

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 1/2/94  
John 14:27-31 "A Gift You Cannot Buy"

**Intro:** I trust you had a nice Christmas. How many received a gift?

This morning, we're going to talk about a gift you cannot buy. It's an incredible gift. Yet this gift is available to all of us. For some of us here today, even Christians, this gift is still under the tree, unopened. Others have taken the wrapping off, but the gift is still there, in the box, untouched. The tragedy is we all need this gift. Everyday. In fact, we try and substitute things in its place, unsuccessfully.

What is it? You'll see, if you turn with me to John 14:27-31. There in His Upper Room Discourse, Jesus offers this special gift to us.

Review:

For the past 2 months, we've been mining the treasures contained in the message Jesus delivered to His 11 disciples, the night of His betrayal, just hours before His trial and crucifixion. The mood of that Passover evening was somber. Jesus had already announced He was leaving the world. Now He indicated His departure was imminent. Peter and the rest were stricken with fear and anxiety. They'd left all to follow Jesus. Life without Him would be no life at all. And what about all the promises He made about a future kingdom. His announcement made no sense to their clouded minds.

Out of that context, Jesus spoke the words recorded in John 14. In John 14, Jesus prepared His followers for His absence. First, He spoke about the future in vv 1-6. He told them He was preparing a place for His own in heaven, and one day, He would return for them. Next, He told them what they needed to know about Present living. He taught them about prayer in vv 12-14, and the ministry of the Holy Spirit in vv 15-26. Jesus informed His disciples that the One He was sending, the Paracletos, would be everything to them He had been, and more. The Holy Spirit would be their Resident Helper in the interum while Jesus was gone.

But there was something else the disciples needed. Soon all hell would literally break loose against Jesus, and those associated with Jesus. Jesus knew His followers would soon face great panic and fear and anxiety. And even after He was gone, the opposition would continue. Jesus predicted that the world would hate His followers just as it hated Him (Jn 15:18).

Q: How would they survive? Jesus knew they needed something, a resource, a provision, a gift. He gave it to them. And to us.

READ vv 27-31

Peace. You can't buy peace. Yet we live in world desperately searching for peace. The Jews and Palestians need peace. Bosnia needs peace. Closer to home, hundreds of teenagers attempting suicide every year need and long for peace.

Illust:

Q: What is peace? How do you experience peace?

**Proposition: As we listen to Jesus' teaching in John 14:27-31, we will learn that there are 4 characteristics of true peace.**

- I. Peace is a Gift (27).
- II. Our peace is linked to His Gain (28).
- III. Jesus' peace has a Goal (29).
- IV. Jesus provided a Guarantee for our peace (30-31).
  - How did He do it?
    - A. He overcame the opponent of peace (30).
    - B. He obeyed the Father (31).

### **I. Peace is a Gift (27).**

V 27 "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you"

The NT was written in Greek. John wrote this gospel in Greek--to give the Roman world an accurate picture of Jesus Christ the Savior. But when Jesus spoke to His disciples, He undoubtedly spoke, not in Greek, but in what language? Aramaic. Aramaic is very similar to Hebrew, the language in which the OT was written.

What's the point? This. The word "peace" that Jesus used in v 27 was a very special word, a common Hebrew word used when 2 people greet or say good-bye to each other. "Shalom." As Americans, we render "shalom" as peace, but our view of peace is much narrower than the Hebrew view. To us, peace means the absence of conflict. We think of peace as tranquility. Peace is kind of a passive word.

However, for the Hebrew, which included Jesus, shalom was much more than staying out of trouble. In fact, when a Hebrew said "Shalom" to another person, he wasn't just extending a vague greeting. The word "Shalom" means "wholeness, completeness, and well-being."

There are 3 dimensions involved in this well-being, as the word is used in the Scriptures (Carson, 75):

The first is vertical. To have shalom is to have peace with God (Num 6:26 "The Lord lift up His countenance upon thee, and give thee shalom--peace."). Paul made it clear in Rom 5:1, that if you have been justified through Jesus Christ, you have shalom (peace) with God. This is the most fundamental dimension of peace. If you don't have peace with God, you won't have it in the next two dimensions either.

Illust: Person on death bed, "He's at peace with God."

The second dimension of peace is horizontal. To have shalom is to have peace with men. Listen. We are born into this world as what? Sinners. Our sin makes God our enemy. But our sin also makes other people our enemies. Why can't people with different colors of skin get along? Why do marriages crumble? Why do neighboring countries hate each other? Because sin alienates us. Our sin robs us of peace with each other. Our world needs shalom!

The third dimension of peace is personal, that is, peace within ourselves. That's primarily what Jesus is offering to His disciples in Jn 14. He knew they'd face trouble. He didn't offer them an escape from trouble, but peace within the trouble.

