
Sermon Notes

December 2, 2018

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

The Gift of Peace: Peace with God

Numbers 6:22-27, John 14:25-27

The Search for Peace

- ❖ People pursue peace from every imaginable angle
 - people long, search and work for peace
 - "Can't we all just get along?"
- ❖ In our broken world, peace is in short supply even among God's people

...And Give You Peace

- ❖ Numbers 6:24-26 is a beautiful expression of blessing and benediction that OT priests were given so that they could, in turn, bless the people of Israel
- ❖ From the very beginning, God wanted His children to focus on His gift of peace
 - God designed our hearts to hunger for His peace
 - "You have made us for Yourself and our heart is restless until it finds its rest in You." (Augustine)
- ❖ Peace is also the longing of God's heart

- God longs to reestablish a relationship of peace between Himself and His children
- God promises that the day will come when He will end the state of war that exists between Him and us
- ❖ Peace with God is the blessing of being a child of God

...My Peace I Give You

- ❖ On the evening before His crucifixion, Jesus gives His disciples the promise of HIS peace
 - Jesus' peace is not what the world calls peace
 - Jesus' peace flows out of His relationship with His Father
 - Jesus' peace flows from His presence and touches every aspect of our lives
- ❖ "Life is a puzzle! Jesus is the missing peace!!"

Shalom and Eirene

- ❖ *Shalom* is a **BIG** word in Scripture
 - to be sound, complete, a wholeness of life or body, prosperity
 - more than a "state of mind", *shalom* is a quality of life
 - a life of peace in a place of peace
- ❖ *Shalom* overflows into our relationships
 - *shalom* is something we have but don't hold on to

- *shalom* flows both into and out of our lives
- ❖ "May the Lord keep His eye on you and give you wholeness, completeness and fullness"
- ❖ *Eirene*
 - something deep within us, a peace in our hearts
 - a state of tranquility where there is no rage or war
 - ***"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"*** (Lk. 2:14)
 - an end to the state of war (enmity)
 - the Prince of Peace is here!
- ❖ Bethlehem today is a mini-picture of our broken world... a world without peace

Receive, Appreciate, Use the Gift

- ❖ A gift may be given, but a gift must be received
- ❖ The only way we can receive God's gift of peace is through a relationship with the God who created us
 - only God can make a peaceful, peace-filled relationship with Him possible
 - love and submit to the person and presence of Jesus
 - bumper sticker "No Jesus No peace... Know Jesus Know Peace"
- ❖ How do you show your appreciation for a gift?

Peace In The Presence of God

- ❖ The face of God represents the presence of God
 - when God says, "My face is going to shine on you and be gracious to you", He means it!
 - when we are in God's presence, it makes a difference in how others see us
- ❖ Access to God's presence is possible through Jesus
 - John 14:25-27 promises us that there will never be a time when we don't have access to God's presence
 - the Holy Spirit teaches, encourages and guides us into God's presence
- ❖ Peace is all about the presence of God

Personal Reflection

1. Would you describe yourself as a restless or peaceful person? Why is this the case? Are there things in your life that need to change so that you can be more peaceful and more peace-filled?
2. Peace is a gift! How do you show your appreciation for this gift (*i.e.* how do you "use" this precious gift from God)?
3. Do you think others sense the peace and presence of God resting on you as they encounter and interact with you? Do you think the peace of God is evident to those who come among our fellowship as we gather to worship and pursue God? Can you think of any ways in which this peace might be displayed more evidently among us?