LOVE Without Hypocrisy

(in the book of Romans)

55 - Peace - When Possible

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called sons of God.

Matthew 5:9 (NIV)

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you,
live at peace with everyone.

Romans 12:18 (NIV)

INVOLVES A HARMONIOUS
RELATIONSHIP
BETWEEN TWO ENTITIES.

PLEASANT CIRCUMSTANCES
OR FEELINGS
RIGHT
RELATIONSHIPS

NELL BEING IN ALL
AREAS OF LIFE
AREAS OF LIFE

Scripture describes different types of "peace."

Peace with GOD.

Peace with other PEOPLE.

Peace with SELF.

Peace with CREATION.

What characterizes **GENUINE PEACE?**

- It is NOT:
 - A passive attitude that allows compromise, or backs down when truth is attacked.
 - A denial of truth and moral issues. (It refuses to sin; it does not close its eyes to sin.)
- It does NOT:
 - Associate with pretension, hypocrisy, false motives, superficial attitudes, etc.

GENUINE PEACE

- It is always consistent with:
 - Love and loyalty to God; glorifying God.
 - Personal holiness and righteousness.
 - Proclaiming the Good News about salvation.
 - Building up other people: Promoting what is good for them not only for the present time, but also for eternity.
- It is *always* opposed to:
 - Fake "peace."
 - Anything that is contrary to genuine peace.

Our sin <u>DESTROYED</u> our ability to have peace. But GOD has <u>RESTORED</u> some of our ability.

- Unsaved people: They can <u>comprehend</u> some aspects of peace.
 - \checkmark Mainly those related to "external" circumstances.
 - ✓ Things that can be learned through nature, conscience, etc.
- People who trust and obey Jesus: The Holy Spirit enables them to <u>grow</u> in experiencing all aspects of peace.
 - $\checkmark\,$ This includes "internal" peace that can exist in "unpeaceful" situations.
 - $\checkmark\,$ The Spirit uses the Scriptures to teach and grow them.

God does <u>not</u> give unsaved people an ability to experience 100% of what peace is.



There is no other option!

• GOD IS WILLING: He offers it...

But experiencing it requires submission to Scripture.

 THEY ARE <u>UNWILLING</u>: They refuse to submit to Scripture! (This includes church-goers who refuse to submit to Scripture – even though they <u>claim</u> to be saved!)



"The Logical Conclusion."



THE ISSUE: The plight of the unsaved.

The <u>unsaved</u>: (1) cannot even comprehend some aspects of peace, and (2) often promote what is fake (sometimes in ignorance).



THE CONCLUSION: The obligation of the saved.

It's the duty of the <u>saved</u> person to promote peace in its fullest and most genuine sense.

A WARNING

to those who <u>claim</u> to be following Jesus, the "Prince of Peace":

- IF THE UNSAVED are doing <u>more</u> to promote peace (what little they <u>do</u> understand) than <u>you</u> are, consider yourself rebuked by them.
 - ➤ They (though unsaved) are living more righteously than you (who *claim* to be saved)!
- IF YOU are unwilling to follow Jesus in this matter, then quit pretending that you are following him ...
 - ➤ ... because you <u>aren't</u> following him!

FOR ALL WHO ARE SAVED:

GOD has called you to PEACE

God has called you to live in peace. -

THIS APPLIES TO <u>ALL</u> SITUATIONS IN LIFE.

You are commanded... you have an obligation.

To pursue / promote peace... all kinds of peace.

 PEACE (and a LOVE FOR PEACE) must characterize the way you interact with others.

Seek peace, and pursue it!

Psalm 34:14b (GW)

THERE ARE BLESSINGS ASSOCIATED WITH OBEDIENCE!

There is ... joy for those who promote peace.

Proverbs 12:20 (NIV)

PROMOTING PEACE ... With Who?

 In your spiritual relationships: Your family in Christ.

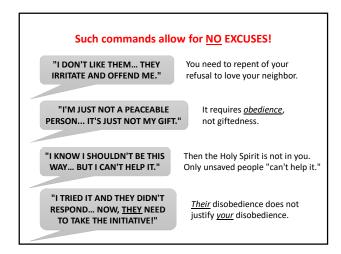
Dear brothers and sisters... Encourage each other. Live in harmony and peace. Then the God of love and peace will be with you.

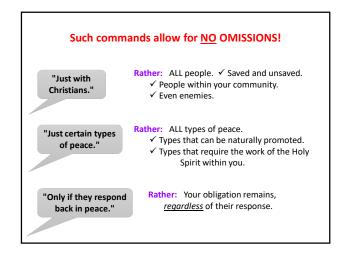
2 Cor. 13:11 (NLT)

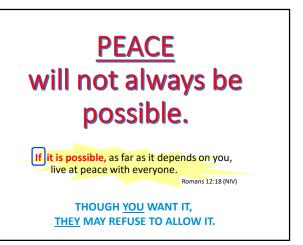
- In your natural relationships: Everybody you meet, such as...
 - Family
 - Community

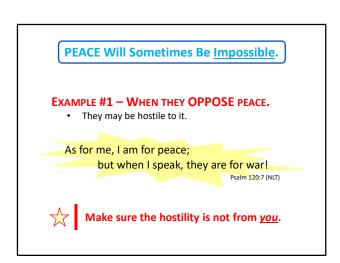
Pursue peace with everyone, ...

