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# Sermon Notes

December 9, 2018

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## The Gift of Peace: Peace with Self

Isaiah 26:3, Romans 7:15-25, 1 Thessalonians 5:23

### Peace With God

- ❖ God gives us HIS peace
  - richer, fuller, more meaningful than what the world calls peace
  - we need God's gift of peace because we are natural born sinners and rebels
- ❖ We cannot make peace with God, but God CAN make peace with us
  - God offers His gift of peace to all who believe and trust in Jesus to save them from their sin
  - no more war... no more enmity... peace, perfect peace!

### Peace With Self

- ❖ Many people, including many Christians are not at peace with themselves
  - discontent and unhappiness about self
  - a restlessness and insatiable hunger, a longing for something more, something better

- ❖ The world offers a wrongheaded path to inner peace
  - putting trust in human ability
  - manufacturing your own brand of inner peace!
- ❖ Jesus is the only source of peace within ourselves
  - peace with self is a GIFT from God
  - peace with self is the way things were meant to be
  - because of sin, our hearts are filled with fear, frustration and futility
- ❖ Jesus ends the civil war inside ourselves
  - James 4:8
  - Romans 7:15, 19 *ff.*
  - the civil war within is a perplexing, overwhelming, insurmountable problem

### Thanks Be to God!

- ❖ *There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.* (Romans 7:25-8:1)
  - God sends Jesus to end the state of war between Himself and us AND to end the civil war inside of us
  - God reconciles us to Himself
  - God offers us a wholeness that unites our spirit, soul and body
  - God makes us single-minded and single-hearted

- ❖ *Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*  
(1 Thessalonians 5:23)
  - "I belong to the God of peace."
  - God Himself does the work of sanctifying us by working directly and personally in our lives
  - being as holy as a pardoned sinner can possibly be
- ❖ A temple of the Holy Spirit
  - wholeness and completeness
  - deep inner peace
  - a blameless life
    - though we long for it, though we pray for it, we can't see it fully
    - **BUT GOD CAN!**
  - if you belong to Jesus, when God looks at you, He sees you wrapped up with Jesus' perfection
- ❖ The Great Commandment (Deuteronomy 6:5)
  - loving God with all you've got
  - receive God's gift of peace within, love God with singleness of heart, singleness of soul, singleness of mind

## We Need God

- ❖ People need God as much as they need air to breathe, food to eat, and water to drink
  - estranged from God, people will never "find themselves"
  - no one can be what they were designed to be apart from the God who gives life
- ❖ God's desire is that we know Him, know His peace and learn to live in peace within ourselves

## Personal Reflection

1. Would you describe yourself as being at peace with yourself or as someone who is restless, discontent, and/or dissatisfied with yourself?
  2. Have you "bought into" any of the world's misguided strategies for "manufacturing" inner peace? If so, are you willing to set all that aside and seek the peace with self that only God can give you in Christ? Why or why not?
  3. Read Romans 7:15-8:1. In what ways do you identify with the struggle Paul describes in these verses? After considering the challenge and the struggle Paul portrays, how do you respond to the triumphant assertion he offers in 8:1?
1. God works to unite our whole spirit, soul and body so that all of our thoughts, actions, words and motives work together as one united whole. Offer yourself to God in prayer, asking Him to do this work within you and to give you a willing spirit to cooperate with all He is working to do in and for you.