

## Romans 7 - Peace with God

We have been looking at the principles of the Gospel of salvation in Romans 1-8. So far we have concluded that all men are guilty of sin as determined by the Law. The Law provides a knowledge of sin, but it is insufficient to provide salvation since our works according to the Law are stained by sin and unacceptable to God. We have seen that God has provided for this dilemma with His grace. Using the example of Abraham, called the "father of faith" in the Bible, we saw that God saved him *by* his faith before there was any consideration of the Law. We saw that that same salvation by faith is available to us. Once we have that salvation secured, we can be a sigh of relief, knowing that our relationship is settled with God...which is the next thing Paul addressed in Romans 5.

Rom 5:1-2 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

2By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

There are all kinds of causes that people advocate for that are popular for a time until the news cycle changes. A perennial favorite is peace. *Peace* is one of the great preoccupations of mankind. The world is always chasing after *peace*.

Isa 48:18,22 O that thou hadst h e a r k e n e d t o m y commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea:

22*There is* no peace, saith the LORD, unto the wicked.

### 1. False Peace -

As with all doctrine, how words are defined and understood can lead to problems. This is true of the word *peace*.

- Psychological Peace

Facing the frustrations of the struggle to survive, paying the bills, dealing with family, friends, and neighbors, worrying about the economy and government regulations, trying to secure the future, it is completely natural for someone to make the mistake that Biblical peace means a relief from simple day to day stress.

- World Peace

Another mistake to make about the peace that God offers is the absence of war.

A former president of the Norwegian Academy of Sciences and historians from England, Egypt, Germany, and India have come up with some startling information: Since 3600 B.C. the world has known only 292 years of peace! During this period there have been 14,351 wars, large and small, in which 3.64 billion people have been killed. The value of the property destroyed would pay for a golden belt around the world 97.2 miles wide and 33 feet thick. Since 650 B.C. there have also been 1656 arms races, only 16 of which have not ended in war. The remainder ended in the economic collapse of the countries involved.

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[sermonillustrations.com/a-z/p/peace.htm](http://sermonillustrations.com/a-z/p/peace.htm)

The naivete of the expectation of world peace is illustrated by one of the most significant moments in British Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain's career. In September 1938 he signed the Munich Agreement along with leaders from France, Italy, and Germany. This agreement allowed Germany to annex the Sudetenland, a German-speaking region of Czechoslovakia, without facing military opposition. Chamberlain believed that by making this concession

to Hitler, it would satisfy his territorial ambitions and prevent further aggression.

Upon his return to Britain after the Munich Agreement, Chamberlain famously declared, "My good friends, for the second time in our history, a British Prime Minister has returned from Germany bringing peace with honour. I believe it is peace for our time."

One year later, the world was plunged into war when Germany invaded Poland in what has sometimes been referred to as the *Rape of Poland*. This occurred merely 21 years after World War I which was called "The War to End All Wars."

- Utopian Schemes, or Social Peace

Striving for utopia is another false sense of peace.

Utopian schemes always run up against the challenges of the sinful human nature. human utopia as idealized by philosophers requires a tyrant and the surrender of all rights, especially the right to be self-determining.

Like perpetual motion machines, they make claims of being self-sustaining as they escape from the boogeyman of capitalism. Of all the utopian schemes that have been tried, they have failed or have been sustained only by being artificially propped up. They are parasitic and depend on the success of the rest of the world to survive.

A famous one named Auroville, in India, has a most remarkable website where they claim to maintain "a universal town where men and women of all countries are able to live in peace and progressive harmony above all creeds, all politics and all nationalities." And that "The purpose of Auroville is to realise human unity." It all looks so perfect and noble on the website, but the problem is that it has human beings that inhabit it. It has existed since 1968 but depends on \$200,000 per year from the Indian government and people leaving in the hottest months to go back home to make money to donate to the cause. Human

nature prevails as one resident has described, "The energy here can be really harsh at times. You can get stuck in a dark loop...When you start to scratch the surface of Auroville, it's a lot more ugly than from the outside. You start to see all the problems here, and it's deeply layered...The reality is a lot more different once you're a part of it." Auroville has a limited supply of water, an unsustainable economy, tangles of bureaucracy, secreted money, and no way to keep record of it all. As a former resident turned bartender described it, "That place, they're all looking to be cured. The ones who are cured, they leave. The rest, they're stuck." When asked, "Cured of what?" he responded, "*That* is the question."

— (based on

[slate.com/articles/news\\_and\\_politics/roads/2015/07/auroville\\_india\\_s\\_famed\\_utopian\\_community\\_struggles\\_with\\_crime\\_and\\_corruption.html](http://slate.com/articles/news_and_politics/roads/2015/07/auroville_india_s_famed_utopian_community_struggles_with_crime_and_corruption.html))

In another utopian colony that seems to have been successful since 1967, a couple explained that they walked away when their desire to have a child together was met, by some with outright condemnation. Because every new mouth means a further spreading out of resources and midwife costs come out of the community kitty, would-be parents are required to get a green light. Although they ultimately got permission, just asking to have a third stirred up more drama and negativity than they could take. Another man realized he wouldn't find a life partner if he stayed. A woman began to feel "locked inside a limited world."

