

“Peace be with you.”

John 20:19-26

So when it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and when the doors were shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in their midst and said to them, "Peace be with you." 20 And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples then rejoiced when they saw the Lord. 21 So Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you; as the Father has sent Me, I also send you." 22 And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 "If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained."

24 But Thomas, one of the twelve, called Didymus, was not with them when Jesus came. 25 So the other disciples were saying to him, "We have seen the Lord!" But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the imprint of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe."

26 After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, "Peace be with you."

/These are the first words that Jesus said to His disciples after His resurrection - "Peace be with you". \ That makes them important.

Jesus greeted His disciples by saying "peace be with you". Thomas wasn't there. So Jesus returned when Thomas was there. His first words were "Peace be with you".

/The last words He spoke before dying on the cross were "It is finished". The debt has been paid.\

John 19:28-31

After this, Jesus, knowing that all things had already been accomplished, to fulfill the Scripture, said, "I am thirsty." 29 A jar full of sour wine was standing there; so they put a sponge full of the sour wine upon a branch of hyssop and brought it up to His mouth. 30 Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

/We have peace with God because Jesus finished the work of our salvation on the cross. He finished bearing our sins and the sin of the world on that cross. \

We are at peace with God – forever. Every believer is, and it is so because Jesus died for us on that cross.

/Another word for peace with God is reconciliation. \

There are several verses that tell us we have been reconciled to God. Note carefully the basis for our having been reconciled to God.

Rom 5:8-11

8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. 10 For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.

11 And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.

/It begins with God's love.\ Christ died for us while we were yet sinners. /While we were God's enemies (the opposite of peace and reconciliation) we were reconciled to God. How? On what basis?\

/Through the death of His Son.\

"It is finished" comes first. Then "Peace be with you" follows.

Eph 2:13-16

13 But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity.

We Gentiles have been brought near to Christ - How?

/By the blood of Christ.\

His last words before He died were “It is finished”.

His first words to His disciples after He rose were “Peace be with you.”

/His blood makes possible our peace with God – our reconciliation to God.\

Col 1:19-20

19 For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, 20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

God reconciled all things – including us -through Christ. He made peace how?

/through the blood of His cross.\

Col 1:21-22

21 And although you were formerly alienated and hostile in mind, engaged in evil deeds, 22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach

Jesus has reconciled us – where?

/In His fleshly body through death.\

/First, “It is finished” . then “Peace be with you”.\

Jesus had previously spoken about His peace – before He died on the cross. Let’s look at one of those passages in the Gospel of John now.

John 14:25-27

*25 "These things I have spoken to you while abiding with you. 26 "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you. **27 "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.***

/The great enemy of our peace – our serenity, our joy - is fear.\ That is why Jesus said, “Do not let your heart be fearful.”

These days, we have all kinds of temptations to be afraid.

/There is one perfect antidote to fear. And that is the love of God.\

1 John 4:18-19

18 There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love. 19 We love, because He first loved us.

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/The only perfect love is God’s love. He loved us when we were His enemies.\ Because He loved us, He gave us His perfect Son to die for us. As a result, God changed our status from His enemy to His beloved, adopted son or daughter.

/God’s love casts out fear. And you can rely on that.\ Believe on that. God loves you. Rest in His love. Enjoy His overcoming peace.

God's love is greater than our worst fear.
God's love is greater than our worst sin.
God's love is greater than our worst thoughts.

God causes ALL THINGS to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. Including our fears and doubts. I don't know how He can possibly do it but He does. He says so in His word so that's that!

Rom 8:28-30

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. 29 For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

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Grace and peace.

Grace – God has done it.

Peace – we enjoy it.

And the Holy Spirit keeps on pouring the love of God into our hearts. God's love will overcome your fears.

Rom 5:1-5

1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

You have been justified by faith.

/You have become the righteousness of God in Christ Jesus, 2 Corinthians 5:21.\
Not simply righteous. The righteousness of God. Where? In Christ Jesus.

You have acceptance with God. Isn't it about time that you accept yourself? With your worst thoughts and fears. With your sins. With your faults – which are many.

3 And not only this, but we also exult in our tribulations, knowing that tribulation brings about perseverance; 4 and perseverance, proven character; and proven character, hope; 5 and hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out within our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.

Praise the LORD! Praise God the Father. Praise our LORD Jesus Christ. Thank You LORD for the Spirit You sent to dwell in our hearts! So that now the love of God has been poured out within our hearts. These are gifts of His grace!

On that evening after He rose from the dead, Jesus greeted His disciples with the words “Peace be with you.”

/And so when Paul wrote his letters, his greeting included peace. But the first word he used – was grace.\

Rom 1:7

7 to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

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/In every one of His letters, Paul greets the saints with these words: grace and peace.\ And he greets us the same way every time we read one of his letters.

/Grace – God has done the work for us freely as a gift.

Peace – we get to enjoy the fruit of His work.\

John 16:33

33 "These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world."

Do not be afraid. Take courage. Christ has the victory. So you cannot lose. He is with you. Cast all your cares on Him. Bear them no longer. Count on His love. Let His joy heal your heart. Be at peace. Be at rest. God's love demolishes your fears.

2 Thess 3:16

16 Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. The Lord be with you all!