Enemies Heb 12:14a (ISV)









EXAMPLE #2 — WHEN THEY PROMOTE FAKE PEACE.

• They may place restrictions on it that are contrary to Scripture: sin and error.

• They may be filled with pretension, evil motives, moral compromise, etc.

... wicked people, ... who speak of peace with their neighbors but have evil in their hearts.

Psalm 28:3b (GW)

Make sure the fakeness is not there because of YOU.



You must maintain LOVE for God and neighbor.

Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment.

And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' "

Matthew 22:37-39 (NIV)

IF YOU LOVE GOD AND NEIGHBOR, THE WORLD MAY OPPOSE YOU.

If you have LOVE FOR GOD, you will ...

- Not compromise holiness and righteousness, when pursuing peace.
- Make holiness your #1 objective this has to do with peace with <u>God!</u>

If you have LOVE FOR NEIGHBOR, you will ...

• Be willing to rebuke and oppose their sin, when necessary.

THESE ACTS MAY RESULT IN CONFLICT, DISPLEASURE AND OPPOSITION! BUT IT WON'T BE <u>YOUR</u> FAULT, BECAUSE YOU DID NOTHING WRONG!

THEY MAY HATE YOU, EVEN THOUGH YOU HAVE DONE NOTHING WRONG.

My enemies are many; they hate me though I have done nothing against them.

Those who hate me without cause are more numerous than the hairs on my head.

These enemies who seek to destroy me are doing so without cause.

Psalm 69:4a (NLT)

THEREFORE...

Don't be surprised when the world opposes your attempts to promote GENUINE PEACE.

✓ Consider how they treated Jesus, the "Prince of Peace"!

'They hated me without cause.'

John 15:25b (NLT)

And he will be called ... Prince of Peace. ... you have betrayed and murdered him ...

Isaiah 9:6b; Acts 7:52b (NIV)

Your Mission...

BE A FOLLOWER OF JESUS, AND PURSUE PEACE ...



REGARDLESS OF THE WAY OTHERS MAY RESPOND!



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"If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone." Romans 12:18

GENUINE PEACE

Here are some of the characteristics that separate genuine peace from the counterfeits.

This peace is something that the unsaved *cannot* comprehend - Romans 3:17.

ITS SOURCE

It comes from God / Jesus Christ.

- "The God of peace" Romans 15:33; 16:20; Philippians 4:7 ("peace of God"); 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:20.
- Jesus Christ Ephesians 2:14; Colossians 3:15; "the Lord of peace" - 2 Thessalonians 3:16.
- God the Father and Jesus Christ Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians
 1:3; Galatians 1:3; Titus 1:4; 2 John 1:3; + many other verses.

It's part of the Gospel ("Good News").

• The gospel of peace - Ephesians 6:15.

CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH PEACE

- Being a recipient of God's grace Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians
 1:3; Titus1:4; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 John 1:3; + many other verses.
- Being a recipient of God's mercy Galatians 6:16; 1 Timothy
 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; 2 John 1:3; Jude 1:2.

- The kingdom of God, righteousness, joy Romans 14:17.
- Love Jude 1:2; love with faith Ephesians 6:23.
- Fruit of the Spirit (various characteristics) Galatians 5:22-23.
- Holiness Hebrews 12:14; morally spotless/blameless 2 Peter 3:14.

PREREQUISITES FOR PEACE.

What God does:

- God justifies us (by faith) Romans 5:1; he calls us Colossians 3:15.
- Jesus made peace possible Ephesians 2:15, 17 ("preached" by Jesus); given by the "Lord of peace" 2 Thessalonians 3:16; being "in Christ" 1 Peter 5:14.
- A "saving knowledge" of God/Jesus Christ 2 Peter 1:2.

What we must do:

- Follow Paul's example Philippians 4:9; do good Romans 2:10.
- Have a mind controlled by the Spirit Romans 8:6.

OUR OBLIGATION TO PURSUE OR ATTAIN PEACE.

Various commands given or implied - Romans 14:19;
1 Corinthians 7:15; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Ephesians 4:3;
2 Timothy 2:22; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Peter 3:11; 2 Peter 3:14.

A FEW OF THE CONSEQUENCES OF HAVING THIS PEACE.

- Unity among God's people Ephesians 4:3.
- Hearts and minds guarded by God's peace Philippians 4:7.
- A harvest of righteousness James 3:18.

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