

Son of Peace

1/17/1998

Good morning brethren. Today we are going to cover the subject of peace. It's a word we hear used a lot but very seldom is it ever explained and in fact even less understood. Few venture into giving it definition for it is easier to just throw it into a statement or proclamation without doing so. Today we are going to give it definition from a Biblical perspective. Peace is very important to our calling and responsibilities as begotten children of God.

Let's start in Ephesians 4:3. We have spent a lot of time in Ephesians in the last couple of studies because it contains some very clear directive to the body of Christ and thus crucial to our growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

4:3; "Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace."

Fascinating word used here, actually several of them. But let's look at the word bond for starters. If we look at Colossians 3:14; "But of all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection."

This word bond here which is the same in both scriptures we have just read is #4886 sundesmos and according to Strong's it means; a joint tie, ie; ligament, figuratively a uniting principle, control.

Vines says of it; "that which binds together, (sun 'with' and desmos) is said of the bond of the iniquity in Acts 8:23; the bond of peace in Ephesians 4:3; the bond of perfectness in Colossians 3:14; figurative of the ligaments of the body; elsewhere in Colossians 2:19 it is translated bands, figuratively of the bands which unit the church, the body of Christ. An intensive form of desmos denoting, that which binds firmly together. It is used metaphorically of the joints and bands of the mystic body of Christ."

So we see what this word basically means and how it is used in context. We are going to follow that usage through in scripture today so there will be no misunderstanding how God uses it to instruct us when it is associated with peace and the unity of the spirit. It is important to have a good understanding of this word translated "bond" before we look at its relationship to peace.

Ephesians 4:1-6. "I therefore the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to have a walk **worthy** of the calling which you were called (There is that dirty little word **worthy** (#516 axios) being used by the apostle Paul again. Some detest its use for it brings in the idea of some sort of qualifying process as it should.), with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love (fruit of the spirit), endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

Now let's look at the context of Colossians 3:12-17. "Therefore as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on the tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; (Same starting context as Ephesians 4, as in the fruit of the spirit) bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts,

to also which you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

Once again we see the same context being used here as we saw in Ephesians. Let’s swing back to Colossians 2:19 where this word for bond is used; sundesmos. “And not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase from God.” Holding fast joints and ligaments.

It is clear that this word bond is found in context being used descriptively of something like a ligament which binds two things together. Just as a ligament attaches muscle to bone. Two parts of the body which when directed by the head can work together. That should tell us something very clear brethren. Without the head directing that which binds the parts together there would be no ability to do so. The many parts would not be able to function as one. Only under the direction of the Head and that which binds all the parts together can this only be achieved. Government does not bind the parts together. So what does? What bonds or binds the parts together? The spirit of our Father! Thus we become like minded, which means we can act as one with the same purpose in mind. We certainly don’t look alike or even have the same functions but those functions are bound together under Christ through the spirit so we can function as one to the glory of the Father and to the genuine growth and building up of the body.

Ephesians 4:6 again. “... one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” The spirit is in us all if we are of the Father. That is every part of the body, and we are all used by the Head who is Christ to bond us together. Here in verse 3 we read, “Endeavoring to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace.” It is clear that we are being taught that God uses the spirit to bind the different parts of the body to function as one.

Galatians 5:22-23. “But the fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, meekness, self-control. Against such there is not law.” These fruits of the spirit can be used collectively or individually to bind things together. In Ephesians 4:6 we read that peace is a bonding agent, a type of ligament in the body and thus very important.

And yes brethren there is no law of God against such things. **The fruit of the spirit are above the law for they are of the spirit of God.** They are written in the spirit like a type of DNA, and they are of the very essence of Gods character and composition.

The word translated as peace in Galatians and Ephesians is #1515 in the Strong’s, and is spelled eirene. It says of it; “probably from a prime verb eiro; (to join); peace (literally or figuratively); by implication prosperity.” Prosperity is also very important when recognizing this fruit of the spirit. The key is understanding what prosperity God is looking for.

Vines says, “this noun occurs in each of the books of the NT save 1 John. (And it describes it as) a) harmonious relationships between men. b) between nations. c) friendliness. d) freedom from molestation. e) order in the state and the churches. f) the harmonizing relationships between God and man accomplished through the gospel. g) the sense of rest and contentment consequent thereon.”

With this in mind let’s read Colossians 3:12-17 again. The context in which God inspired this word to be used is very important to understanding what God is teaching us about it.

“Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, (do we do that brethren or do we follow the pattern of the world and thus of its father Satan and smash and bash the other parts of the body? Do we actually think we can survive without the other parts and the vital functions they perform? How can a toe survive unless food goes into the mouth via the hand and arm putting it there and then travel through all the various functions in the body to give the toe its life giving blood full of nutrients and oxygen etc. which it needs to live? Do we all really comprehend what God is teaching us when He talks about the church being one body? He is not talking about one toe.), if anyone has a complaint against another, even as Christ forgave you, so you also do. But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, **to which also you were called in one body**; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in our hearts to the Lord. (And no that does not mean we go around singing to each other all day long but to have the demeanor and disposition of a one who is busting out in joy and thanksgiving in how we address the other parts of the body. However that does not apply outside the body for that requires another display of wisdom.) And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”

“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts...” This word rule here is #1018 in the Strong’s. It is spelled brabeuo and it says of it, “from the same as #1017; to arbitrate; i.e. (generally) to govern, (figuratively) prevail.” The word it comes from #1017 brabeion from brabeus and it means an umpire of uncertain derivation, an award (of arbitration), i.e.; (specifically) a prize in the public games.” An umpire and not a dominator; an arbitrator and not an ultimator!