Think about something. Warren Wiersbe put it this way, "Unsaved people enjoy peace when there is an absence of trouble; Christians enjoy peace in spite of trials

(354)." What makes the difference? In the world, peace is something you hope for or work for; but to the Christian, peace is God's gift.

Never forget that. Peace is a gift, a gift from Jesus Christ to His followers. Let that sink in. Peace is something that is available to you today. You say, "You don't know the turmoil my life's in." That may be true. But I do know Jesus' promise: "I leave peace with you. I give peace to you."

Now you're thinking, "I can't fathom that kind of peace." No wonder...

V 27 "I give My peace...NOT as the world giveth, give I unto you."

How does the world give? With strings attached. With clauses and fine print conditions. The fact is, the world can't give the kind of peace Jesus offers. Do you know why not? There are 2 things over which the world has no control: One is Death, and the other is the Future.

But Jesus is in control of both! He conquered death, and He holds the future! That's why He can offer us peace! Peace is a gift.

Illust:

Q: What difference does this gift of peace make? Notice the by-product...

V 27 "Let not your heart be troubled (= to stir up)...afraid (= to be cowardly)."

The result of peace is a non-troubled heart. That's what disciples needed. The storm would soon howl. In hours their lives would be in jeopardy.

Did you ever stop to think who was the only CALM person on Good Friday? It certainly wasn't Pilate--he was a nervous wreck. No way for the religious leaders--they were riled up into a frenzy. Scratch Judas--he hung himself. Without a doubt, the disciples weren't calm--they crumbled. Who was the only person who exhibited peace that day? Only Jesus. He was in complete control. And He offers us peace.

Jesus' peace dispels anxiety and fear.

Friends, Americans are spending millions of dollars a year to find peace. But you can't find peace in a bottle or a pill. You can't buy peace, period. Peace is a gift.

Q: Are you experiencing Jesus' gift of peace in your life?

Illust:

Tran: There are 4 characteristics of true peace. First, peace is a gift.

## **II. Our peace is linked to His Gain (28).**

V 28 "Ye have heard how I said..."

Now that was a surprise to the 11. These were men who had left all to follow the Master. Their hearts were breaking because He was leaving. And then they heard this, "If you really loved Me, you would rejoice that I am leaving!"

Rejoice? How, and why could Jesus' departure be a cause for their rejoicing? Jesus mentions two related reasons.

1. You should rejoice...because I am going to the Father.

At first, that doesn't make sense to us, does it? Why should that be a cause for rejoicing? Listen carefully. When Jesus told His disciples, "I'm going to the Father," He had in mind His redemptive journey. The return trip to the Father would take Him to the Cross, then to the Tomb, and then to a hill outside of Jerusalem where He ascended to the Father. Jesus didn't come to earth merely to give us a good example to follow. He came to redeem us, to save us, to die for us.

When Jesus said, "You should rejoice because I'm returning to the Father," it was the completion of His redemptive work He had in mind. He could have stated it negatively, "If I don't return to the Father, if I stay, your greatest need will remain unmet! So if you really loved Me, you'd rejoice because I'm going to My Father."

2. You should rejoice...because My Father is Greater.

In what sense is God the Father greater than Jesus? Jehovah's Witnesses cite this verse as a proof-text to say that Jesus is not God, that He is less than God, that God is on a greater plane than Jesus. Is that what Jesus meant? Obviously not. Jesus just stated His equality with the Father in v 9.

God the Father possesses unapproachable splendor and glory. But the God-man, Jesus, laid aside His glory (Ph 2). He subjected Himself. He humbled Himself, and laid aside the honor He deserved. In that sense, His Father was "greater" than Him.

Jesus' statement has to do with authority, not being or worth. Suppose I said, "The president of the USA is greater than I." Would you take that statement to mean that he is more of a human being than I am? No. You would know that I meant that the president is greater in authority, and position, and rank.

From eternity past, Jesus enjoyed equal glory with the Father. But during His 33 year incarnation, He gave up His glory. He did it willingly, for us. Yet He anticipated the day when His glory would be restored (see: Jn 17:3-5).

Now plug this into Jesus' statement in 14:28, "If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I'm going to My Father, who is greater." Do you see what He's saying? "If you really loved Me, you would want what is best FOR ME. You'd be glad that I'm going back to My Father, for there My glory will be restored."

Q: What does that have to do with "peace"?

Key: Peace is not something I "work up" in me. It's the result of Christ's redemption. Our peace is linked to His Gain.

Q: What was the first thing Jesus told His disciples after the Resurrection?

A: See Jn 20:19, 21, 26 "Peace be unto you."

