

Sermon Series: More Than Enough: How Jesus Meets Our Deepest Needs

To be used with: Session Four: Our Need for Peace

Sermon Title Possibilities: Jesus, Our Peace

Scripture: John 14:1-7

Connection with Unit Theme: To complement the small group study *More Than Enough* these sermon outlines will use the same Scripture passages as the small group study, so the pastor can reinforce the study from the pulpit.

Introduction: Most of us remember where we were on September 11, 2001. I was a pastor in Missouri, and I was waiting on a telephone call from one of my deacons. I had to take the church van to the garage for some repairs, and the deacon was going to meet me there and bring me back home. The phone rang, and I expected it was the deacon calling to let me know he was ready to leave. Instead it was my song leader. He asked me if I was watching television. I thought that was a rather strange question, but I told him I was not. He said, “A plane just crashed into the World Trade Center.” I turned on the TV and, sure enough, there was the World Trade Center with a huge gaping hole in one of the towers. I didn’t know what to make of it. Soon my deacon called me and let me know he was ready to go. I left for the garage, and when I got there, I learned that another plane had hit the other tower, and the World Trade Center had collapsed. A third plane had crashed into the Pentagon, and another had crashed in Pennsylvania. When I got home that morning I had a frantic message on my answering machine from a teenager that used to attend our church. She was worried that biblical prophecy was being fulfilled.

The recent terrorist attacks in Paris and other places remind us that we live in a world that’s anything but peaceful. The 20th century probably saw more efforts at world peace than any other period in history, but the hope of peace continues to elude us. As long as sin reigns in this world, there will be no peace. The good news is, sin will not always reign! One day Jesus will return and put an end to the wickedness of this world. In the meantime, we can find peace in Him.

I. The promise of peace.

- A. “Let not your heart be troubled” – The wording of this verse implies that the disciples were indeed troubled.
 1. The disciples had plenty of reasons to worry.
 - a. He had already predicted that one of the disciples would betray Him.
 - b. He had just told Peter he would deny Him three times.
 2. Worse yet, Jesus had told them He was going away.
 - a. The disciples had expected Jesus to set up an earthly kingdom. How could He do that if He were going away?

- b. He told the disciples they could not go with Him (13:33, 36).
- B. Jesus urged them to “believe in God.”
 - 1. The word “believe” could also be translated “trust”.
 - a. Worry is the opposite of trust in God.
 - b. If God is in control of all things, we have no reason to worry.
 - 2. “Believe also in me” – Once again, Jesus equated Himself with God.

II. The place of peace.

- A. Jesus told them He was going away to prepare a place.
 - 1. He spoke of His Father’s “house”.
 - a. “Many mansions” – The word “mansions” would better be translated “dwelling places”. This verse has been abused by many proponents of the infamous “prosperity gospel”.
 - b. Though Jesus did not promise literal mansions, we can be certain that heaven is a place of unspeakable beauty (2 Cor. 12:1-4).
 - 2. He would prepare the place by His death and resurrection.
 - a. His death would pay the full penalty for our sins.
 - b. His resurrection would prove that He was indeed God’s Son, and would authenticate His sacrifice on the cross.
- B. He assured them He would come again.
 - 1. What will happen when Jesus comes again?
 - a. He will receive us unto Himself.
 - In my opinion, one of the most powerful gospel songs ever written is “Jesus Will Outshine Them All”. It reminds us that, though heaven will be a place of great beauty and we will see our loved ones again, the main attraction will be Jesus!
 - b. He will take us to a place of perfect peace (Revelation 21:4).
 - 2. How can we be sure He will return?
 - a. He proved His claims were true when He rose from the dead.
 - b. None of His other promises have ever failed.

III. The Person of peace.

- A. Thomas was confused by Jesus’ statement: “whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.” He and the other disciples had no idea where Jesus was going, let alone the way to get there as far as he was concerned.
 - 1. The disciples had no reason not to know.
 - a. He had told them many times He was going back to His Father.
 - b. He had predicted His own death and resurrection.
 - 2. Jesus gave Thomas a threefold answer.
 - a. He is “the way” – That means He is the only way to the Father.
 - b. He is “the truth” – He is the ultimate standard of truth. Anyone who teaches contrary to Jesus is teaching falsely.
 - c. He is “the life” – Eternal life is found only in Him.
- B. To know Jesus is to know the Father.
 - 1. No one can come to the Father except through Jesus.
 - a. Jesus is the only one that paid the penalty for our sins.
 - b. He is the only one that defeated death.

- When I was in college I attended a faculty symposium featuring a liberal theologian from a prominent university. He essentially said all religions of the world are working for the same purpose and leading to the same place. One of our professors asked him how he could reconcile that statement with John 14:6. The theologian said he believed that verse was added later by the early church. Skeptics often say that about verses in the Bible that they don't like. Unfortunately for them, the textual evidence is clearly against them.
2. Jesus and the Father are not the same Person, but they are the same God.
 - a. He claimed to be as eternal as God the Father (John 8:58-59).
 - b. He said He and the Father "are one" (John 10:30). The Jews knew exactly what He meant by that statement (10:33).
 - c. To hate Jesus is to hate God (John 15:23).

Conclusion: When I was in seminary, our pastor invited an elderly retired missionary to come speak at our church. I'm sure he was at least in his seventies – maybe older – but he still had quite a bit of fire in his bones. George H. W. Bush was President at the time, and he had just met with Soviet Premier Mikhail Gorbachev on the island of Malta. This incident had inspired the missionary to prepare a sermon called "From Yalta To Malta." He remembered the Yalta conference at the end of World War II between Franklin Roosevelt, Winston Churchill, and Josef Stalin. That conference didn't turn out so well, and the missionary was skeptical about the chances of the more recent conference on Malta. Then he said something I thought was rather profound: "We won't have true peace in this world until the Prince of Peace comes."

He was right. Just a year later President Bush was sending troops to Saudi Arabia in the largest deployment since the Vietnam War. As long as there's wickedness in this world, wars will continue to happen. True peace will not come until our Lord returns. Until that day, we can enjoy peace through Him. When things in this world seem to spin out of control, we can rest in the assurance that He will win the final victory. That's true peace!

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