

**“Jesus Offers Peace”  
John 16:33**

**Big Idea – Jesus can give me peace in the middle of troubles and trials.**

**Great starting illustration:** Catherine Marshall writes "A king once offered a prize to the artist who could paint the best picture of peace. Many tried, but there were only two the king really liked. One was of a calm lake. It was a perfect mirror for the peaceful towering mountains all around it. Overhead was a blue sky with fluffy white clouds.

The other picture had mountains too. But they were rugged and bare. Above them was an angry sky from which fell rain, and in which lightning played. Down the side of the mountains tumbled a waterfall. This did not look peaceful at all. But when the king looked closely he saw behind the waterfall a tiny bush growing in a crack in the rock. In the bush a mother bird had built her nest. There, in spite of the rush of angry water, she sat on her nest - in perfect peace.

Which picture do you think won the prize? The king chose the second picture. Why? 'Because,' explained the king, 'Peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work. Peace means to be in the middle of all these things and still be calm in your heart.'

*Jesus said in, John 16:33 These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."*

At some point we all discover that there's no safe harbor free from storms; that peace is not the absence of storms, but:

The assurance of God's presence and protection in the midst of them;

The growth of our faith and character because of them;

His rock-solid promise to bring us through them stronger and wiser.

\* Duke University did a study on "peace of mind." Factors found to contribute greatly to emotional and mental stability are:

The absence of suspicion and resentment. Nursing a grudge was a major factor in unhappiness.

Not living in the past. An unwholesome preoccupation with old mistakes and failures leads to depression.

Not wasting time and energy fighting conditions you cannot change. Cooperate with life, instead of trying to run away from it.

Force yourself to stay involved with the living world. Resist the temptation to withdraw and become reclusive during periods of emotional stress.

Refuse to indulge in self-pity when life hands you a raw deal. Accept the fact that nobody gets through life without some sorrow and misfortune.

Cultivate the old-fashioned virtues--love, humor, compassion and loyalty.

Do not expect too much of yourself. When there is too wide a gap between self-expectation and your ability to meet the goals you have set, feelings of inadequacy are inevitable.

Find something bigger than yourself to believe in. Self-centered egotistical people score lowest in any test for measuring happiness. (Duke University Study)

Our society has given us a lie about what true peace really is. They say it is found in possessions, alcohol and substance abuse, extra marital affairs, or self fulfillment. No wonder our mental health statistics are staggering:

An estimated 26.2 percent of Americans ages 18 and older — about one in four adults — suffer from a diagnosable mental disorder in a given year. Even though mental disorders are widespread in the population, the main burden of illness is concentrated in a much smaller proportion — about 6 percent, or 1 in 17 — who suffer from a serious mental illness. In addition, mental disorders are the leading cause of disability in the U.S. and Canada for ages 15-44. Many people suffer from more than one mental disorder at a given time. Nearly half (45 percent) of those with any mental disorder meet criteria for 2 or more disorders, with severity strongly related to comorbidity.

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/statistics/index.shtml>

The statistics on teen depression are sobering. Studies indicate that one in five children have some sort of mental, behavioral, or emotional problem, and that one in ten may have a serious emotional problem.

So how do we get this peace Jesus promised?

### **Remember the Words of Jesus**

Do you know there is power available when Jesus speaks?

- HE CAN SAY PEACE BE STILL and winds and waves will take a vacation.
- HE CAN SAY COME FORTH and a dead man will answer from death and turn a funeral after-service into a family reunion.
- HE CAN SAY SOMEBODY TOUCHED ME and someone who's reached out for him will agree with him that he's got so much power that just one touch will turn a life around.

SOMEBODY HERE, KNOWS THAT YOU WOULD HAVE GIVEN UP A LONG TIME AGO, BUT YOU HAD A WORD – JUST A WORD – TO KEEP YOU GOING:

- YOU WERE GOING TO QUIT – but “greater is He that is in me than He that is in the world.”
- YOU WERE GOING TO THROW A PITY PARTY – but “weeping endures for a night, but joy comes in the morning.”
- YOU WERE GOING TO LOSE YOUR MIND UP– but “He's able to keep you in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.”
- YOU WERE GOING TO DISCARD ALL YOUR HOPE – but “the Lord is my light and my salvation.”

