

### Exegesis

**Vs. 27a** – So far, Jesus has listed numerous *benefits* that will come to his followers as a *direct* result of his departure: a prepared place (vs. 2), the rapture (vs. 3), same and greater works (vs. 12), answered prayer (vs. 13), the Holy Spirit (vs. 16), a resurrection (vs. 19), and the indwelling of both God and Jesus (vs. 23). But now, as Jesus is concluding the first major section of the Farewell Discourse, he reveals one more benefit: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you." As family members are bequeathed the assets of a deceased loved one, the apostles are given something special in Jesus' last will and testament: *peace*.<sup>1</sup> And the sort of peace that Jesus passes down is *unique*, for he sets it apart from the kind given by the "world." But what does he mean by this contrast?

The Greek world (not unlike our own) spoke about peace as nothing more than the *absence* of conflict.<sup>2</sup> But taking history into consideration, this means that world peace is, at best, *fleeting* or, at worst, a *myth*. It is fleeting in the sense that it *never* lasts forever. And it is a myth in the sense that when we say we're "at peace," all we're actually saying is that the major world powers *aren't* at war. Even if there's no large-scale conflict, is there not some conflict somewhere at the ground level? We haven't stopped killing each other since Cain killed Abel (Gen. 4).

So, when the Lord takes his peace and compares it with the kind offered by the world, he is distinguishing it in two key ways:

First, Jesus is saying that his peace is *permanent*. Far from being *fleeting*, it is *eternal*. It is not like the enforced but tenuous peace brought about by some military occupation (e.g., *Pax Romana*).<sup>3</sup> That sort of peace wanes as the power that established it begins to diminish. On the other hand, Christ's kingdom is a dominion without end (cf. Dan. 7:14). The peace agreement Jesus brokered for humanity *transcends* the mortal plain and reaches the very throne room of heaven where it is secure *forever*. Though nations may rise against one another, Christians will never again be at war with God (cf. Eph. 2:11-22).

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<sup>1</sup> Carson (1991), p. 505.

<sup>2</sup> Morris (1995), p. 584; Köstenberger (2008), p. 443.

<sup>3</sup> Kruse (2017), p. 359; Köstenberger (2008), p. 443, "The famous *Ara Pacis* ("altar of peace"), erected by Augustus to celebrate his inauguration of the age of peace, still stands in Rome as a testimony to the world's empty messianic pretensions."

Second, Jesus is saying that his peace is *legitimate*. Far from being a *myth*, it is the crowning characteristic of the messianic age (cf. Isa. 9:6-7; 52:7; 54:13; 57:19; Ezek. 37:26; Hag. 2:9).<sup>4</sup> This is not the false peace of the false prophets (cf. Jer. 6:13-15).<sup>5</sup> It is the hard-won *triumph* of Jesus Christ. God and man are truly *reconciled* through the shed blood of God's only Son (cf. Col. 1:20). No enemy can overwhelm those who are said to "*overcome*" the world (cf. 1 Jn. 5:5). The Christian is *genuinely* triumphant through Christ whereas this world is "passing away" right before our eyes (1 Jn. 2:17).

But make no mistake, the kind of peace Jesus offers is *not* the *absence* of conflict but a "resolve in the midst of discomfiting circumstances...the composure to be faithful in the face of adversity."<sup>6</sup> In fact, later, the Lord will say, "In the world you will have tribulation" (cf. 16:44).<sup>7</sup> So, it is not a matter of "if" his followers will have trouble but "when." Thus, Jesus' peace means experiencing tranquility even though one may be surrounded by danger. For the Christian, even the *worst* trial is "temporal" (2 Cor. 4:17-18). That, no matter what comes our way, we can say, "This too shall pass."

**Vs. 27b** – This peace was supposed to have an *immediate* effect on the disciples' hearts: "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (cf. 14:1). The verbs Jesus uses are in the *present* tense; it is choice we have to make every day. If we allow it, fear will run away with our peace. We must *choose* to trust in the Lord and, in doing so, will no longer be held captive by our fears. This is why the old prophet can say, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26:3). And this is why Paul says to the *persecuted* church in Philippi, "Rejoice in the Lord always...do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the *peace* of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Phil 4:4-7; cf. Col. 3:15). Peace in hardship is the peace of Christ. But it is a peace we must choose to take hold of.

**Vs. 28** – "You heard me say to you, 'I am going away, and I will come to you.' If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I."

The term "if" introduces yet another *conditional* statement (cf. vs. 7, 14-15, 23).<sup>8</sup> So, when the Lord said, "If you loved me, you would have rejoiced," he was pointing out that, despite what

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<sup>4</sup> Carson (1991), p. 505.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 506

<sup>6</sup> Köstenberger (2008), p. 444.

<sup>7</sup> Klink (2016), p. 641, explains that the peace of Christ "is an unbroken union with the Father, even in a world filled with continuous strife, persecution, humiliation, and even death."

