

Sunday

Week #1. Restoring Peace With God

Peace

Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you. My peace, I give unto you . . ."

Thus, we have a gift – genuine Inner Peace.

In the Bible the word for peace, Shalom, doesn't mean no trouble. It introduces a mental state which encompasses anything and everything that makes for our highest good. Thus, Jesus' gift of peace is the peace of reality, the peace of conquering our fears, not the illusion of peace where we escape into daydreams of life.

"I would rather walk with God in the dark than go alone in the light."

Mary Gardiner Brainard

Genuine peace is independent of the bullets flying about our heads – the outward circumstances of daily life. No experience of life can ever take genuine peace from us. No sorrow, no suffering, no danger can ever make it less.

Yet, there are times when we get trapped by illusion, fall into wishful thinking or are persuaded to try temporary escape through a fanciful experience.

But the genuine article comes only from looking full into the face of Jesus and receiving His full contentment. Thus, we acknowledge that our efforts are limited but God's are unlimited.

So, ask. "Have I received the gift yet?"

It's free and once received must be put into practice to authenticate its power. When you begin reflecting the peace of Jesus in your everyday affairs, you are showing that you have restored peace with God, because you are exhibiting the freedom to turn your mind to Him, to change your story, your testimony.

On the other hand, when you will to not receive the gift, you open yourself up to all sorts of resistance and illusion because you can never turn your mind onto anything other than yourself, your circumstances, your troubles, your worries, and your thoughts. These cause you to become depressed – apathetic – blaming – guilty – afraid – angry – worried.

Thus, without Inner Peace, nothing has much value. You live in a state of constant worry, fearing that at any minute everything will be lost.

The payoff of Inner Peace is that you live your daily life in a state of harmony with your highest values and with your innermost convictions.

This has got to be the world's greatest bargain, because it's free for the asking and everybody wins, because of the nature of the gift.

The gift you receive is the Holy Spirit, Jesus' ally. Jesus taught us three basic things to get us on the path to peace.

#1. The Holy Spirit will teach us all things we need to know.

This is The Way of which Jesus spoke when He said, "I am the way, the truth, the life."

The Way is not only a map, it is an internal gyroscope that guides us into our relationships with friends, with family, with acquaintances, and keeps us learning about how our faith plays out in practical ways during our lives every day.

To receive the Holy Spirit is to agree to open our minds, to pay attention to all the wonderful and important things God has a hand in, things that are playing out before our very eyes, things that we don't see if we're sleep walking.

Thus, we are constantly adding to our stores of knowledge, our discernment and to our skills, as we grow our talents, going from the Amateur Believer to the Professional.

#2. Jesus said, "I am the truth."

Jesus, through the Holy Spirit, brings our minds back to His words in matters of belief, so that we don't fall into the illusion of stiff-necked know-it-allism, because we are open to discovering the true meaning of truth.

#3. Jesus said, "I am the Life."

Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit we will be kept right in matters of behavior every day. When temptation comes to do something wrong and we're on the brink of giving in, there will come into our mind's eye a picture of Jesus. And a verse of Scripture or a song will trigger our love for Him. Thus, because we will not be able to have peace when flooded with guilt, our conscience will turn us aside. So, instead of the wrong, we do the right, as guided by the still small voice of intuition and discernment.

So, go for peace! When you have peace, confusion stops, because there is no confusion in Him.

Once you decide on peace – Your story changes forever.

Week 1 Food Diary

Monday

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Snacks

Tuesday

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Snacks

Wednesday

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Snacks

Thursday

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Snacks

Friday

Breakfast

Lunch

Dinner

Snacks

Monday

Week I – Day I

Morning Prayer

Theme: Ask God to heal our families

Today pray that a loved one in your immediate family who is struggling will be healed - physically, mentally, and spiritually.

Evening Prayer

Theme: Changing what is, through the power of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit As A Source of Devotion

Today commit your hands to serve Him. Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to help you positively impact the lives of others through small gestures of kindness throughout the upcoming day. Try holding an elevator, being kind while driving, or opening a door.

Wrapping UP

Let the day's events stream through your mind. Let them teach you. List five things you did today that were good. Thank God for each.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Make a list of six things you intend doing tomorrow. Pray for the Holy Spirit to guide you through the day.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Tuesday

Week I – Day 2

Morning Prayer

Theme: Pray that God will heal our work communities

Today pray that a co-worker who is in need of healing will receive the attention of God.

Evening Prayer

Theme: Changing what is, through the power of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit As A Source of Joy

There's lots of suffering wherever we go today and to turn our backs on it is to work the death of joy on ourselves and on those with sorrow.

Jesus said, "He who believes in Me . . . out of his heart will flow rivers of living water." (John 7:38)

Look around and you'll see how in the midst of all the suffering, the flowers, trees, squirrels, birds, and the stars are giving off evidences of joy – fragrances, acrobatics, twinkles, dancing in the breeze.

Then, remember. Jesus also said, "These things have I spoken to you, that My joy may be in you and that your joy may be full."

