

Good morning. I, for one, am grateful. I was born in the age of air conditioning. I see pictures of church gatherings in the 1920s, and men have suits and ties and coats on, and there's no air conditioning. And I'm like, how did the Holy Spirit even accomplish anything, right?

So can I get an amen that we're grateful for Freon and air conditioning? Amen. All right. I really don't know how I would have survived, but I'm sure I would have anyway. Hey, I want to just comment, too, when we're singing.

When Quentin was leading us in. Holy, holy, holy hymn. I don't know about you, but I kind of felt a moment and a reminder that the presence of God is here. He always is here. But just this morning had a sense that the Holy Spirit's here.

Always is. But more so this morning feels like. And I pray that we all, self included, listen to whatever the Spirit says to us this morning, because he always leads us into freedom, right? So thanks to Quentin and the band for leading us in that song and leading our hearts in that way. So, hey, today is a day for statistics, I suppose.

And the topic is one in every four people do something, right? So one in every four people are crazy. Look at your three best friends. If they seem normal, it's you.

One in every four people at any given zoom meeting are actually listening. The other three are staring at their own video feeds. Research shows that one in four people make up exactly 25% of the population.

One in four people use a strong, secure password. The other three of us just add another exclamation point at the end. One in four people are terrible at math, which leaves the other 58% to do all the work. Now, if you're not a math person, that was a joke, right? Okay, next one's a little more serious.

These are actually research studies about people and about us. One in four adults feel they have no close confidant or trusted friend to talk about in their daily struggles. One in four employees exhibit high signs of burnout, exhaustion, cynicism, and low performance. One in four people will experience a mental health or a neurological disorder at some point in their lives. And this last one, which will kick off what we're talking about today, one study of 46,000 people.

One in four people say that inner peace is what they struggle with the most. One in four people, inner peace is what they struggle with the most. And I would say the other three may not be being honest or it's their number two. In other words, struggling with inner peace is we're acquainted with that, right? And we could count off 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2, 3, 4.

And the other three could leave the room. But like I said, I think we all wrestle with that. We all wrestle with this sense of inner peace. And that's what we're talking about today. The series is called Frontline.

So about, you know, I experience things in church, or I'm told things in church about, you know, guilt and image and belonging and peace. But yet my everyday life doesn't seem to translate to the front line of my everyday life. And why is that? And what do I do about that? Cause I hear all this in my head.

But when Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday comes, something's not connecting. So today the topic is peace. It's the topic of the day. Peace. And how that peace, or inner peace, however you want to call it, it's the very thing sometimes that we wrestle with.

Like I hear about the Bible says this, the front lines of my life looks like this, something's not working right. So we're gonna talk about the two extremes of emotion. The first, I'm a signed guy, you know that. So first one is distress and distress are the distressing emotions that Jesus talks about. The Bible talks about that you and I all feel.

Hunter, just read about not being anxious. That's a distressing emotion. Worry about the future. Jesus said, come unto me all who are weary and heavy laden. Weariness, feeling burdened.

That's distressing emotions. Jesus talks to the disciples about not being troubled, not being afraid. Why are you crying? Those are all distressing emotions. They're all emotions we'd rather not feel, but they're all emotions that because we're human beings, we do feel, and they're distressing emotions.

On the other end of the spectrum, though, is peace. Jesus talks about peace a lot. The Bible talks about peace. Jesus talks about rest for your soul, peace of God. Jesus says, my peace.

Peace is this sense of tranquility not around you, inside your soul, inside your soul. So you think about these fancy postcards of tranquil nature scenes, but that's your soul. It's about tranquility of soul, regardless of the outward circumstances. It's about rest for your soul, regardless of the pace of life on the outside. So we're gonna talk about.

But here's the thing. We know this. We feel those things. And we know we're supposed to be. Supposed to be.

Cause the Bible tells us so this way. But the bridge between here and here, sometimes for us, self included, is hard to navigate. So we live

here, but we feel guilt that we're not there and we're not sure what to do. So that's what we're talking about today. So again, the topic of the day is peace.

So to do that, we're looking at a couple different scenarios, like some vignettes where Jesus asks the disciples about some of their distressing emotions, like what's going on and what's happening. All right, first one, Mark, chapter four. The disciples. You may know this story. The disciples are in a boat with Jesus.