<sup>8</sup> Köstenberger (2008), p. 444.

they might've thought, or, doubtless, would've asserted at the time (cf. 13:36-38), the disciples didn't really love him.

What was Jesus' proof? Had the apostles truly loved him, they would've been *happy* to learn of his departure; instead, they were *sad*. Their lack of joy was a *barometer* for their lack of love. Jesus' words are similar to the adage, "If you love someone, let them go." Since the disciples were so concerned with *their* loss, they failed to realize how much *better* it was for *their* master to leave. And, in doing so, they failed to love Jesus the way he was meant to be loved. "They were so preoccupied with their own problems that they were unable to rejoice with him in this matter."<sup>9</sup> The humiliation that Jesus experienced in becoming a man was about to come to an end (cf. Phil. 2:7-8; Heb. 12:2).

Not only that, in moping about, the disciples failed to realize all the *benefits* that would come as a result of Jesus' homecoming (*see notes vs. 27a*). Is not "the Father...greater than [the Son]"? Only good could come of such a family reunion. After all, without it, believers would be denied the Holy Spirit (cf. 16:7), and Jesus would be deprived of "the glory which [he] had with [God] before the world was" (cf. 17:5). In light of this, for Jesus to stop what he was doing would be a travesty. The realities of what was to come ought to have overridden any present discomfort. The disciples complained when they should've celebrated.

**Vs. 29** – "And now I have told you before it come to pass, that, when it is come to pass, ye might believe." Jesus said the same thing in 13:19 when he foretold of Judas' betrayal. Thus, all the things (good and bad) that Jesus has been telling the disciples were not really meant to guilt trip them. These words were intended to *bolster* their faith. Even with these warnings and promises, we know how the disciples floundered (cf. 18:15-18, 25-27) and how they scattered to the four winds (cf. Mar. 14:50). They doubtless would've fared even *worse* had the Lord not prepared them for what was to come.

**Vs. 30-31** – "Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me."

When the Lord said, "Hereafter I will not talk much with you," he was not ending the discussion. He still has a lot left to say to his disciples. He was referring to how, as they spoke, "the prince of this world," aka the devil, was bearing down upon them. Their time was running out. But the Lord says that Satan "has nothing in [him]," which is to say that the old snake has no *claim* on him.<sup>10</sup> Even though he will sink his fangs into the Lord's flesh and even though he will strike

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<sup>9</sup> Kruse (2017), p. 359.

<sup>10</sup> Carson (1991), p. 508; Köstenberger (2008), p. 445.

the Son of God down, those achievements are not proof of the devil's superiority. Even when victorious over Christ, Satan was powerless.

What it proves is that Jesus loves the Father. He explains, "that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go hence." As our love for Jesus is expressed in loving obedience, so was Christ's love for God expressed in loving obedience to God's will (cf. 10:17-18). The devil only had the power to take Jesus' life because the Lord, of his own accord, laid it down for him to take.<sup>11</sup> Satan is not strong enough to take Christ's life without help from the Son of God. The Prince of Darkness was defeated before the battle even began.<sup>12</sup> It was because the Son sought to love God that he obeyed his Father's commands. Thus, the first part of the Farewell Address ends as it began: loving obedience (cf. 13:34). How will God know we love him? Obey. Though we may look to the cross and rightly see a demonstration of God's love for us, if we're not careful, we'll turn Jesus' sacrifice into something done *only* for the sake of humanity. However, this verse is a gentle reminder that he did not go to the cross for us but for God. Loving obedience to the Father drove the Son to Calvary's Hill.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Kruse (2017), p. 361, "Jesus' impending passion and death was not a defeat suffered at the hands of prince of this world, but an act of obedience to the Father."

<sup>12</sup> Klink (2016), p. 642.

<sup>13</sup> Kruse (2017), p. 361-362.

## VIDEO DESCRIPTION

### **Deep Dive: The Gospel of John | Week 52 | John 14:27-31**

SPEAKER: Ben Hyrne, Pastor

It is because we can rely upon the Scriptures that we can have *peace*. And unlike the kind given by the "world," Jesus' peace is not fleeting or a myth. It is eternal, and it is the backbone of our salvation. To be clear, Jesus' peace is not the absence of conflict but tranquility *amid* conflict. For the very One who promised peace was also headed to the cross. Therefore, though wars may rage around us, the believer is given the sort of peace that transcends their circumstance. This is why the old prophet can say, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee" (Isa. 26:3). When we trust in God when he is the very love our life, can anything steal away our peace (cf. 1 Jn. 4:18)?

**Pastor's manuscript can be found here:**

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### **Grace Pointe Baptist Church**

12029 Eastern Ave.

Baltimore, MD 21220

**Contact:** [info@GracePointeLife.com](mailto:info@GracePointeLife.com)

**Website:** <https://www.gracepointelife.com>

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Title: Jesus' Peace

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