teaches us anything, it

teaches us that holiness stems from a right personal relationship with the One true and living God. Robert Murray M'Cheyne, one of the truly great men of God in Scotland during the last century, once preached on "Why is God a Stranger in the Land?"<sup>7</sup> He said that one of the reasons was ignorance of the Bible. Biblical illiteracy is rampant today, *especially* in our churches. One of the reasons, in my opinion, is directly traceable to our *loss* of confidence in the total Sufficiency of Scripture. The church, and by this I have in mind the Evangelical Church, has increasingly turned to the various social sciences as mediated by pop-psychology and Wall Street.<sup>8</sup> Until we realize how desperately we need the Scriptures, we will go on being fascinated with the latest church growth technique, the latest therapeutic solution for our wounded emotions – but there will be no true piety, no true spirituality, no genuine cultivation of Biblical fruit in our lives and no real evangelism.

## ENDNOTES

---

<sup>1</sup> *The Works of Thomas Goodwin VI* (rpt. Taneki Publications, 1996), p. 315.

<sup>2</sup> L. O. Richards, *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words* (Regency, 1983), pp. 479-480.

<sup>3</sup> cf. Richard N. Longenecker, *Paul: Apostle of Liberty* (Harper & Row, 1964), p. 179.

<sup>4</sup> John W. Sanderson, *The Fruit of the Spirit: A Biblical Study of Genuine Character Growth in the Life of the Christian* (Presbyterian and Reformed, 1985), p. 43.

<sup>5</sup> *The MacArthur New Testament Commentary: Galatians* (Moody, 1987), p. 164.

<sup>6</sup> Paul in Romans 8:5 says, "They that are after the flesh do *mind* the things of the flesh." The word for *mind* is *phronēō*, which literally means "to fix their thoughts on." In Philippians 3:19 we read of those who "mind earthly things." In contrast, the Christians are to "set your minds on things that are above" (Colossians 3:2). The thought-life of the true Christian is to be governed by the Holy Spirit speaking only through the Scriptures.

<sup>7</sup> Andrew A. Bonar, *Memoir and Remains of Robert Murray M'Cheyne* (rpt. The Banner of Truth Trust, 1973), p. 589. Note his points: (1) Loss of a sense of sin, not only in the land at large, but also in the Church. (2) Deadness among true Christians. Much activity, but no true interest in the things of God. (3) Great boldness of sinners in sin. There is no fear of God. The Word of God is not sought and valued.

<sup>8</sup> Sometimes it is claimed (by Evangelicals who should know better) that the writers of Scripture did not have the advantage we have today with all the *new* information we have at our fingertips. Richard Mouw, past President of Fuller Theological Seminary, has gone on record as saying, "We do know more about the human psyche today than our Christian forebears," and he concludes that secular therapy must be incorporated into a larger biblical worldview; cf. his *Consulting the Faithful* (Eerdmans, 1994), p. 74. The major problem with Mouw's analysis is that *much* of what secular psychology advocates (i.e., homosexuality is normal) is clearly condemned in Scripture; cf. the excellent discussion on the subjects of homosexuality and divorce as they are commonly addressed in our culture in Noel Weeks, *The Sufficiency of Scripture* (The Banner of Truth Trust, 1988), pp. 167-182.