They're crossing over the Sea of Galilee. Big, big body of water. Some of the disciples are fishermen, so they know water. But there's a horrible, horrible storm. It's violent.

A violent storm. The boat is, you know, rocking. And some of these guys who are fishermen, they know this is not normal. This is a big. This is.

And they were terrified. So they weren't like novice boaters. They knew this was. And it says they were terrified. And what was Jesus doing?

He was taking a Sunday afternoon nap in the back of the boat. And they say, teacher. So this is the stress, right? They were terrified. They thought they might die.

Understandably. They say, teacher, don't you care that we're drowning? We might drown. The boat was taking on water. Jesus stands up and just says, peace, be still.

And the winds and the waves stopped. And they're like, who is this guy? But then Jesus asked him this question. Why are you so afraid? Okay, I'm gonna do a freeze frame moment.

Let's freeze frame the movie. Jesus just asked the question. And Sutton's over here and they're sweating and just, okay, Jesus, what do you mean? Why? Of course they're gonna be afraid.

Wouldn't you? I mean, Jesus, we could die. And you're back there taking a Sunday nap watching NFL or whatever you're doing back there. What do you mean, why are we afraid? And again, let me just say this Jesus tone toward them.

He doesn't mock us. He's not like, why are you afraid? Jesus is tender with us. He's probably saying, why are you afraid? He's inviting them into a conversation about what's going on inside of them.

All right, so it's like, Jesus, it seems obvious. Why are you asking them? Well, he's asking them. Cause he's showing them something about himself. He's not degrading them or demeaning them.

He's just like, why are you afraid? And the word afraid here, it's interesting. It's not the typical word for fear. Cause the word for fear is usually the word phobos, which gets phobia. This word.

One of the translations of this word for fear is timid and cowardly. So now you're thinking, okay, Jesus maybe was making fun of them. Why are you guys being cowards? But he wasn't.

There was a situation in my life, oh, it was probably 20, 30 years ago, that I knew there were two things God wanted me to do. Both of them involved hard conversations with two different people. But I wasn't doing it. And I told my wife, there's these two things. And I told her what they were.

I know God wants me to do this and this. And she said, why aren't you doing it? And this is literally what I said. I'm a wimp.

I lack courage. And it was like, that's what Jesus is talking about. Why are you afraid? Why are you lacking courage about the very situation you know Jesus is asking you to step into? And the human part of us says, well, it's just, I don't know what's gonna happen when I have those conversations.

It might destroy me emotionally, but it might not. But Jesus is like, but I want you to do that. I'm gonna go with you. So you might have storms in your financial life. And Jesus is saying, don't be afraid.

Why are you afraid? Trust me. You might have storms in your relational life, breakups, divorce, disengagement from your kids, whatever. And Jesus might be gently asking you, why are you afraid? Just follow me.

You might have storms in your health life or your mental health life. And you're just sleep at night becomes a premium. You wake up more than you wish you did. And you. Those things swirl in your mind.

Money, relationships, future, past.

But Jesus doesn't shame us for those things. Even when there's one point where Jesus in the gospel, he's gonna heal a young boy. And Jesus says something to the Father about his faith, his trust. And the Father says, I believe. Help me in my unbelief.

I believe. And maybe that's a short prayer that you might need, I might need even this week. Jesus, I trust you. I believe, but help me. I want more of that.

I don't wanna live in those emotions. I need to experience them. Yeah, but I don't wanna live there. I want this. Help me in my unbelief.

Second question that Jesus asked somebody about a distressing emotion. This is the morning of the Resurrection. So Peter and John had run to the tomb. They came back and told everybody else. Mary comes to the tomb Cause she's trying to figure out what's going on.

She gets there and the tombstone is rolled away, tomb is empty. But she's distraught. She's weeping because she thinks, as you and I probably might have thought, somebody took his body, which was like desecration. So she's weeping and Jesus shows up. For whatever reason, she didn't recognize him.

The Bible tells us maybe it was tears in her eyes or something else. And Jesus comes up to her and he asks the question again that almost seems like, come on. He says to her, why are you crying?

Asks the disciples in the boat, why are you afraid? Now he's asking us, asking Mary, why are you crying? I don't like using this word, but I would say, duh, Jesus, freeze frame. Jesus, what do you mean why is she crying? She just saw some horrendous things happen to you and now she thinks somebody stole your body.

