

Eternity Daily Bible Study No. 291

THE PASSION SERIES – THE GOSPEL OF JOHN CHAPTERS 12-21

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John 14:27-31 MKJV Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (28) You have heard how I said to you, I go away and I am coming to you *again*. If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go to the Father, for My Father is greater than I. (29) And now I have told you before *it* happens, so that when it happens you might believe. (30) I shall no longer speak many things with you, for the ruler of this world comes, and he has nothing in Me. (31) But that the world may know that I love the Father, and as the Father has given Me commandment, even so I do. Arise, let us go away from here.

Today I need these verses - hassled, harried, rushed and pressured by deadlines I need God's peace. This morning in my quiet time God said "John, there is no stress in Heaven, only love and peace." I have a trip to Singapore and the Philippines next week and I am scrambling to be ready with my seminar material in time. This is far from a life and death situation, there are no Pharisees at the door with clubs but yet my "peace" is easily fractured and my wife is telling me to stop stressing out. I need to stop and take a minute to hear Jesus on this. Maybe you do too.

Stress comes from being outside of Heaven. It comes from letting the world invade our peace and our space. Somehow we need to be in Heaven and on earth at the same time. Jesus is about to go from the upper room to the Garden of Gethsemane and there He will experience great anguish and He will do so in prayer. Now conference preparation and Gethsemane can hardly be compared but we can apply the principles Jesus used to handle stress there to our daily troubles.

Firstly Jesus was human and He DID experience stress. He cried with tears and sweated drops of blood. He asked that the cup pass from Him, and He was genuinely distressed in spirit. But under the turmoil there was an unbreakably solid relationship with the Father. There was peace in the relationship even if there was not peace in the world. Thus the peace that Jesus gives us is not a shot of Valium - we are not tranquilized into blandness, rather we have peace with God in the midst of tribulation.

Secondly while Jesus was pressured He was not fretful. He was composed and solid not anxious and dithering and fractured. Psalm 37 says three times that we are not to be fretful - even on account of evil (Psalm 37:1,7,8). The peace that Jesus gives eliminates this cork-popping anxiety. It stops us from "thrashing about". The peace that Jesus gives takes us into the presence of the Father and makes our fussing seem as silly as it really is. Too often we "let our hearts be troubled." We agree with our anxiety and give it room to move. We have to resist our fretfulness (and see it as sin) and

stay calm claiming Christ's peace instead.

Thirdly the peace that Jesus gives has a profound eternal perspective. "If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, I go to the Father, for My Father is greater than I." While the process of going to the Father was via the cross it was ultimately for His honor and glory and greater good. If the disciples understood that Jesus' departure from earth was for His greater benefit, then they should be encouraging it - not troubled by it. The eternal perspective took the anxiety out of the whole situation. As Hebrews says Jesus endured the cross because He could see the eternal joy set before Him - and we are to do likewise!

Hebrews 12:2-3 MKJV looking to Jesus the Author and Finisher of *our* faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured *the* cross, despising the shame, and sat down at the right of the throne of God. (3) For consider Him who endured such contradiction of sinners against Himself, lest you be weary and faint in your minds.

Fourthly the peace that Jesus gives overcomes the Devil. "I shall no longer speak many things with you, for the ruler of this world comes, and he has nothing in Me." Jesus is not overly perturbed by Satan turning up to kill Him, consume Judas and break Peter. Jesus does not turn aside to rage against the Devil but simply stays in the will of God. We are to withstand Satan but we are not to fret over his schemes - or the Devil will use that very anxiety against us. Rather we are to entrust our souls to God who arranges things perfectly (even seminars!). The apostle Peter puts it this way: **1 Peter 5:6-8 MKJV** Therefore be humbled under the mighty hand of God, so that He may exalt you in due time, (7) casting all your anxiety onto Him, for He cares for you. (8) Be sensible *and* vigilant, because your adversary *the* Devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking someone he may devour;

Fifthly the peace endures outside the Upper Room. "Arise, let us go away from here." Jesus would lead them away from the food and the feast and the safety and the warmth, through a vineyard where he would teach about being the vine and the branches and to the Garden where the betrayer would come. Jesus gives them His peace for this entire situation. Not just a peace that is in church, or the peace of the grand cathedral. Rather real world peace. The peace of an unbreakable bond with God.

How can we get hold of this peace? Three steps -

1. Try not to let anxiety in to your heart in the first place "let not your heart be troubled".
2. Head to the Father in prayer and ask for His heavenly perspective on the matter.
3. Cast your anxieties on Christ and accept the peace He gives in return and then stay in that peace by thinking on "things above".

Philippians 4:6-9 MKJV Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. (7) And the peace of God which passes all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (8) Finally, my brothers, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* honest, whatever *things are* right, whatever *things are* pure, whatever *things are* lovely, whatever *things are* of good report; if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* any praise, think on these things. (9) Do those things which you have also learned and received and heard and seen in me. And the God of peace shall be with you.

Blessings,

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