

New Mount Zion M.B. Church



***140 West Maple Street
Jackson, MS 39203***

**New Mount Zion M.B. Church
Bible Class
June 29, 2020**

***“Understanding The Fruit of The Spirit”
3rd Fruit***

The Hebrew word for "peace" is shalom. "Shalom" is still used today as a traditional greeting among many Jewish people, and it can be used to convey a wish for prosperity, well-being, success, harmony amongst friends and family, unity among the nations, and many other blessings. Literally, however, "shalom" means "to be complete [or whole]." At his calling, Gideon, one of the early Judges, named the place of his call "Yahweh-Shalom" which means "The Lord is our Peace" (Judges 6:24). Paul echoes this in Ephesians 2:14-15, explaining that the things that kept us from God were now removed because of Jesus, and we were able to be unified with Him.

Living with true peace can only be done by allowing the Holy Spirit to bear the fruit of his presence in our lives. Galatians 5:22-23 says, “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.” How incredible is it that we can have peace in this world through relationship with the Holy Spirit! The fact that true peace is solely a fruit of the Spirit takes the weight of peace off our shoulders.

So what is peace? Some people would say that peace is the opposite of war, when there is no fighting or violence. There is peace in our homes when nobody is arguing or fighting. That is having peace with others. There are two other types of peace.

There is also peace with God. When Adam and Eve started out in the Garden of Eden, they had peace with God. They walked with Him and spent time with Him (Genesis 3:8a). But when Adam and Eve chose to sin by trusting Satan instead of God, the peace that they had with God was broken (Genesis 3:10). The Bible says every person has sinned (Romans 3:23), and every person has lost the peace that God wanted to have with him or her (Isaiah 57:21).

But God wanted to restore the peace we had with Him, so He promised to send a Savior to restore that peace (Genesis 3:15).

The Savior that God promised was Jesus! God fulfilled His promise when He sent Jesus, His Son, to earth. The prophet Isaiah called Jesus the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6). Anyone who believes in Jesus is made right with God; their peace with God is restored!

“There is peace with God through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.” – Acts 10:36b NLT

Thirdly, there is peace within our own hearts. This is something we deal with every day. We have peace in our hearts when we are not worried, upset, angry, or afraid. This is something that people may not be able to see on the outside, but we know it's there on the inside. When we don't have peace we feel sort of unrest on the inside. We think about all the things that can go wrong. Our mind races and our heart beats quickly. God does not want His people to live without peace in their hearts and minds.

When He was about to leave His disciples, Jesus told His followers, “I am leaving you with a gift – peace of mind and heart.” (John 14:27a NLT) This peace stays with us even when we have something upsetting in our lives.

For instance, what if someone lost their job, and they didn't know how they would pay their bills or buy food at the grocery store? That would be a pretty scary situation. But God does not want us to worry about it. He wants us to trust Him.

Having peace with God helps me rest in the knowledge that He has a plan—even if my life is crashing around me, even if I cannot see His plan. Peace is trusting that He will catch me if that meteor of destruction hits the world I've carefully created. Peace is hope in the promise that God is found in the storm as often as He is found in the peaceful places. Peace is knowing He has me cradled safely in His hands.

Peace is a confidence in who God designed you to be. If you are constantly seeking others' approval, trying to be just like someone else, or not fostering your gifts and talents because they aren't what you wanted to be given, then you're not at peace with yourself.

When we are most truly the selves we are meant to be, living a godly life, allowing the Spirit to bring forth the Fruits of the Spirit, we will feel that peace the strongest. That doesn't mean everything will be hunky-dory, and all troubles will be far from you. But it does mean there will be peace within the mess.

"World Peace" is a wonderful ideal that every beauty pageant contestant hopes society can attain. But what exactly IS world peace? Is it simply a lack of war? Is it everyone leaving everyone else alone? Or is it working together as a community?

The Apostle Paul challenges us to consider true peace as more than merely not fighting but rather as actively being peacemakers (Romans 12:18). He describes us as a body, each of our parts having a different role, but each essential to the health and well-being of the whole.

It's impossible to bear the fruit of peace apart from connectivity to God. It's impossible to force peace in our lives because it's impossible for us to bear fruit in our own strength. John 15:4. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me." Peace is the fruit of abiding in the Holy Spirit. It's the fruit of surrendering our perspectives, relationships, words, actions, thoughts, and emotions to him.

Peace can be maintained for a time out of ignorance or denial, but when the realities of life come upon us, peace can be impossible unless we let His peace rein in us! When we do not let go we will blame God and lose our unity and serenity in Him. Peace is learning to let go of our will, desires and plans. Peace is not the peace of the hippie movement or even between nations, although those things can be applied from it.

Peace is serenity from the realization that God is in charge and we can relax because He is in control. Peace is the recognition that our biggest problem has been solved! It is the stillness we have when our trust is upon Christ as Lord (Psalm 46:10). Peace will also enable us to yield our will over to Him. Peace enables us to be moved from the stronghold of fear and trepidations into a life of harmony (Isa. 26:3; II Tim. 1:7). When we are on the verge of giving up, or losing our hope, peace can be the anchor to keep us on His path, to see His hope, to let it give you the confidence to keep moving on His path.

Do you have peace in your church? If not remember those who seed strife and make divisions in the Church are not doing Christ's work, but are attempting to gratify their own selves. They cause people to follow a person and not the Person of Christ! Contentious, divisive people will cause others to stumble, so they must be avoided, and disciplined, which means removing them from fellowship if they persist (Rom. 16: 17-24; 1 Cor. 5:9-13; 2 Thess. 3:6; 2 Tim. 3:5; Titus 3:10)!

Remember the Fruit of the Spirit are codependent entities, neither one can stand or work by itself as they are designed to work all together synergistically to build us up for His service.

One of the strongest human desires is for peace, whether it be peace between nations, peace between neighbors or even peace within our own minds. Peace is listed in the top three characteristics of the fruit of the spirit. Without love, joy and peace, the rest of the fruits are not possible. God has also called us as Christians to be peacemakers.

Also, we must understand what a "peacemaker" is. The Greek word simply indicates a person who makes or works toward peace. A person can only work toward peace if he is at peace himself. Believers have peace with God through Jesus Christ (Romans 5:1). God is the source of peace (Philippians 4:7) and calls His followers to exhibit peace in their own lives (Galatians 5:22; Romans 12:18).

Living as a peacemaker follows the example of Jesus Himself. He is called the "Prince of Peace" in Isaiah 9:6. Ephesians 2:14-16 reveals that Jesus is our peace in that He has reconciled Jew and Gentile and reconciled both to God. Jesus offers this same peace to His followers: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid" (John 14:27).

A peacemaker actively works toward peace. Whether it's to provide peace between two people or two nations, our world is in much need of those who represent the heart of God to bring peace to broken relationships. Those who assist in such efforts will find joy in the experience of seeing people reconciled to one another and to God. Every believer should be a peacemaker in the sense of spreading the good news that peace with God is possible. "Peace" was part of the angels' message to the shepherds when Jesus was born (Luke 2:14). "Peace" is part of our message to the world because God "through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18).