And what she answers when Jesus says why are you crying? She says, she talks about Jesus, him. And she says now somebody has taken him away. So she's in the midst of this grief, sadness cause something was taken away from her. I did a funeral last Saturday.

I attended a funeral Monday night of a 26 year old tragic death. It's like grief is real, we don't need it, we're not pretending that's not real. But yet there's other things. Grief is when you experience any emotion of something taken away from you. Maybe it's the death of a loved one, that's probably the grief someone's taken away from you.

Maybe it's death of a relationship, that relationship has been taken away from you and that's what's causing you this crying emotion. You may not be crying, but you know what I'm talking about. Or maybe what's been taken away from you is a hope or a dream. I thought my life would have turned out differently, but it was taken away from me. Just like Mary said to Jesus.

So again when Jesus asked her, why are you crying? He's not asking for the cognitive correct answer. Cause Jesus, he's wanting conversation with her. He's inviting her to talk about her pain of what's been taken from her. Then he reveals himself to her and of course she's like overjoyed.

But the questions that Jesus asks when he says why are you afraid in the boat or now why are you crying? They're not judgmental statements, they are invitations to conversations with. And maybe, maybe your prayer this week is just saying to Jesus, I'm really sad because of this Was taken away from me, my relationships, some money, whatever.

Hopes and dreams. Maybe that's your only prayer of the day.

I'm sad, Jesus, cause this was taken from me. Cause Jesus wants to hear. He invites us into those kind of conversations. Third scenario, and this is Easter, Easter Sunday. He shows up.

Jesus shows up. And the disciples are in a locked room. Cause they are still scared to death. They don't know what happened exactly. They know the tomb's empty.

They're really confused. But they saw the brutality of the Romans toward Jesus. And they know what the Romans are capable of. So they think they might be nests. They lock the door.

Door. Jesus shows up, still human, new body Jesus. But he somehow came into the room without unlocking the door. And he says to them, why are you troubled? Troubled is an emotion we all feel.

Right. Troubled is like inner commotion. It's you're agitated, you're stirred up. I like to imagine it as like a blender that's on high.

Maybe yours don't make that sound. Mine does. Right, but when that's on high and your soul is agitated, I think you all know what that feels like. Something happens that troubles you, something has happened that troubles you. Something will happen in your future.

And I guarantee it will trouble your soul. So when Jesus asks them, why are you troubled? Freeze frame moment here in that movie, Jesus, do you really have to ask that question? Do you know why they're troubled? Do you know why we're troubled over here?

We saw some horrendous things happening to you and we thought it was gonna happen to us. And we're scared to death. We're troubled, we're confused. Somebody told us the tomb was empty. We don't know what to make of all of this.

We're in a big time cognitive dissonance. We don't know what to make of what's going on in my life. Maybe that's you, Jesus. I have no idea what's going on in my life. Things are spinning around of control.

Maybe you had nothing to do with a circumstance spinning or turning and you're feeling agitated because the life around you. And Jesus says to you, why are you troubled? But again, he's not asking in a judgy way, why are you troubled? He's more like, talk to me, why are you troubled? Why are you troubled?

And what's interesting is Jesus himself, the Bible tells us, was troubled at times. When Lazarus died, his really good friend, he comes in there, Mary and Martha and other people are weeping and crying. Cause of Lazarus death. And the Bible tells us Jesus was troubled when

he. On Palm Sunday, he came into Jerusalem this big fanfare.

And then he realizes the brokenness of the people of Jerusalem. And it says he's troubled at the Last Supper when he talks about somebody's going to betray him. And the Bible tells us Jesus was troubled.

So that tells me being troubled is not a sin. Now, staying there and living your life out of that troubledness will lead you in a bad direction. But. But Jesus knows what that feels like. When you're troubled, you don't need to hide from him.

I feel I'm all troubled. I gotta get it figured out till I go talk to Jesus. He knows what you're feeling. That gives me great hope. There was a time, years ago, I was going through some long time ago, going through some stuff, and there was some un.

Let's see. I'll just say there were false accusations toward me and I was riding my bike. I can show you in town where I was not that makes any difference. And I said out loud to Jesus, I'm so tired of being misunderstood. And I heard, not vocally, but I know it was Jesus.