So, how do we get to the joy of Jesus?

There are only three prayers for joy: "I need help," "I surrender," "Thanks." Focus on "I surrender" and your joy will be complete. Then, give it away.

Pray for the Holy Spirit to help you surrender your own desires and replace them with the desires of God.

Wrapping UP

Let the day's events stream through your mind.

Let them teach you.

List five things you did today that were good.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Make a list of six things you intend doing tomorrow. Ask the Holy Spirit's help.

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

Wednesday

Week I – Day 3

Morning Prayer

Theme: Pray for the healing of our living communities

Today pray that the people of your local community will practice genuine kindness one to another. Ask God to make your local church the cornerstone of warmth and generosity in the community.

Evening Prayer

Theme: Changing what is, through the power of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit As A Source of Love

Love is not premeditated – it is spontaneous, free to burst forth in extraordinary ways.

The fountains from which love flows are in God, not in us. It's absurd to think that the love of God is naturally in our own hearts, as a result of our own nature. His love is there only because it "has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit . . ." (Romans 5:5)

Pray for the love of God to flow into your heart in abundance.

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Thursday

Week I – Day 4

Morning Prayer

Theme: Pray for the healing of our nation

Think of someone in the nation that needs healing and pray for God to touch their lives. It can be a victim of tragedy (the floods in Texas, Virginia Tech shooting), a soldiers family, our leaders, etc. The options should be endless.

Evening Prayer

Theme: Changing what is, through the power of the Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit As A Source of Strength

The strength to change deeply entrenched eating habits while at the same time delivering you from other troubles and stresses is a work in progress.

Jesus set the stage when He said, "In the world you will have trouble, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

Thus, no strain, no gain. The strain of life is what builds your strength. So, to ask for peace of mind and joy of heart and relief from all stresses is impossible. To get the strength, you have to go through the trouble that's causing the stress. Then God gives you nourishment – "To Him who overcomes, I will give to eat from the Tree of Life . . ."

So, pray for the Holy Spirit to show you the first step. Then overcome your fear and timidity and step out, realizing that the strength given is moment by moment. Thus, our strength to overcome future trouble is within you now, ready to be released.

Wrapping UP

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Let them teach you.

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Friday

Week I – Day 5

Morning Prayer

Theme: Pray for the healing of our world

Today pray for all peoples everywhere who are combating violence.

Evening Prayer

Fundamental Friday(A review of the Spiritual Foundations of Change)

Principle #1 - The Body is God's Temple(I Cor. 6:12-20,Romans 12:1-2)

This practical advice is an ethical demand which governs your daily life in order to get the work of God done. Thus, "present your body to God," because it is the temple of the Holy Spirit and the instrument through which the Holy Spirit works and, like any cathedral, it is designed by God for the offering of worship to God.

So, if you want to, you can take all the decisions you must make every day, all the choices of an ordinary day, all the actions you engage in every day, and offer each as an act of worship. That's the essence. It's voluntary.

Real worship is the offering of everyday life to Jesus, not just that time spent in church on Sunday. Wherever you are in the world at any given moment – at the office, at the hospital, at school, in your car, in your garden, at the table, shopping – wherever you are you are called to be at worship, because, wherever you are, you are in your body. Do this and you will have strong ammo for avoiding the potholes of Fundamental #2 (coming up next Friday).

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Saturday Eating Realities

Week 1- Nutrition Basics

In order for you to take your health seriously you must have some basic understanding of what you are putting into your body. A simple place to start is by reviewing the basic food groups (carbohydrates and proteins this week, then fats next week).

Carbohydrates – otherwise known as “sugars”.

Good Effects – supply energy to the cells of the body.

Bad Effects – causes insulin release which leads to weight gain and diabetes.

Types of Carbohydrates

1) Complex Carbs – Natural carbohydrates found in breads, pasta, rice, cereals, and vegetables. These tend to cause less insulin release and therefore less weight gain and diabetes. Vegetables are the preferred source for carbs because they also contain fiber (see below).

2) Simple Carbs

- a. Natural – honey, fruits – these cause a large amount of insulin release, but, are better than processed carbs. Fruit also contains fiber which is good.
- b. Processed – Man made sugar which is added to foods – candies, soft drinks, icing, cakes, cookies, pies. These cause extreme insulin release which greatly increases diabetes and weight gain.

3) Fiber - nondigested carbohydrates found in fruits and vegetables.

Since they are not digested the body cannot use them for energy. Their good effects come through improving bowel function and by reducing the amount of insulin released when you eat, which decreases diabetes and weight gain. Since fiber is found in large amounts in fruits and vegetables these are the best overall sources of energy.

Proteins – Build and repair the body tissues, supply energy.

These are found in meats (beef, pork, chicken), fish, eggs, dairy products, beans, nuts. Since most of the foods with high protein content have large amounts of fat, a high protein diet usually has a high fat content.