Vines says of #1018 brabeuo or rule; “properly to act as an umpire, (brabeus #1017), (Are we understanding where this word is coming from? It is not from dominion. It is not used here from the perspective of forcing your heart to do something.), hence, generally, to arbitrate, decide. Colossians 3:15 rule representing the peace of Christ as deciding all matters in the hearts of believers; some regard the meaning as that of simply directing, controlling, (and that is where the aspect of ruling is coming from) ruling.”

Do we see here how this all works? This word translated rule here means to arbitrate (both sides listened to and thus an impartial decision made) or decide just as an umpire is supposed to do. It means there are rules and regulations in place and that someone is charged with making decisions. In this context who is that someone? And let the peace of God rule in **your** hearts. Your hearts! That’s us individually brethren. We are to clearly define what the rules are. Whose rules are they? The Fathers! Who gives us the strength and wisdom in the body to understand them and apply them? Christ! It is through the spirit that we have the ability to be a true umpire, a true arbitrator individually and collectively. That is one of our general functions in the body. It starts with ourselves. Once we learn how to rule; umpire, arbitrate between the spirit and our own flesh then we will be able to assist the other members of the body in doing so.

God is directly involved and does not use a surrogate when it comes to such things. There is no vicar between us and Him. If His spirit is dwelling in us we will be like minded with God because we will have a desire to be so **and thus walking in a worthy manner as is the language of God**. That becomes a visible sign to other members of the body. We are part of the body which is controlled by what? The Head and

not some organization of men or any such vain ridiculous thing. Our Head is Christ and He uses the power of God, the holy spirit, to accomplish these things in our lives individually so we can be of benefit to the body in whatever function we are given to do for the wellbeing of it. I truly hope we understand this simplicity in Christ. Please keep in mind that understanding or comprehending this is the easy part. Doing it is where the difficulty is.

So now what is our part in all this? Let's go to 1 Peter 3:8-11. "Finally all be of one mind, (serving one another, willingly yielding to one another) having compassion for one another; love as brothers, tenderhearted, courteous (humble); not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing. For he who would love life and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips from speaking guile (deceit); let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it."

Some very important marching orders in these verses. We are required to undertake them all. But today we are focusing on seeking peace and pursuing it. We are individually responsible to pursue these things in the body and to some extent outside of it as well.

Romans 12:18 says. "If it is possible, as much as it depends on you, live peaceably with all men."

We have spent a lot of time here in Romans 12 in the past couple of months looking at the gifts of Christ. We just read in 1 Peter that we are to seek peace and pursue it. And now we are being taught here in Romans that much of this depends on us. It depends on us allowing it to happen. And not only happen **but to pursue it**. That takes focus and effort on our part. There is no vanity in this, and if someone attempts to insert it vanity will kill this effort stone dead. Let's get the context here in Romans 12. Start in verse 9 and read through to 21. "Love without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil. Cling to what is good. Be kindly devoted to one another with brotherly love, in honor giving preference to one another; not lagging in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation, continuing steadfastly in prayer; distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep. Be of the same mind toward one another. Do not set your mind on high things, but associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own opinion. Repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of men (not just some, for that would be a vain pursuit). If it is possible as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved do not avenge yourselves, but give place to wrath; for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord. (Personally that is difficult for me to do) Therefore if your enemy hungers, feed him; if he thirsts give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

There is a way to resist the devil! God just explained it to us here. It is simple if we believe Him and do it. It is not simple from the point of view of the flesh but of the spirit. How often have we wanted to return evil for evil. That happens when we feel we are justified and are better than another. God says don't be high and mighty in your thinking nor in your opinion of yourself. Please keep in mind that the scriptures are talking about all men here, but with a primarily focus on the called of God. If someone is about to blow your brains out you don't say to him, peace be with you in your intent to blow my brains out. No we can't be Pollyannaish in our understanding of scripture. Remember we are to be peaceable towards all men as much as it depends on us. I would think we were well beyond the peaceable venue if someone was about to murder you. Thus a different approach and different wisdom needs to enter into that situation. Are there situations where we can overcome evil with peace? Yes there are and we are

going to look at that today. There absolutely is a way to overcome the devil and his evil through peace. Hebrews 12:14 says, "Pursue peace with all, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord." That is a very blunt statement. Not one that can be written off easily is it. However, I am sure some deluded deceiver has tried to do so in the past.

Psalm 34:14, "Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it." Here we have seeking peace tied together with departing evil and doing good." That's important!

Romans 14:19 says, "Therefore let us pursue the things for peace and the things by which one may edify (build up) another."

It is easy to see that there is a result to pursuing peace. It is a promise from God. It is being patterned in the scriptures but I caution all it is not according to man's wisdom. Pursue here is #1377 dioko; "a prolonged (and causative) form of a prime verb dio (to flee) to pursue (figuratively or literally; by implication to persecute."

Vines says of dioko; "is denoted three ways a) to drive away, b) to pursue without hostility, to follow after. C) to follow on. It is used metaphorically of seeking eagerly after peace in 1 Peter 3:11."

