

# Sermons from the Greats II: George Whitefield, the Method of Grace

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Sermon Summary & 5-Day Devotional Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>, 2026

## Sermon Summary

We opened Jeremiah 6:13-16 and faced the hard truth that God's people can be lulled into a false peace by leaders—and by their own hearts—who say, "Peace, peace," when there is no peace. We walked through George Whitefield's burden, not to condemn but to awaken, as genuine peace with God never comes by softening sin; it comes by seeing it clearly and then fleeing to Christ. We were reminded that real Christianity is an inward work of the Holy Spirit. God may draw people in varied ways—some through deep upheaval, others with a quieter mercy—but certain realities come alive in every soul that truly knows peace.

First, we must be convicted of our actual sins. Not general guilt, but the piercing sense that we have sinned against a holy God and deserve His judgment. Second, we must feel the burden of original sin—the bent within us that produces the very things we hate. Until we recognize the root, we will keep trimming branches.

Third, we must see the sin in our best works. Our fig leaves—prayer, discipline, charity—cannot cover the heart's stain. Even our brightest deeds are mixed, and self-righteousness is often our last idol. Fourth, we must be convicted of unbelief. Historical agreement about Jesus is not saving faith. True faith is a Spirit-given trust that transfers the weight of our hope from ourselves to Christ alone.

Finally, true peace flows only when we lay hold of Christ's righteousness by faith. When His righteousness is counted as ours, and His pardon becomes personal, the soul rests. That is the "ancient path" Jeremiah urges us to walk: a Spirit-born honesty about sin, and a Spirit-born confidence in Jesus. I urged us to stand at the crossroads, to reject soothing lies, to seek the Lord while He may be found, and to ask for the only peace that lasts—the peace that Christ Himself speaks to a humbled heart.

## Key Takeaways

### **- Beware of soothing, false peace**

False peace feels kind and costs nothing; it leaves our idolatries intact and our conscience sleepy. It numbs us to judgment instead of preparing us for grace. Learn to question the peace that never confronts you. God's peace wounds before it heals, and it always leads to holiness.

### **- Conviction must go beneath behavior**

God not only exposes what we've done; He unveils what we are. Until we grapple with the bent of our nature, we will swap sins rather than be delivered from them. Deep conviction is not God's cruelty—it is His scalpel. He reveals the root to free us from it.

### **- Even our best works are stained**

Religious effort is a poor disguise for self-trust. Our finest moments still carry mixed motives and hidden pride. Seeing this is not despair; it is doorway. When our righteousness crumbles, Christ's righteousness finally becomes precious.

### **- True peace rests on Christ's righteousness**

Assurance is not built on moods, record, or resolve, but on a Person and a finished work. Faith takes Christ as enough when everything in us feels insufficient. This rest is not passive; it reshapes our loves and our lives. When Christ speaks peace, the soul learns how to be still.

## 5 Day Devotional Based on the Sermon

### **Day 1: Stand at the Crossroads: Seek the Ancient Paths**

You stand at a real crossroads: comforting words promise peace, yet your soul knows the wound is deeper. God invites you to look carefully, ask for the good way, and walk in it for your healing. The ancient path is not nostalgia; it is the timeless road of truth, repentance, and trust. False peace numbs, but true peace begins when you let God name the wound and lead your steps. Ask for the road that brings rest, take the next small step, and keep walking with Him.

Jeremiah 6:16: Stand where the roads meet and pay attention; ask about the old, reliable path—the good way—and choose to walk in it, and you will discover rest for your soul.

*Reflection: Where do you feel tempted to settle for a “peace, peace” that avoids honest repentance, and what single step will you take this week to walk the good way instead?*

### **Day 2: Convicted of Actual Sins: Honest Before God**

Facing your actual sins is not cruelty; it is mercy that clears the fog. Before a holy God, even one wrongful thought, word, or deed matters, and we have many. Let the weight land not to crush you, but to drive you to seek mercy. Grieve not only the consequences, but that your sin is against God Himself. Bring specific wrongdoing into the light today and ask for cleansing and a new heart.

Ezekiel 18:4: Every life belongs to me, says the Lord; the one who sins is the one who bears the consequence of death.

*Reflection: Name one concrete sin from the last week that you will confess to God today, and what specific repair or change will you pursue as a response?*

### **Day 3: Seeing Original Sin: The Heart’s Deep Roots**

Conviction must go deeper than actions; it must reach the roots. Inside is a fallen nature that bends us away from God even when our behavior looks clean. When you feel that inward pull, do not deny it—let it teach you humility and dependence. Join the ancient cry, “Who will deliver me?” and let that question open you to grace. Let the awareness of indwelling sin turn your longing toward Jesus for daily rescue.

Romans 7:24–25: What a burdened person I am! Who will rescue me from this dying body? Thanks be to God—deliverance comes through Jesus Christ our Lord.

*Reflection: When do you most notice the bent of your heart even when your behavior looks fine, and how will you ask the Spirit for help in that exact moment?*

### **Day 4: When Your Best Works Still Fall Short**

When awakening begins, the reflex is to fix yourself with better prayers, stricter habits, and more good deeds. Yet even our finest efforts are mixed with pride, fear, and self-justification. Like fig leaves, they may cover but cannot heal. This is not to shame diligence, but to free you from

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trusting it. Lay your best works down and rest your confidence in Christ alone, even as you keep doing good in His strength.

Romans 8:8: Those who live from the old, fleshly nature cannot bring pleasure to God.

*Reflection: Think of one recent “good” action you felt proud of—what mixed motives can you acknowledge before God, and how will you consciously transfer your confidence from that act to Christ today?*

### **Day 5: Lay Hold of Christ: Peace by Faith**

Peace comes when you cling to Christ Himself, receiving His righteousness as your own. Not theory, but trust—entrusting your weary self to the One who justifies the ungodly. When God declares you righteous through faith, a river of peace begins to flow. From that acceptance, you walk the good way not to earn love, but because you already have it. Today, take hold of Him by faith and let His word speak rest to your soul.

Romans 5:1: Since we have been made right with God through faith, we now live at peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Reflection: In one area where shame lingers, what simple action will embody your trust in Christ’s righteousness—perhaps a prayer, a confession to a friend, or an act of costly obedience?*