Week 1- Nutrition Basics

Recommendations:

- 1) Eat carbs that are high in fiber so there is not as great an insulin release. This will decrease the risk of diabetes and weight gain. Try to eat 5 servings (1cup=a serving) of fruits and vegetables daily.
- 2) Limit processed carbs - candies, soft drinks, icing, cakes, cookies, pies. Instead eat fruits/vegetables for snacks.
- 3) Increase fiber intake by increasing fruits and vegetables.
- 4) Try to replace protein from meat(especially red meat) with protein from fish, beans, and nuts which have less fat.

Now, review your food diary from this past week. Try to get an idea of the amount of carbohydrates and protein you are eating. Also try and distinguish the different types of Carbs you are eating (especially the amount of processed carbs).

Saturday's Message

Week 1 "A Call To Service" I Chronicles 29:1-9

Being determined to get a job done right is a wonderful life quality. I have been blessed to know many people who have this quality. One such person was my mother. She always had goals to accomplish and possessed the motivation and determination to reach those goals. She worked hard at public work but was one of the best homemakers and mothers I have ever met. At fifty-nine (59) years old she was determined to get her driver's license for the first time. She did. When she turned seventy-five (75), I tried to get her to retire from the hosiery mill where she had worked for many years. She listened patiently and when I had finished my little talk, she moved up to the edge of her chair, looked at me with "determined eyes," and said: "Now, Phillip, I am not BUT seventy-five (75) and I am going to keep working." She finally retired from the mill at age eighty-four (84).

Thinking about this reminded me of King David who was determined to build a great temple in Jerusalem. But because David was a man of war, God willed that David's son, Solomon, would lead in the building of the temple. But David was determined to do his part. He worked hard gathering all the materials which Solomon would need to build that temple. In I Chronicles 29:1-9, we find David addressing the people of God. He tells them about gathering all the materials for the House of God and then confronts them with a strong challenge in the form of a question. In I Chronicles chapter 29 and the last part of verse 5, David asks: "WHO THEN IS WILLING TO CONSECRATE HIS SERVICE THIS DAY UNTO THE LORD?" Four (4) or five (5) words and one phrase in this question demand our careful attention.

1. The word WILLING: "Who then is willing . . .?" David is appealing for willing workers – people who do not have to be begged to do the work of God. David knew that the temple at Jerusalem would never be built if Solomon had to spend all his time begging the people to work. Being willing to work and having the strong determination to accomplish the task – to reach the goal – will bring positive results.

God willingly sent His Son to save us. Jesus willingly laid down His life for us. We should be willing to serve Him and others in His name.

2. The word CONSECRATE: "Who then is willing to CONSECRATE . . .?" In a spiritual sense, this word means "to give oneself to." We can never accomplish much in the service of God until we willingly give or consecrate ourselves and our resources to God. Reaching any goal requires consecration – giving oneself to.

In our life and work as Christians we need divine power – help from God. Receiving that power – that help from above – demands CONSECRATION.

3. The Word HIS: "Who then is willing to consecrate HIS . . .?" Here we get very personal! This is a personal call to service! God wants you and God wants ME in His service. The temptation is to say, "Let someone else do that. Many people are more qualified than I am." We can help each other in life and work but every person has a job to do – a service to render – and unless each person does his own job, it probably will not be done.

When God says: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" we should personally answer with the prophet Isaiah: "Here am I; send ME." (Isaiah 6:8)

4. The two (2) words THIS DAY: "Who then is willing to consecrate his service THIS DAY . . .?" This really means NOW. Delay is costly and tomorrow may be too late. Now is the time to act.

Our daughter, Rose Marie, is one of the greatest lovers of the outdoors I have ever met. When she was just a toddler she would run to the door and holler "SIDE." One day she did this several times and each time Jewell and I were occupied and called back to her to wait a while because we were busy. After this happened several times, Rose Marie went to the door, turned and walked back into the den, put on her little coat, looked up into her mother's face, and said: "SIDE NOW."

To you and to me God is saying: "Service now – not tomorrow – NOW." We have waited long enough. Now is the time to willingly consecrate ourselves and our service to God. ACTION NOW.

5. The phrase UNTO THE LORD: "Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day UNTO THE LORD?" We are not called to consecrate ourselves and our service just to the church or to the denomination. Our consecration – our giving ourselves – is "unto the Lord." In David's day that was Almighty God, the God of Abraham, Moses, and others. Today, the Lord is Jesus Christ – the Son of God, crucified, risen,

ascended, returning. Everything we do as Christians should be done as "unto the Lord."

Verses 6-9 of I Chronicles chapter 29 affirm that the people responded to David's great challenge by giving themselves and their resources. As a result, there was a lot of rejoicing – a lot of joy in the fellowship. Verse 9 says: "Then the people rejoiced, for that they offered willingly, because with perfect heart they offered willingly to the Lord: and David the king also rejoiced with great joy." There can be a lot of rejoicing today if we will follow their great example.

And so, we return to the searching question: "Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the Lord?" Are you?

Reverend Phillip R. Morrow Sr.