

The Peace of God

(Pastor Kamstra's Farewell Message; August 25, 2019)

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ⁸Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. ⁹Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you. (Philippians 4:1-9)

"The time spent on any item on the agenda is normally in inverse proportion to its benefits" (Parkinson's Law of Triviality)

"Work expands to fulfill the time available for its completion" (Parkinson)

"In theory, one is aware that the earth revolves, but in practice, one does not perceive it; the ground upon which one treads seems not to move, and one can lived undisturbed. So it is with time in one's life." (Marcel Proust, Remembrance of Things Past)

"Never have we had so little time to do so much" (Franklin D. Roosevelt)

PEACE: IT'S CHARACTER

A. Paul promises the Peace of God to those who rejoice and pray

1. This peace is not a military peace
2. This peace is not a relational peace
3. This peace is not a doctrinal peace; every believer has peace with God
 - a. In Romans 5:12, Paul writes about "*Peace with God*"
 - b. In Philippians 4, Paul is writing about the "*Peace of God*"

B. The *Peace of God* is an inner gift of God's grace

1. This "peace" is an infusion of divine strength
2. This "peace" is inclusive; it keeps our hearts, minds, will and strength focused on Jesus
3. This "peace" is being in an intimate, inseparable relationship with Jesus
4. This "peace" is enjoyed only by people who keep the *Lord near* (cf. 4:5)

PEACE: ITS CONTENT

A. Through the first window, we see peace as calm in the midst of turmoil

1. As Paul wrote these words he was confined to a Roman prison
2. As we endure troubles or storms - we can still be embraced the *Peace of God*

3. My prayer: that you know this peace in your storms and challenges

B. Through the second window, we're assured of God's presence in our world

1. This is a peace of Jesus - God with us - wrapped around us all the time
2. This is a peace where God holds and cares for us in the palm of his hand

"Sometimes it seems God's gone away; forgetting the promises we heard him say; And we're lost out there in the stars!" (Maxwell Anderson)

"The eternal God is your dwelling place, and underneath are the everlasting arms." (Deuteronomy 33:27)

3. My prayer: that you know God's presence even when life doesn't make sense

C. The third window, we'll call the future: "*The peace of God will keep you*"

1. This promise is a forever promise to help us face each new day
2. The future belongs to God. We belong to God. The promise is guaranteed!
3. My prayer: that you step confidently into the future knowing God is there

D. None of these windows really explain this "*Peace of God*"

1. "*It is a peace that passes all understanding*"
2. Nothing can challenge our eternal security, his divine companionship, or the confident hope we have in Jesus

PEACE: IT'S CONTEXT

A. This indescribable peace is illustrated in the context

1. 4:1 - People who have this peace "*stand firm in the Lord!*"
2. 4:2 - People who have this peace "*agree in the Lord*"
3. 4:4 - People who have this peace know how to "*rejoice!*"
4. 4:5 - People who have this peace are forbearing, patient, and gentle
5. 4:6 - People who have this peace have minimal anxiety

B. People who have this peace expect Christ to return: the best is yet to come

1. 4:6 - They pray - so they can stay close to God
2. 4:6 - They practice gratitude - so they worship and give thanks
3. 4:8 - They focus on things that are true, right, pure, lovely and praiseworthy

C. This peace is not available apart from Jesus

1. We're not saying, Goodbye. We're saying, "Fare well!"
2. May the God of Peace and the Peace of God be with you!