He says I have spoken unto you – these things, these matters, these prophecies that in me, in Him, you might have peace.

*You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. - Isaiah 26:3*

*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. John 14:27*

A great many people are trying to make peace, but that has already been done. God has not left it for us to do; all we have to do is to enter into it.

*And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Philipians 4:7*

We are living in a world full of trouble.

*Philipians 2:15 states that we live in the midst of a crooked and perverse (crooked) nation. We don't even feel safe in our homes anymore.*

Where is God? Does God care? Can the one who spoke the world into existence and who spoke peace to the disciples during the storm speak peace into our world? YES HE CAN!

Here in John 16, Jesus focuses on the disciples and the storm that was about to hit them. They were unaware that their world was about to fall apart. Everything that had looked bright was about to go dark.

They had come to the realization that Jesus was the Messiah, the chosen one of God. They were sure that God had put His stamp of approval on Him. But it all crashed in one cruel sweep of arrest, trial, and crucifixion.

If this could happen to Jesus, God's Son, if that kind of violence could get to Jesus, what hope is there for any of us? Their world was about to spin out of control. Just as ours sometimes does. Out of control? Yes. Beyond Hope? NO!

The disciples were about to learn what people who live in fear have not grasped. When everyone and everything around falls to pieces, God's peace will stand intact, strong and secure. You can have that peace today.

**HOW?**

**Reject all teaching that is false.**

*“These things have I spoken unto you”*

We must be careful to teach only His Word. No wonder so many people are disappointed in God when they have been taught such things as:

- A. Get saved and you won't have any more problems
- B. Get saved and you won't have any more pressures
- C. Get saved and experience no more sickness or pain.

ILLUSTRATE: D. L. Moody: "The best way to show that a stick is crooked is to place it next to a straight one!"

The best way to spot a false teaching is measure it against the TRUTH of the Bible.

**Recognize the troubling truth that we must face-** “In the world ye shall have tribulation”

- A. We will have troubles
- B. We will have trials
- C. We will have tribulation
- D. But, we will also have triumph “That in me ye might have peace”

ILLUSTRATE: C.S. Lewis: "We don't need to be told new ideas as much as we need to be reminded of old truths."

God tells us that we WILL have tribulation in our life

Don't Worry – God's taken care of it

I like what Mark Lowry says, – “And it came to pass...”

**Realize there is a trust that we must follow** - “Be of Good cheer, I have overcome the world”

We must trust God’s promise, power and provision

ILLUSTRATE: The more we know of God, the more unreservedly we will trust him; the greater our progress in theology, the simpler and more childlike will be our faith.

Dr. Jerry Falwell made this statement – I like it:

“If God puts you on hold, don’t hang up.” TRUST HIM

CONCLUSION: Peace is not found in society but is located in a Saviour!

Peace is not living in a safe world but being Safe in the Saviour’s hands.

When your world is going to pieces bring those handfuls of broken pieces to the Lord and let Him give you peace.

*Romans 15:13 - May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

*Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. - Psalm 34:14*

**Peace only comes to those who pursue it.**

We must intentionally live in a manner in which our aim is peace and not turmoil. Our pursuit must be so obvious that we have a plan. It's different for everyone, but it might be something like this:

### **How to Pursue Peace**

- **Pray** - releasing everything to God.
- **Prepare** - by reading the Bible for direction & wisdom for the day.
- **Praise** - sing or whistle or hum. Fill your mind with Christian music and faith filled lyrics that usher in peace.

- **Protect** - Do your best, with the help of the Lord himself to protect your mind from any thoughts or influence which would potentially destroy your peace. That includes negative comments, angry responses, bitter feelings, unforgiving attitudes and destructive behavior.

**Remember,**

**Jesus took your pain to give you His peace.**

*Isaiah 53:5 But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was on him, and by his wounds we are healed.*

Jesus gave all for us. He took our sins, our punishment for sin, our guilt, our shame, and replaced it with His peace.