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[www.cnn.com/interactive/2015/09/us/communes-american-story/](http://www.cnn.com/interactive/2015/09/us/communes-american-story/)

Such communities are elitist. They tout compassion, but they only serve those who are "good enough" to make the cut. They preach an ideal world. If the whole world were governed by the idealistic and artificial principles of utopian schemes, it would collapse under its own weight.

It is interesting that of all the creative efforts of man, there are no real movies

about utopia. In all their efforts, they all realize that utopia looks more like dystopia, a nightmarish and bleak vision of a future or an alternate reality where societal norms have disintegrated, and the world has descended into chaos, authoritarian rule, or a dehumanizing existence.

But, we shouldn't assume that Christians can do it better. As long as we have to struggle against the flesh, there will be failure. Although we are called to separate from the world, it is not simply a social separation. It is to be separate in character.

1Cor 5:9-10 I wrote unto you in an epistle not to company with fornicators:

10Yet not altogether with the fornicators of this world, or with the covetous, or extortioners, or with idolaters; for then must ye needs go out of the world.

Matt 5:14-16 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.

15Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house.

16Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.

Is peace a hopeless endeavor then? No, not if you can understand true Biblical peace.

## 2. True peace -

At the birth of Christ, the angels sang:

Luke 2:14 Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.

What was God's good will toward men?

2Pet 3:9 The Lord is not slack

concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

The peace we have while on earth comes from repentance and having peace with God.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

The peace that Jesus gave was not peace as the world conceives it. People often reject the peace that comes in Christianity because it does not match their expectations. But consider what would happen if converting to Christianity met their expectations. Would true Christianity survive? Joining a church would be self-defeating since false professions would abound which would immediately corrupt the church.

In 313 AD, the Roman government made peace with Christianity after years of persecution. Many people saw the opportunity to get ahead by flocking into the newly approved church. There were many false professions. True Christians had not given into the pressures of joining in with the world of paganism, but when the tables were turned, pagans had no scruples about changing the name of their gods and going to church, bringing their gods, rituals, and superstitions with them. Was peace such a good thing?

If it were peace as the world knows it, then it would almost immediately cease to be peace.

The *true* peace we have is knowing that we are no longer condemned by God because Jesus *is* our peace. we are at peace with God through Him Who *is* peace.

Rom 5:6-11 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

7For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

8But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

9Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

10For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

11And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.

### 3. True Utopia -

True utopia *is* possible, just not in this life. That is what the Millennium is all about. Isaiah described it,

Isa 2:1-5 The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem.

2And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.

3And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

4And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.

5O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the LORD.

Whatever utopian aspirations we might have, whatever part of utopian peace we can experience now, all depends on overcoming the one thing that destroys them: human sinful nature. Our peace on earth is successful to the degree that we can exercise the Godly nature by being born again. After the resurrection there will be no sinful flesh as we live in a glorified body.

Gal 5:16-18 *This* I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh.

17For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.

18But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law.

There *will* be persecutions.

2Tim 3:10-12 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, 11Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me.

12Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

Rom 5:2-5 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

3And not only *so*, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience;

4And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

5And hope maketh not ashamed;



because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

How shall we then live? *Live* the peace. Paul declares, Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

Rom 12:9-21 *Let* love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

10*Be* kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another;

11Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;

12Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;

13Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

14Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not.

15Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.

16*Be* of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits.

17Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men.

18If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

19Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance *is* mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.

20Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.

21*Be* not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Don't believe the political hype that we can eradicate the sin of man by

government fiat. Instead of waiting for the politicians to fix everything, share the Gospel for true peace with God without which there can be no peace between men.

God has not promised us sun without rain, joy without sorrow, peace without pain. But God has promised strength for the day, rest for the labor, light for the way, grace for the trials, help from above, unfailing sympathy, undying love.

– Annie Johnson Flint

There is no peace that comes from indulging in the sins of the flesh. There is no peace in alcohol. There is no peace in drugs. There is no peace that comes from sexualized music. There is no peace in adultery and fornication. There is no peace in stealing, from man *or* God (the tithe). There is no aspect or piece of utopia that is enjoyed without living the kingdom of God now. There is no peace that comes from laying back and not putting in the hard work needed to pursue the kingdom of God.

But pastor, I was looking for a message of comfort and "peace." Yes, as you serve the Lord, there will be peace. The challenge offered here is to get the right kind of peace.

If you are not saved, you need to make peace with God before you can make peace in the world.

Rom 5:1-2, Isa 48:18,22 ,

1. False Peace - 1Cor 5:9-10, Matt 5:14-16
2. True peace - Luke 2:14, 2Pet 3:9, John 14:27, Rom 5:6-11
3. True Utopia - Isa 2:1-5, Gal 5:16-18 , 2Tim 3:10-12, Rom 5:2-5, 12:9-21