Was Jesus merely being polite? No! He's saying, "Remember what I promised you in the Upper Room? It's yours now. My work on the cross is finished. Shalom be unto you!"

The world wishes peace on people. Jesus says, "Through Me, peace is yours." Our peace is linked to His gain.

Illust:

Tran: Peace is a Gift. It's linked to His Gain, His work in our behalf.

### **III. Jesus' peace has a Goal (29).**

Quote: D.A. Carson, "Let us be frank: Jesus' peace is not something everybody wants. Sometimes that is because of misconceptions..." (78)

Q: Do you want the peace Jesus offers? If so, you need to realize that Jesus' peace has a goal. What is it?

V 29 "And now I have told you...that ye might believe."

You know, don't you, that the Cross was no accident. Jesus could have been king, had He so desired. He could have swayed the crowd, and destroyed the soldiers with merely a word. But He didn't. He willed to die. The Creator of life chose to taste death for us (Heb 2:9). And He told His disciples this, ahead of time. Why? So that afterwards, they would believe.

Right here's the reason Jesus offers us peace. He could take us home to heaven when He saves us. He could rescue us from life in this painful world. But He doesn't. He leaves us here. Why? He wants us to learn to trust Him, to live by faith in Him, to believe.

Q: What's the mark of a mature Christian?

Somebody that knows a lot of Bible verses? Not necessarily. A person who is hyper-involved in Christian service? An individual that gives big sums of money to the church. No. A mature Christian, acc to v 29, is a person who lives with a confident trust in Jesus, the Lord God.

Listen. When Jesus' peace is real to us, it'll affect our trust level.

Q: How much do you trust Jesus? Do you rely on His peace for your job conflicts? How about with your money problems?

Quote: Words penned by Katherine von Schlegel (Carson, 79)

Tran: A gift, a gain, a goal, and...

### **IV. Jesus provided a Guarantee for our peace (30-31).**

Q: How did He do it? What did Jesus do that guarantees our peace.

A: Two great accomplishments...

#### A. He overcame the opponent of peace (30).

V 30 "Hereafter I will not...for the prince of this world cometh"

Oh beloved, do you see the omniscience of Jesus? At the very moment He was speaking to the 11 in the Upper Room, in His mind's eye, He could see the mob assembling on the other side of the city--the Roman soldiers, the temple police, the Sanhedrin members, and Judas. Jesus could see them all. And He could see the future. He knew that soon the procession would arrive in the Garden with lanterns, and

torches, and swords, that they would hunt Him down as if He were a dangerous criminal.

And worst of all, Jesus could see the master-mind behind their plot--Satan himself. He knew that Satan had entered Judas, that Satan controlled the jealous priests. He knew that the major spiritual conflict of all ages was about to unfold. So He said, "The prince of this world cometh."

Q: Who won that battle?

Satan thought he did. When he saw the spikes go through Jesus' hands, when he saw the Messiah breathe His last breath, He thought he had won. Satan thought Jesus' death was a victory for him. But He was wrong. In fact, Jesus made that clear before He ever left the upper room--v 30 "and hath nothing in Me."

What did Jesus mean? He used an old Hebrew idiom which means, "He has no claim upon Me." Or as the NIV translates, "He has no hold on Me." Col 2:15 reveals that it was through death that Jesus won the victory over the devil!

There's the first act whereby Jesus guaranteed our peace. He overcame the opponent of peace.

B. He obeyed the Father (31).

Before reading v 31, let me ask you a question.

Q: Why did Jesus die for us? You say, "He died for us because He loved us, right?" Yes, but there's a greater reason. Listen carefully, I don't mean to diminish Jesus' love for us, which is beyond our comprehension. But there was a greater love (if love can be measured) that took Jesus to the cross. It was His love for His Father.

V 31 "But that the world may know that I love my Father..."

Jesus chose to die, not only because He loved us, as breathtaking as that thought is, but He chose to die because He loved the Father, and desired above all else to do His Father's will (Carson, 84).

Problem: Quote Carson, 84 "We diminish the grandeur of the plan of redemption when we neglect this divine element. It is a mark of our egocentricity..."

I'm not trying to minimize Christ's love for us. The Cross reveals that Jesus loves us. But in an even greater way, the Cross reveals the profound love that the Son of God has for His Father. He came to do the Father's will, to obey the Father's command, even though it meant infinite suffering.

There's the second act that guarantees our peace. First, Jesus overcame the Evil one. And second, Jesus obeyed the Father.

### **Conclusion:**

Jesus offers you peace today.

Problem: Some of you here today are settling for an imitation peace, which is not peace at all. You're trying to cover up your anxiety and fear and insecurity. But those monsters still scream at you from within.

Challenge: Stop mocking Christ's offer. Stop shortchanging yourself.