No sin that is forgiven can take away our peace.

No guilt that invades our souls can compare to the peace that floods our souls.

No wrong that we've ever done can burden us anymore because the peace of Jesus washes away our shame.

No eternal punishment awaits us because of our iniquities, for Jesus died in our place to give us His peace.

If we are in Christ, and have humbly repented before God, then none of the transgressions of this life can rob us of peace. Know that today!

I will close with the true life story **of Ethel Waters**

Ethel Waters became a famous blues and jazz singer in the 1920's and '30s.

She is in the Grammy Hall of Fame. She is in the Christian Music Hall of Fame. And, in 1994 her face was on a 29-cent stamp honoring her life. And yet, she knew much personal turmoil and unrest. Ethel Waters came into this world unwanted and unloved. Of her early childhood, Ethel said, "No one raised me; I just ran wild. I never was a child. I never was cuddled, or liked, or understood by my family."

Her young mother had been raped at knife point by a family acquaintance. At the age of 13, Louise Anderson gave birth to baby Ethel on October 31, 1900, in Chester, PA. Her heartrending beginning (on Halloween day) only got worse.

Ethel survived an unbelievable childhood filled with extreme poverty, daily hunger, and being shuffled between aunts, uncles, grandmother, and neighbors. She never lived anywhere more than a year. She worked for drug lords in exchange for food and shelter. She married a man when she was only 12 years old but soon fled the abusive relationship. At 13, Ethel found a job in Philadelphia working as a maid earning less than \$5 a week.

At the age of 17, Ethel began her professional career at the Lincoln Theater in Baltimore. Recalling those days, Ethel laughingly revealed that her stage name became "Sweet Mama Stringbean" because, "I was so scrawny and tall." She met the great jazzman W.C. Handy at this theater and convinced him to let her sing his "St. Louis Blues" as part of her act. Being the first woman to sing this song on stage and with her unique style brought her quick fame and bigger and better opportunities.

The gangster, Al Capone paid her top dollar to star at his Chicago club for a singing gig. She later signed with Columbia Records and had many hit records. She starred on Broadway after having attracted the attention of the great Irving Berlin. She was the first African-American to receive equal billing with white performers on Broadway.

She traveled from coast to coast performing, and at one time performed with the Jimmy Dorsey band, becoming the first black singer to star in a coast to coast radio show.

Eventually she made her way to Hollywood and began acting. She starred in several Warner Brothers movies and became the second black woman nominated for an Academy award for the movie: "Pinky."

In 1939 she became the first black singer/actress to have her own variety show on TV. She was also the first black woman to star in her own 1950 situation comedy, The Belah Show. She received an Emmy award for her TV work in the 1960's.



In actual fact, Ethel's career accomplishments are too numerous to mention. Regrettably, as Ethel got older much of her golden voice had faded and her health suffered due to various ailments and becoming severely overweight.

By 1955, Ethel was deeply in debt with the IRS hounding her for back taxes and seizing the royalties of her work. Yet Ethel had faced lean and mean times many times before. A turning point came when Ethel attended the Billy Graham Crusade in New York's Madison Square Garden in 1957. Years later, she gave her testimony of that night:

In 1957, I, Ethel Waters, a 380-pound decrepit old lady, rededicated my life to Jesus Christ, and boy, because He lives, just look at me now. I tell you because He lives; and because my precious child, Billy, gave me the opportunity to stand there, I can thank God for the chance to tell you His eye is on all of us sparrows.

Ethel Waters was a little sparrow that soon soared with eagles. I want to close today with a song that says it all...Ethel Waters sang it. She made it famous on many Billy Graham crusade tv shows. Discouragement was not her choice. She pursued peace in Christ. And, so must we!

Ethel Waters singing: "His eye is on the sparrow."

The last verse of the song is:

Whenever I am tempted, whenever clouds arise,  
When songs give place to sighing, when hope within me dies,  
I draw the closer to Him, from care He sets me free;  
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me;  
His eye is on the sparrow, and I know He watches me.

In Christ our Saviour you can have victory!

In Christ our Saviour you can have Joy!

In Christ our Saviour you can have peace!