Brethren it is apparent from the use and meaning of this word that we need to, must, put an effort into peace for it is a fruit of the spirit. Just like every other fruit of the spirit we must be involved in its working in, and through us. Now how do we start to do this? By resisting the devil and not God just as Psalm 34:14 told us. As Revelation 3:12 tells us we are to be dining with Christ. In a nutshell that is how we resist the devil. That is all part of the simplicity of Christ. There is no grand attack strategy. We simply focus on Christ and what He is feeding us and stay clear of the food of Satan and his hoards. We do not let anyone or anything come between us. We resist it in that way. We exercise good and not evil. That is how we pursue peace. That is how we can start to pursue peace.

All these scriptures we have covered on peace show us it takes effort on our part. We play a vital role in this fruit of the spirit being carried out. We can't do it apart from Christ. It is He who defines for us in our hearts what peace truly is. Men do not, for they cannot do so apart from Him. They have their own definition of it which is twisted by the deceits of the devil, "for they seek peace, but they do not know the way of peace." Yet we hear them talk about it all the time.

In Luke 1:79, in talking about one of the functions of John the Baptist we read; "To give light to those who sit in darkness and shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

This simply tells us it is something we need to learn, it isn't something that we naturally do. Many would say John in fact was not very peaceable by men's standards. He confronted the Pharisees and Herod for that matter. Let's look at Matthew 3:5-11 and see this is not the fruity tootie definition of peace. You know what I am talking about. The long haired hippy type version of Christ walking around love dove giving the peace sign and handing out flowers to everyone.

Matt 3:5-11; "Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, Brood of vipers! (Does that not sound familiar?) Who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Therefore bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not think to say to yourselves, we have Abraham as our father. For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from these stones. (Our physical lineage isn't important for we are to know and be of our heavenly Father whom Christ came to reveal to us.) And even now the ax is laid to the root of the trees. Therefore every tree which does not bear fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. I indeed

baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not **worthy** to carry. He will baptize you with the holy spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn; but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.” Not flattering, charitable, or peaceful in the eyes of the world. Yet John was to “guide our feet in the way of peace.” I ask is this a dilemma to your understanding of peace?

Luke 3. If we were to start reading in verse 7 we would see what we just read in Matthew. But let’s start down in 19-20. “But Herod the tetrarch, being rebuked by him concerning Herodias, his brother Philip’s wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done, also added this, above all, that he shut John up in prison.” Depart evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it. Here John was exposing evil!

Sounds like he (John) was not very peaceable based on today’s definition; “just overlook the evil can’t you and see the good in it all. Live in peace.” We must not be misled by what man gives definition to today for our actions and ways are defined in scripture. We need to go to God’s word and no other, for this is a sick and dying generation who call good evil and evil good, so why would we ever let it define our understanding and actions. If we are looking for a definition for peace, which we are to function by, we look to the word of God.

John 14:27. “Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.” Christ’s peace is fundamentally different from that envisioned by the world.

Do we remember the connection we read earlier about peace and our hearts? Here we are being taught a fundamental principle of peace. If it is Christ’s peace in us, we are not afraid. If the peace of Christ, we are not troubled. This does not mean that we will not go through times of trouble but we are not troubled in our heart during them. Why? Because He has told us He will only allow us to be tested in that which we can bear. He knows us better than we know ourselves and He will never leave nor forsake us. We listen to Him talk to us each and every day if we are reading the pages in this book we call the Bible. **Peace produces a heart which is not troubled or afraid!** And it is something which can be **given** as we have just read. That is very important to understand and believe if we are to be a son of peace. Philippians 4:7 says, “... and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding (of men) will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

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.”

See how Christ contrasts this here. Because we may be having tribulation in the world, that does not mean we can’t have the peace of Christ in us. In fact, they go hand in hand if we understand the spirit of God working in us and how that will set us at odds with the world. We can recognize if we have that peace when we are in worldly tribulation in how we react to it. When a trial arises do we try to flee from it by denial using the ostrich approach or even the unthinkable surrender approach? Do we get emotional and function recklessly and shamefully before God? Or do we peacefully ask God to assist us in coming through it in a responsible way? Please give us a way out should be our prayer and belief for that matter. It is a 3 way street one might say; us, the Son, and the Father.

Romans 5:1. “Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Romans 8:6. “For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.”

Romans 10:15. "And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things." Remember this is not peace as the world views peace. The world can't conceive of peace in tribulation, never can nor never will without the spirit of God, for the world's definition is alien to the wisdom of God.

Romans 14:17. "For the Kingdom of God is not food and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the holy spirit."

Romans 15:13. "Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the holy spirit." Do we profess joy and peace in believing? Do we exhibit that? Can others see that in us? It is very important for us to be doing so. It needs to be recognizable in us as we will read a little later to be able to fulfill the command we have been given.

Verse 33; "Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen."

Romans 16:20. "And the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen"

It is very clear that God does not have the same view or definition of peace that the world does. Here we have just read that the God of peace is crushing Satan under our feet. To the world that is contradictory. It makes no sense to it. If you are at peace you don't go around crushing anybody. Well guess what! That is not the way God looks at it. Remember to pursue peace is to resist evil. Crushing Satan under our feet would certainly qualify as resisting evil.

1 Corinthians 7:15. "But if the unbeliever departs, let him depart; a brother or sister is not under bondage in such. But God has called us to peace." Peace is not something you suffer through for that falls under other fruit of the spirit. So peace does not mean we need to endure a marriage or for that matter any relationship with an unbeliever. We are talking an abusive relationship here not just a dislike or something of that nature for that is to be handled by other fruit like longsuffering.

1 Corinthians 14:33. "For God is not of confusion (disorder) but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." Is there disorder/confusion in your organization? For that matter is there disorder/confusion in your life? Confusion is a sure sign there is no peace residing there.