I heard inside Jesus say, I know what that feels like. And it was like, oh, you do? You know what it feels like to be misunderstood. You know what it feels like to be troubled. You know what it feels like to be falsely accused.

You know what it feels like when your friends betray you. Oh, I'm not alone in this. So again, when he says, why are you troubled? To the disciples post resurrection. And he says, maybe to you too, or to me too.

Why am I troubled? Why are you troubled? It's an invitation to a conversation. And maybe you talk to him about your troubles, but talking to Jesus about it is part of the healing process. We don't go from these troubled, weary, burdened, afraid, crying.

We don't go from here to there in one bunny hop. We grow. Our souls grow. We move, we have an experience. We understand.

Oh, and we kind of relate to Jesus. He grows our souls. He grows our souls. He grows our. So it's about the growth of your own soul.

And usually our souls grow with difficulty when we have these things happen. And then we learn how to trust Jesus a little bit more, a little bit more, a little bit more. And we move to the place where our souls are then anchored in peace. Doesn't mean life is peaceful outside of. Your life might still be turbulent.

Right. So there's. So this is the passage that Hunter read at the beginning. So the first three were all Jesus talking About these

disturbing emotions, distressing emotions. Now it's Paul Philippians, chapter four.

He says this. Don't be anxious about anything.

Okay, Paul, that's easy for you to say. You're like a theologian, dude. You know all the right theology. Jesus actually appeared to you on the road, and it's a miraculous situation. So how can you tell me not to be angry?

You don't know what I'm going through, Paul. Oh, oh, wait a minute. Oh, Paul, when you wrote that, you were in a dungy dirty Roman prison, weren't you? And you never got out, and you had a sense that even then you were gonna be executed. Oh.

So how could you say that in that situation? Paul, you're in a situation none of us have. I haven't experienced that. I haven't experienced a situation where I knew death was imminent and I'm in a dark, dirty, filthy dungeon, and you tell me not to be anxious. How can you say that?

But that tells me it's possible for us to get to that place. It's easy to kind of say, well, Jesus understands me. That's Jesus. Right? But now we're talking about Paul, and he's telling us not to be anxious, and we can't say to him, you don't know what I'm going through.

And he's like, yeah, I probably do. But the spirit of Jesus in me gives me peace. So here's the whole passage on the screen. We're gonna read it out loud together. So remember, Paul wrote this in a Roman prison.

He wrote it to the church in the city of Philippi. But he wrote this probably in chains, you know, filthy situation. And he had a pretty good sense. My last days of life are gonna be here, and then they're gonna kill me. And this is what he says.

This is what comes out of his soul. I can be that way. You can be that way. Yes. Right.

So read it out loud with me. Here we go. Do not be anxious about anything. But in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God and the peace of God. Say that again.

The peace of God one more time. The peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Let me break this down a little bit. We often read prayer petitions. Present your request to God.

It sounds so formal. Paul's simply saying, just talk to God about it.

Talk to Jesus about your anxieties. Talk to him. It doesn't have to be like a formal.

Now I'm praying. Now I'm petitioning Now I'm doing this. No, just talk to Jesus. And then it says, the peace of God, which transcends all understanding. That simply means he's offering you supernatural peace.

You can go to. Great. I'm not a pro therapist. If you go to therapists, I've been to one different time. I'm all about finding psychological peace.

But Jesus is talking about this supernatural peace, something that doesn't make sense. Like it doesn't make sense that Paul is writing about peace in a Roman Dungy prison. That must be supernatural peace transcends my understanding. That's what he's talking about, that you can have and I can have. And so he talks about this.

And it guards our hearts, it guards our mind. So even like when I say about talking to Jesus, there are times literally in the last X number of years, I'll wake up at night and I'll be anxious about something. Maybe nobody else has ever had that experience. And if so, you're just better than me. Right?

But I've actually whispered out loud, laying in bed, Jesus, I'm anxious about this situation. Jesus, I'm worried about this I'm anxious or Jesus, I'm afraid.

Those are powerful short, short, short prayers. Maybe whisper that when you're laying in bed in your car. Jesus, I'm afraid. Jesus, I'm sad. Jesus, my heart's troubled about this whole situation.

Jesus, I'm anxious. It's the conversation he wants. That's what prayers and petitions are, conversation with Jesus. Now, does it change overnight? No.

