

PERFECT PEACE

(εἰρήνη)

Harmonious relationships, freedom from molestation, quietness, wholeness and rest.

Perfect peace guarantees to a perfect life! Having an attitude of peace and calm is precious. It's an attitude that says, "I'm trusting God, and nothing else!" And it speaks powerfully to those around us. But it takes time, focus and the grace of God to be consistently peaceful. One way to develop consistent peace is to learn to live "in the now." We can spend a lot of time thinking about the past or wondering what the future holds, but we can't accomplish anything unless our mind is focused on *today*. The Bible tells us that God gives us grace for each day that we live. I believe that grace is the power, enablement or energy to do what we need to do—and He gives it generously, as we need it. We need to make a decision every morning to say, "God has given me today. I will rejoice and be glad in it" (Psalm 118:24).

The Real Source of Stress

Too often our stress level is tied up in our circumstances. You could be stressed because you're always busy or you're struggling financially or because you're not getting along with someone you love. It could be a number of things, but what's interesting is that these situations are not the cause of stress. Stress is really caused by your reaction to each situation.

We don't have to work at trying to get rid of every stressful situation. We need to learn how to embrace peace. See, we're always trying to get rid of everything that bothers us. But the Bible says that in the world there will be tribulation. That's why Jesus said, "Cheer up, I have overcome the world." We don't have to work at trying to get rid of every stressful situation. We need to learn how to embrace "perfect peace."

**"You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in you."
(Isaiah 26 :3)**

This wonderful promise was given in the darkest period of Israel's history, so it may well prove to be a special help to us today, when we are surrounded by much gloom and depression and when we are constantly threatened by the three great enemies of faith - doubt, fear and worry - the trusting soul may experience inward peace, a deep down calm and a quiet confidence!

It is described as "perfect peace". But what is perfect peace? Can we define it? Yes, it is a condition of *freedom from disturbance within the soul*; it is *perfect harmony reigning within*. The Hebrew word "shalom" has in it the idea of soundness of health, so that to be filled with perfect peace is to be spiritually healthy and free from all discord within the soul. There can be no room for jealousy, envy, discontent, uncontrolled temper, selfishness, pride or intolerance in the soul which is filled with peace, for all these things are disturbing factors in the heart. They are discordant notes. The peace which God offers, and which we by His grace may experience, is very practical. It is none other than a great calm which He commands –

look up Mark 4:39. God calls the peace which He gives, “perfect peace”. In what sense is it perfect?

- **It is perfect in QUALITY;** that is to say, it is perfect in the kind of peace it is. There is an imperfect peace, e.g. the peace of (a) **Ignorance**, when we imagine that all is going well whereas, in fact, if our eyes were open to see the truth we would know that all is not well (Jeremiah 6:14). There is also the imperfect peace of (b) **Stagnation**; the pool of water may be calm and peaceful, but underneath it is foul and green with slime. Many men and women know only a peace like that, and one day the shock of God’s judgment will stir up their pool and they will find that they have no real peace at all. There is also the imperfect peace of (c) **Dependence**, which is a peace which is dependent upon some thing or person. How unsatisfactory this is, for the “thing” may fail and the “person” may die! Then, where is their peace? In contrast with these three kinds of imperfect peace, God’s peace is perfect.
- **It is perfect in QUANTITY;** that is to say, the supply of it is sufficient and it exactly meets our need. The marginal rendering of “perfect peace” is “peace, peace”, i.e. **double peace**. This is very significant when we turn to Philippians 4:7, for there we are told that this double peace is peace of heart and mind, and that is the kind of peace we need, a peace which garrisons our mind and calms our heart. This double peace is also double in the sense that it is: (i) peace with God (Romans 5:1); and (ii) the peace of God (Philippians 4:7).
- **It is perfect in CONSTANCY;** that is to say, it is permanent and not intermittent. The promise says, “you will keep...” – compare Psalm 121:4.

2. HOW DOES THIS PERFECT PEACE COME TO US?

- **By Christ Jesus.** Turn to Philippians 4:7 again and notice that the Lord Jesus Christ is the channel through whom the peace of God flows into our souls. This peace within is the possession of the Christian alone. There is no peace for anyone who does not possess Christ and who is not resting on the finished work of Christ for salvation. It is “the blood of Jesus (which) whispers peace within” (Colossians 1:20).
- **By the Holy Spirit.** The Lord Jesus Christ procured peace for us upon the cross of Calvary, and that peace is offered to us through Him as the channel; but it is conveyed to our hearts and minds by the Holy Spirit —look up Galatians 5:22. As the Holy Spirit fills and floods our lives, so He produces this wonderful fruit within us.
- **By His Word.** Look up the great promise which is made in Psalm 119:165. Things and people can so often disturb us, or even cause us to stumble, but here is a promise of perfect peace to those people who love and meditate in and obey the Word of God.
- **By our obedience.** Look up Leviticus 26:3-6, and be sure to notice that most important word “If”. God guarantees to us that if we will walk in His statutes and keep His commandments, He will keep our hearts in perfect peace; if we will do our part, then God will surely do His part.
- **By plenty of praise and prayer.** The promise of Philippians 4:7 is preceded by the conditions mentioned in verse 6.