2 Corinthians 13:11. "Finally brethren, farewell. Become complete. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you." Peace does not consist of confusion or a contradictory life style.

Notice what is composed around the word peace here in this instruction.

So what peace are we called to? For that matter who is our peace?

Ephesians 2:14-15. "For He Himself is our peace who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of division, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, the law of commandments in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man from the two, making peace."

Can we see how this is all going together and how God looks at peace and what it comprises and even where it is found? We are talking about the body of Christ. The world does not house this peace.

Verses 17-18; "And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one spirit to the Father."

In these specific verses we are talking about the unification in peace through one spirit, of Gentile and Jew. One who was afar off and the other who had an inheritance in the promises of the commonwealth of Israel. Notice this same theme centered around God's peace.

Ephesians 6:15. "... and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace." Peace is actually part of putting on the armor of God. Once again not a worldly view.

1 Thessalonians 5:3. "For when they say peace and safety, then sudden destruction comes upon them, as labor pains upon a pregnant woman. And they shall not escape."

2 Thessalonians 3:16. "Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always in every way. The Lord be with you all."

Peace comes from God and can be given in every way. It can be given to all who are in the body for it is a fruit of the spirit. Thus we are to display peace, not the world's version but Gods.

James 3:18. "Now the fruit of righteousness (keeping Gods commandments) is sown in peace by those who make peace."

Who are we making peace with? Did the Prince of Peace make peace with everyone? We will be answering this clearly today. Remember what His actions and those of John were in regard to the religious leaders of their day. They let them have it yet John was to prepare the way to peace. That is confusion to the world which does not have access to the spirit of God at this time and thus incapable of understanding the things of God for they have only the spirit of man to define such things. So please do not take this as a lesson in looking down our noses at others. Nothing could be further from the truth. However we must focus on the fact that the peace of God is not a fuzzy, feely, touchy, type of thing. It is not for everyone at this time.

2 Peter 3:14. "Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless." (Here the context is the Day of the Lord. That day is surrounded and defined in great glory and retribution in violence at the same time.)

We are going to really find out what the word peace means to God. It is so intricately tied together with "without spot and blameless" as we have covered in the word tamin; complete, perfect, full, whole; an offering without blemish. Peace cannot be separated from it. The Old Testament scriptures or First Covenant scriptures are also full of the same instructions. The equivalent word in Hebrew to the Greek is #7965 salom. Vines says of this word peace; "completeness; welfare; health. The root is a common Semitic root with the meaning peace in Akkadian, Ugaritic, Phoenician, Aramaic, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic. Salom is a very important term in the Old Testament and has maintained its place in Mishnaic, Rabbinic, and modern Hebrew. In Israel today, people greet the newcomer and each other with the words mah sloamka, (what is your peace, how are you doing) and they ask about the peace (well-being) of one's family. The use of salom is frequent (237 times) and varied in its semantic range."

Isaiah 9:6-7. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be on His shoulder. And His name will be Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will perform this." (Notice these are names for Jesus our Christ and not titles. Name is #8034 shem. It is a prime word and Strongs says "an appellation, as a mark or memorial of individuality." God names things for what they are. If Jesus is named Prince of Peace He is also named Mighty God according to scripture. If someone tries to convince you He is not God let alone Mighty God that person does not have the truth of God residing in them let alone the peace of God. The two are actually inseparable. Also if one tries to convince you that your salvation is predicated on the correct pronunciation of a

Hebrew name for Jesus our Savior then that one is deceived and clearly does not understand that Jesus will be called by many names. That is a doctrine of demons as is the first one so flee from them in haste.) The Prince of Peace will see a continual increase in His and government and peace, His government and peace; or completeness, welfare, and health. This is a very good state to be desired and dwell in. Please understand the term welfare here has nothing in common with the government welfare of man's society. It is something quite different.

Government here is # 4951 misrah. Strong's says it comes from #8280; empire. 8280 is sarah "a prime root; to prevail: have power (as a prince.)" The Hebrew usage of this word fits together beautifully with the Prince of Peace as it should. It is not talking about some burgeoning bloated aristocracy. It is not some huge massive hierarchy. It is basically telling us there will be no end to His power as Prince and completeness. That is what these two Hebrew words mean here for government and peace.

The ISBE (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia) says, "The concept of peace in the OT is most often represented by the Hebrew root slm and its derivatives. The noun salom, one of the most significant theological terms in scripture, has a wide semantic range stressing various nuances of its basic meaning: totality or completeness. These nuances include fulfillment, completion, maturity, soundness, wholeness (both individual and communal) community, harmony, tranquility, security, well-being, welfare, friendship, agreement, success and prosperity." Peace is often understood as the opposite of war or linked to the absence of war. (A simple question; can you have peace without the absence of war? Absolutely brethren and that will become clear from Gods perspective if we have not already seen it.) In this sense peace is desirable for nations, tribes or clans, in which the willingness to negotiate is implicit. Such peace can result from military victory, the kings coming in peace means his coming in victory with his purpose accomplished. Surrender is often concomitant with the end of military hostilities and is therefore an element in the resulting peace. But peace can also result from diplomacy and this demonstrates its intimate connection with the biblical concern for the total well-being of the individuals as well as the community. (We will see how that is to be carried out in these end times.) The ratification of treaties was intended to bring peace, formal and informal agreements of non-belligerence and/or nonviolence were frequently made in ancient times and the term covenant of peace was employed in a variety of situations. Such covenants of salom (completeness or fulfillment) served to unite the wills of the opposing parties, creating a common will that was expected to be maintained by scrupulous adherence to the covenant stipulations."