But every time you utter that prayer and you open yourself up to Jesus, you move to the point where this becomes more of reality, and it drives who you are in your soul. And distress becomes a foreigner in your soul. It's still gonna be there. You're still gonna have this side of heaven. We're still gonna have souls that have trouble and anxious and crying.

But we don't stay there. We don't live there. We don't plant our feet there.

So the last scenario is now, it happened the Easter Sunday when Jesus showed the disciples. It happened a week later when he showed up. He comes into the room and they're scared and all that stuff. And he asks them, why are you troubled? But then he says, one of the situations in the scripture, he comes into the room and he says, peace be to you.

What peace? We're traumatized. And he says it again, peace be to you. As his Father sent me, I'm sending you. And then he says, and now receive the Holy Spirit.

The scripture said he Breathed on him, which I wrestle a lot with. Not wrestle. I'm curious about what that looked like. Did he go around each one blow in the air. I'm just being facetious, you know, I don't know.

But he. I think, why? Because breath is the same word for spirit. And he's saying, if you will receive the Holy Spirit, the. That will move you toward the foundation of your soul.

That is anchored in peace, no matter what is happening outside of you. And you might say, well, I already have the Holy Spirit. I'm a Christian. My point is, we can always have more, right? I can always receive the Holy Spirit in certain situations.

When I feel traumatized, when I feel sad or troubled or whatever else. Maybe the simple prayer is, holy Spirit, I need more of you. Cause I need this in my soul. So when Jesus said peace to you, receive the Holy Spirit. There must be a pretty powerful connection between peace and the Holy Spirit.

Cause it's supernatural, right? We're gonna sing a song here, a short chorus. None of you know it. Cause I just. Maybe you do.

But I just heard it for the first time, like a month ago. So I. Here's the words on the screen. It's shalom, Shalom, Shalom. Shalom is the Hebrew word for peace.

Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the city of peace. That's Hebrew. Jesus would have been speaking Aramaic, not Arabic. Aramaic.

And the word for peace there was shloma. It just sings better if we say shalom. Right? And Arabic, it's salam. It's all the same thing.

It's peace. The kind of peace Jesus talks about, of course, is soul depth peace. So shalom, shalom, shalom, you're my peace. And I want you to sing this to Jesus. And if you're able to, or just open a hand and put it on your lap.

Cause you're basically saying, I want to receive more of that peace. The Bible tells us the fruit of the Holy Spirit, so it must come from the Holy Spirit. All right, so what's the first note? Shalom. Okay, Just sing.

Just join in when you can figure it out. Shalom, shalom, shalom, you're my peace. Shalom, shalom, shalom over me. Do it again. Shalom,

shalom, shalom over me.

Oops. Shalom, shalom, shalom over me, over me. Acapella, Right? Words this time. Shalom, shalom, shalom, you're my peace.

Shalom, shalom, shalom over me. Jesus, would you speak your words of peace over every single person in him this morning? And to the degree that we've been open to receive more of your spirit in us. You promise as you'd do that. So we want that shalom that you offer us deep in our souls.

We want to be like Paul. We want to be like Jesus. So I pray for peace, the peace of the Holy Spirit to be poured into every one of us here today. And we love you, Jesus, and no one like you. Absolutely no one like you.

So we have a time of response during this service, and that was already a response. Cause I'm asking you to be willing to say to Jesus, I want more of your peace. And you're driving in your car, open your hand up. Nobody. If somebody sees you, they'll just think you're talking on the phone, Right?

Just. I want more of your peace, Jesus. But we also, we do communion. Some people call it Lord's Table Eucharist. Different traditions remaining the same thing.

But Jesus said, this is my body, this is my blood. Broken for you, shed for you. Every time you eat this cup and eat this bread and drink this cup, remember me. And so I'm gonna ask you to remember something specific about Jesus. Remember, he said, peace be to you.

It's not like a peace, man. It's not that. It's like I'm offering you something supernatural in your soul. Peace be to you. Receive it.

So even as you take his this into your body, you're inviting more of his spirit into your situation, into your fear, into your troubledness, into your crying, whatever, all right? And there'll be people on the sides who have lanyards on that are there to pray with you. And maybe you just need to ask the person praying for you. I just. Just pray for peace.

And you know what you're talking. You don't need to give them details. You know what you mean? So. And then we're gonna sing as well.

So let's welcome the Holy Spirit. Amen.