Can we see that is exactly what needs to be happening to the body of Christ if He is to be victorious in us. We are to be like minded WITH HIM! To be at one with Him and thus with our Father. We are all to do the will of our Father and then we will become complete and fulfilled. That means putting aside petty, fleshly, behavior. Thus we will be enduring to keep the spirit in the bond of peace and let the peace of God rule in our hearts to which also we were called in one body and be thankful. It's the same pattern throughout. The Prince of Peace rules in our hearts through the holy spirit dwelling in us, and as we are told, we must seek and pursue it. And as Romans 12:18 says; "as much as depends on you live peaceably with men." However just like with John there will come times when it doesn't depend on us. But rather on our standing up for the truth of God and these times will not seem peaceable to the recipients as demonstrated in John's acts towards Herod, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. If we truly profess Christ it will bring division at times so please keep that in mind.

Continuing in the ISBE. "Psalm 119:165 stresses the sense of serenity and contentment by all who love the divine law. Prominent in the OT is the teaching that God is the giver of peace in all its fullness. The prophets declare emphatically that God Himself is the source of true peace. **Without a righteous life, made possible by God's help, no one is able to find peace; therefore peace and righteousness are frequently linked together, also the association of peace with justice.** The sense of well-being and fulfillment that comes from God is dependent upon His gracious presence. It is in this light that peace is sometimes invoked as a spiritual blessing upon another. Harmony between God and His creatures and among His creatures themselves is at the heart of the OT emphasis on peace as community. Such community results when people treat one another with goodwill and love, but no peace is possible where there is malice (unjustified harm to another).

Corresponding to Hebrew *shalom* in the OT, Greek *eirene* and its derivatives form the dominant NT word-group expressing the ideas of peace, well-being, rest, reconciliation with God, and salvation in the fullest sense. In classical Greek *eirene* primarily signified the absence of conflict (especially in the military and political sense) the antithesis to war; it could also connote the conditions resulting from the cessation of war, or the condition of law and order that results in the blessings of prosperity for land and people. In NT references to the political and military spheres, *eirene* is used in the classical sense to denote the opposite of war. In general however the NT's use of *eirene* is influenced much more by the LXX, where the term is used almost invariably to translate the Hebrew *shalom*. Thus *eirene* in the NT has taken on a broader connotation of well-being, completeness, inner satisfaction, the contentment and serenity that derive from having lived a full life, etc. The peace that Jesus gives is qualitatively different from that which the world can give.

As the source of all peace, God is frequently referred to in the epistles as the God of peace. Peace is included among the gifts of the holy spirit to believers. The NT expects peace to be the normal state of affairs among Christians, and especially between husband and wife. Peace with God is essential to unity within the church. Peace is associated with various other gifts, virtues, and states of being: with receptiveness to God's salvation, with freedom from distress and fear, with healing both physical and spiritual, with heavenly wisdom, with love, and with security. Inner peace is a vital aspect of Christian experience; it is closely related to, and issues from, a life of righteousness.

Jesus Christ is the mediator of peace (Colossians 1:20). Peace with God is the result of being justified through faith in Christ. The good news of salvation, which is called the gospel of peace because it reconciles believers to God and to one another, forms part of the whole armor of God that enables a Christian to withstand the attacks of the spiritual forces of evil. "

So says the ISBE and actually there is much more but I think we can see it expresses a fairly accurate explanation of the usage of peace as seen from the perspective of God and not from the world. We have covered a lot of scriptures and some scholastic research so far today as to what peace is. We have done all this to clarify two points in the NT scriptures which we have recently covered. We recently covered Matthew 10 in some detail as it related to following Christ and our part in it and what is expected of us, and the resulting relationships we would have because of following Him. Saints would be delivered up to councils and scourged in their synagogues, brought before governors and kings, and those in our own households would be doing it. Brother against brother, father against child, etc. Now that does not sound too peaceful does it?

Matthew 10:34-39. "Do not think that I came to bring peace (same word we have been reading about) on the earth (key words here "on the earth" in understanding about the peace of Christ and who it is for). I did not come to bring peace (on earth) but a sword. (That today is a total contradiction as to what a Christian is to be) For I have come to set a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes will be those of his own household. He who loves father or mother more than Me is not **worthy** (#514 in each occurrence. Axios; deserving suitable) of Me. And he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not **worthy** of Me. And he who does not take his cross and follow after Me is not **worthy** of Me. He who finds his life will lose it, and he who loses his life for My sake will find it."

Why? Because we are to confess Christ before men! That means in what we say and in what we do. Verse 32 tells us, "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven." Is this all getting clearer?

Let's look at Psalm 69 just to get a little clarification of this. It is nothing new! Verses 1-9.

"Save me O God! For the waters have come up to my neck. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I have come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. (And what is going to overtake so many at the end of the age? Satan spews a flood out of his mouth to engulf the body if possible.) I am weary with my crying; my throat is dry; my eyes fail while I wait for my God. Those who hate me without a cause (That will be a terrible burden to bear from within the church and our very own families) are more than the hairs of my head (are you hated? You bet you are if you are confessing Christ in word or deed before men); they are mighty who would destroy me, being my enemies wrongfully; though I have stolen nothing, I must still restore it. (False accusations) O God you know my foolishness; and my sins are not hidden from you. Let not those who wait for You, O Lord God of hosts, be ashamed because of me; Let not those who seek You be confounded because of me, O God of Israel (what an astounding humble attitude) Because for Your sake I have borne reproach; shame has covered my face. I have become a stranger to my brothers and an alien to my mother's children; because zeal for your house has eaten me up. (This is exactly the same context as to what we were just reading in Matthew 10) And the reproaches of those who have reproached You have fallen on me."

Can we see why this is all happening and will continue to happen? It is the result of being zealous for the household of God. For His way of life and as a result all these things will befall us. Not because we have wronged them, but because of their reproach for God. That is exactly what happened to Christ. We are going to walk that same path if we follow Him or as we have read today; to seek peace and pursue it. Christ is the Prince of Peace and He will grant it to us through all of this type of tribulation if we are willing to listen to Him thus we do not fear them but preach from the roof tops, in plain view as a light is visible in the darkness from afar off. That is just as the context tells us if we read the entire 10th chapter of Matthew.

Back to Matthew 10:34 again. "Do not think I came to bring peace on the earth. I did not come to bring peace but a sword."

This verse is correct in that Christ did not come to bring peace to the earth but to those called of the Father and chosen by Him. Ruling over one another will not achieve this brethren. Only being a son of peace will lead us to endeavor to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, letting the peace of God rule in our hearts to which also we were called into one body and one spirit, in one hope, and one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father who is above all and through all and in all.

Matthew 19: 29. "And everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or lands, for My names sake, shall receive a hundredfold, and inherit everlasting life."

Back to Matthew 10 again. Verses 11-14. "Now whatever city or town you enter, inquire who in it is **worthy**, and stay there until you go out. And when you go into a household, greet it. If the household is **worthy**, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not **worthy**, let your peace return to you. (Peace is something we can give. Remember what peace means; your completeness, your wholeness.) and whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet." Peace here is associated with the words you are speaking! It is also associated with being worthy to receive it. Very, very, important! If we do not comprehend this we can find ourselves getting discouraged. We must not do that but continue regardless of how many qualify themselves as being "not worthy" of the peace we have to offer.

Worthy here is #514; axios and Strong's says of it; "probably from #71 deserving, comparable or suitable. Vines says of worthy; "is said of persons or their deeds in a good sense in Matthew 10:10, 11, 13, 37, and 38 as well in Matt 22:8 where it says the wedding is ready but those who were invited were not worthy." Let's not ignore the context this word is repeatedly used in. It defines the word and we can't sidestep that in some Pollyannaish way.

In Luke 7:4-5. "And when they came to Jesus, they begged Him earnestly, saying that the one for who He should do this was **worthy**, (in referring to the centurion who had the sick servant. And why was he worthy in their eyes?) For he loves our nation, and built them a synagogue." But Christ noted his great faith in verse 9 as the thing to be marveled as well as his humility to Christ in acknowledging His authority. Faith and humility are two key ingredients to being worthy and having peace. But peace with who?

Luke 15:19. "...and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants." Same word being used in the parable of the lost son.

Verse 21, "Father I have sinned against heaven and in your sight, and am no longer worthy to be called your son."

There is a lot of instruction to us where we see this word translated as worthy appearing in scripture so please do not lose sight of it or trivialize it.

Luke 10:1-12. "After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place He Himself was about to go. (Now notice how peace works out here. Remember John was going to prepare the way for Christ and we will be doing the same.) Then He said to them, the harvest truly is great, but the laborers few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. Carry neither money bag, sack, or sandals; and greet no one along the road. (They had a duty to perform and were not to put the greater emphasis on life's needs or getting distracted along the way and possibly getting carried off in some other direction.) But whatever house you enter, first say, peace to this house. And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. Do not go from house to house. (No collection here, no picking and choosing which foods you will eat from the different houses.) Whatever city you enter and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. (Of course that does not mean unclean things.) And heal the sick there, and say to them, the kingdom of God has come near to you. But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its

streets and say, the very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this that the kingdom of God has come near you. (That is what Christ said to the Pharisees and now these disciples were empowered to say the same thing.) But I say to you that it will be more tolerable in that day for Sodom than for that city.”

This is Christ’s instruction to us brethren. There are a lot of lessons contained here. We have a responsibility to seek out other sons of peace! We also have an ability to give our peace in such situations. It can and will be recognized by another son of peace. It is a fruit of the spirit just as love is and we give our love to another. We show love to others by our outgoing concern for them. We also give our peace; or completeness, wholeness, and fullness to them as well. How? Through the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. As our love is often rejected so will our peace be as well. **Christ did not come to bring peace to the earth but rather to those who would be worthy of it.** We are to do the same thing to those called of God the Father. However brethren not one of us has lived up to this. We should be striving to do so for it is in our power and is a work at our hands.

Isaiah 66. We have covered these scriptures often in the past and actually recognize ourselves as the nobodies among men. These verses can refresh and confirm our memories to what we have just read and serve as a warning to us about who we will, and are, dealing with all too often.

Verses 1-5; “Thus says the Lord: Heaven is My throne and earth is My footstool. (In other words He is making it very clear who is who.) Where is the house that you will build Me? (Maybe a little mocking taking place here, with the emphasis being that He is putting everything into proper perspective. He is God and we are not.) And where is the place of My rest? For all those things My hand has made, and all those exist (Because of Me) says the Lord. But on this one will I look: On him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word. (What a magnificent Creator we have. He isn’t looking for one who will tell Him what He is going to do for Him, the great and pompous offerings of men, things from what God already owns. Our Creator is looking for one who has a humble and contrite spirit toward Him. Who is in awe of Him. God says He and He alone builds His house. He does not need our assistance in that sense. What He is looking for is one who will occupy His house, His household for eternity. Our Creator is about to tell us what is really important to Him when it comes to our relationship with Him.) He who kills a bull is as if he slays a man; he who sacrifices a lamb as if he breaks a dog’s neck; he who offers a grain offering as if he offers swine’s blood; he who burns incense as if he blesses an idol. (Christ is talking about sacrifices here. What sacrifice is He really looking for? Is it shed blood of animals and fields of grain? Not quite. It is a very personal and deep commitment to Him and the rules and ways of the household of God. Sacrifices are required because of sin. He is looking for a repentant heart which does not ever want to sin any more. We can kill all the bulls and lambs etc. but that is not what God is looking for. That was just a requirement, a penalty to pay, and with the purpose of reminding us we are sinners and need righteous blood to free us from the penalty of sin. Watch how He wraps up this thought and how He categorizes what men actually end up doing with such requirements.) Just as they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delights in their own abominations (They perverted it all. They decided how it was going to be done. If a lamb is sacrificed contrary to the way God has clearly stated it is the same as breaking a dog’s neck. It all turns into disgusting showmanship. There is a lot of show going on in the churches of God brethren. It is just deplorable to witness such things as a member of the body of Christ. Just think how God looks at it. The focus in the churches is on the muckity mucks and not on the flock. As we have covered many times in

the past they are devouring the sheep and have put them into bondage and have dumbed them down rather than build them up.) So will I choose their delusions and bring their fears on them; (And what is the chief fear of the deluded leaders? Losing the cafeteria they are feeding in. That's the brethren. The money is drying up so they are raiding the other "flocks." Christ is knocking at the door and calling us out one at a time if we actually invite Him in.), because when I called, no one answered, when I spoke they did not hear; but they did evil before My eyes, (those are the folks offering the supposed sacrifices) and chose that in which I do not delight. Hear the word of the Lord, you who tremble at His word: your brethren who hated you, who cast you out for My names sake, said let the Lord be glorified. That we may see Your joy. (Listen to these guys. They throw out the real wheat and do so in God's name and are expecting some big congratulatory thing from God for doing so.) But they shall be ashamed."

So let me ask you at this point who are the worthy here? The muckity mucks or the poor of the flock? Who is more prone to act like a son of peace? Who is functioning with the right spirit in the bond of peace?

Brethren we will never achieve the goal God has set for us if we are trying to prove who is the greatest amongst us. We do not control the other parts of the body. If we are an eye we don't have the authority to reject another part of the body unless they are a cancer to it. That is a study for another time. Christ gives us clear direction in such things but we should use the authority housed in those particular scriptures with trembling and fear. We are to be making every effort to unify the other parts of the body in the spirit in the bond of peace. How do we do that? By giving our peace to them and seeing if they in fact will accept it. If not we move on. We don't make a big deal out of it. Unfortunately some of them won't let it go that easily for they will be influenced by the vainest being in the universe. Then persecution will pursue us brethren. It has happened to me and it has happened to you. And don't think for a minute it won't happen again.

A word of advice brethren. Don't look to find yourself in another. It is not going to happen. If we are a toe we should not be looking for other toes to fellowship with. We should simply be looking for the peace of Christ in them regardless of what part or function in the body they are engaged in. If we find this peace or completeness we will also find the love of God in them as well. And don't forget the other fruit of the spirit also. Here is a mystery it seems in the churches; "we will know them by the love they have for one another." Remember that love is not the feely touchy worldly display but the deep abiding love of God (His commandments His household rules) as displayed by outgoing concern for the rest of the body regardless of function performed. We all do not look alike or perform the same tasks. We look to our Head for direction and guidance. We are all to be working to edify the body, to build it up under Christ's direction and not to dumb it down or tear it down. Peace is a big key to unlocking the relationship we are to have with a brother or a sister. Look for completeness, a recognizable fulfillment of the spirit in the individuals we come in contact with. These will be the sons of peace who are worthy of our peace just as scripture tells us. Just think Christ says we will not have completed this task before He returns. How often have you heard that brethren? Probably not often, if at all. Many brethren are scolded by their organizations leaders for not doing their part. And what does that consist of? Give us more so we can do the work! Those are sick people brethren. Very, very, sick! They in most instances have the spiritual disease of dominion. Flee from such darkness and never look back. We are to be lights. That means we are to help others to see by that very light we are to be giving off.

Matthew 25:7. "Then all those virgins arose and trimmed their lamps."

Think about the context here. All ten arose. Those who had kept oil in their lamps and also those who did not. Those who had not were very aware that the other 5 had oil in their lamps. Now how do you think they knew that? The word translated trimmed from the Greek here means, "adorned the outside." This is very significant for it suggests they all looked the part on the surface.

We are the temple of the holy spirit as we read in 1 Corinthians 6:19. "Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the holy spirit which is in you which you have from God, and you are not your own?" We are the lamp, the vessel. The oil is the holy spirit of God.

Matthew 25:8-9. "And the foolish said to the wise, give us of your oil, for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, saying, lest there should not be enough for us and you; go rather to them who sell, and buy for yourselves." We have studied this a lot in the past. The wise could not give the oil, the spirit of God. Only God can do so. So no, you can't lay your hands on another and impart the holy spirit to them. Have you ever watched a lamp when it is running out of oil to burn? If so you will have noticed the wick starts to flicker before it dies out. It no longer shines bright does it. If that wick is allowed to burn until the last drop of oil is used you will have seen the wick had deposits of carbon on it which unless cleaned off could prevent it from burning clean and bright even with an infusion of new oil. Brethren that is a very important lesson we should be aware of. A kerosene heater will do exactly the same thing. If the wick is cleaned off the vessel once again can become an instrument of light.

Ephesians 5:8. "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light." Verse 10-14; "Proving what is acceptable to the Lord, (As children of the Lord walking in the light what do we do? Proving what is acceptable to the Lord! That's what John did. That's why he had a problem with the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Herod. But yet he was a son of peace.) And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness. But rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light. Therefore He says; awake you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light."

As sons of peace we are to seek out other sons of peace.

Matthew 10: 11-14 again. "Now whatever city or town you enter inquire who in it is **worthy**, and stay there until you go out. And when you go into a household greet it. If the household is **worthy**, let your peace come upon it. But if it is not **worthy**, let your peace return to you. And whoever will not receive you nor hear your words, when you depart from that house or city, shake off the dust from your feet." Luke 10:5-11. "But whatever house you enter, first say, peace to this house. (That is how we start it all out) And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. And remain in the same house, eating and drinking such things as they give, for the laborer is worthy of his wages. (You don't tell them what you want to eat it is left up to them to decide that. There is no dictation on your part. A muckity muck would go in and say I need money, a car, a house of my own, etc.) Do not go from house to house. Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you. And heal the sick there, and say to them, the kingdom of God has come near to you. But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, the very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless, know this, that the kingdom of God has come near you."

Do we have the Faith to do this brethren? Do we have the faith to do it! As we have seen it can have the appearance of a very lonely undertaking. However we are told we will be rewarded with eternal life, we will receive a hundred fold what we will have lost in doing so when we confess Christ.

Look what the sons of peace are told at the end of the age. Matthew 25:34-40. "Then the king will say to those on His right hand, come you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave Me drink; I was a stranger and you took Me in; I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me. Then the righteous will answer Him, saying, Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed, or thirsty and give drink? When did we see You a stranger and take in, or naked and clothe? Or when did we see You sick or in prison, and come to You? And the King will answer and say to them, assuredly I say to you, inasmuch as you did to one of the least of these My brethren, you did to Me."

There are many brethren who are going to be spiritually hungry, thirsty, sick, and naked, in prisoned and who can't get out. We need to think about these things in the spiritual condition and context of this age. The word "visit" found here in verse 36 and 43 is #1980 in the Strong's, episkeptomai. Strong's says "to inspect, i.e. (by implication) to select; by extension to go to see, relieve." Vines says of this Greek word 1980; "primarily to inspect, a late form of episkopio to look upon, care for, exercise oversight."

That is all part of our responsibilities as sons of peace. How will we ever know others are sons of peace unless we inspect/visit the situation? Are we content to live in a cave and pass the time away?

Luke 1:68 and 78; "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, for He has visited and redeemed His people."

"Through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring (Messiah) from on high has visited us." If we read down through the verses here we see who this is talking about. Verse 68 tells us his father was Zacharias.

Verses 76-80. "And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Highest; for you will go before the face of the Lord to prepare His ways, to give knowledge of salvation to His people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God, with which the Dayspring from on high has visited us; to give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace. (Once again we see peace is directly tied to light.) So the child grew and became strong in spirit, and was in the deserts to the day of his manifestation to Israel."

John came giving knowledge of salvation by the remission of sin. That is certainly overcoming evil with good. That was his peace brethren. He never forsook it. So what peace do we have to give? The gospel of salvation in all is fullness from the word of God.

Yes, John was a son of peace and he had a task to perform just like we all do. Did the world see him as a son of peace? No it did not. The rulers of his world cut off his head. They loped it off and yes there is symbolism in that as well.

Luke 7:16. "Then fear came upon all, and they glorified God, saying, a great prophet has risen up among us; and God has visited His people." Visited here is the same as we have just seen. The word "came" there in Matthew 25:36 and 39 in relation to what we are to be doing is #2064 erchomi and it is the most frequent verb denoting to come or to go and **it signifies the act in contrast with hecho which stresses the arrival. We are not to be focusing on the arrival.** Diamond Jim Brady does that. That is the superficial and not the act stemming from a simple humble willingness to do so. We are seeking out other sons of peace even though they may appear to be the least of these My brethren. Most will not

have been associating with you or maybe even do some things you don't like. Remember He has told us they are sick, hungry, and thirsty, without clothing, spiritually imprisoned. But guess what? He says these are MY brethren! There is an awful lot we need to learn about these things. We are not looking for the flashy folks who have the exterior adorned yet are full of emptiness. We are also not looking to associate with heretics. We should be driven by the simple words of our Creator Husband when He will say to us; well, good and faithful servant, you were faithful over a few things (He is not expecting us to be faithful over an empire of things at all.) I will set you over many things enter into the joy of your Lord. These are the words a son of peace longs to hear. Let's do our part and always remember you can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink. We need to be cognizant to that through this incredible endeavor. However we must not use that as an excuse to not continually seek out sons of peace. That is a task which has been given to us and it is not ours to modify. We either do it or we don't. Let's finish this up today with some very inspiring words from Isaiah about our role at the end of the age. Remember we will not have gone through all the cities in Israel with our peace before Christ returns. Isaiah 52:7, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good, who proclaims salvation, who says to Zion, your God reigns."

Our peace we give to you.

Brian Convery