

## 20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 6 (February 5-11, 2017)

This week, we will conclude our study of Biblical peace and rest with a selective group of Scriptures.

**Sunday**, February 5 (read Psalm 85:7-11)

*Love and faithfulness meet together; righteousness and peace kiss each other. (Psalm 85:10)*

Because of His unfailing love, we know from the New Testament that God grants salvation to those who ask for it through His Son, Jesus Christ (v. 7). As a result, He promises peace to all recipients, but we will never experience peace in its fullness if we return to our folly (v. 8). God desires to be glorified by the way we live for Him following our salvation experience (v. 9), but there is a connection between love and faithfulness as well as righteousness and peace (v. 10). In other words, if we refuse to be faithful to His Word and His will, we will never experience the fullness of the peace and love that He offers. Don't you love the expressive way the psalmist states this truth in the printed verse above? In v. 11, we see the separation of duties. We are called to be faithful on earth whereas righteousness always comes from heaven. Are you experiencing this peace of God? It's available to the obedient!

**Monday**, February 6 (read Psalm 34:11-16)

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

We saw in yesterday's devotion that there is a direct connection between righteousness and peace. Today's text will amplify that point. We are told in the printed verse to "seek peace and pursue it." To do that, we have to examine the life that we are living following our salvation experience. I can testify that many of the misdeeds of the body will decrease in old age, but the sins of the tongue tend to get even worse (v. 11-13). If we are to seek and pursue real peace, we must examine our **words** as well as our **actions**! Those who choose to live under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and under the authority of Scripture will attract the eyes and the ears of the Lord (v. 15). Isn't that enough reason to "seek peace and pursue it?"

**Tuesday**, February 7 (read Psalm 34:1-10)

*Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him. (Psalm 34:8)*

I want you to read the first 10 verses of this chapter because they teach other elements in the pursuit of peace. Those who know His peace should be consistent in **praising God** and **bringing glory** to Him (v. 1-3). They should also be **free from fears** (see 1 John 4:18) and their faces should **glow** with the **radiance** of one who is at peace with God (v. 4-5). God sends His **angel to protect** those who love Him enough to obey (v. 7). The psalmist then challenges us to "taste and see that the Lord is good," because all who take **refuge** in Him are **blessed**. Just like He promises in Philippians 4:19, God will **supply** all the **needs** of those who "seek peace and pursue it" (v. 9-10, 14). In case this is not enough to encourage you to seek His peace, we will see some other benefits in tomorrow's devotion.

**Wednesday**, February 8 (read Psalm 34:17-22)

*The righteous cry out, and the Lord hears them; He delivers them from all their troubles. (Psalm 34:17)*

Anyone who has accepted Jesus as his/her Savior and Lord is righteous in God's eyes (see 2 Corinthians 5:21); therefore, the psalmist continues to list the benefits of seeking real peace. We can cry out to Him when we are in any kind of trouble and **He delivers us** (v. 17, 19), according to His will for us. We can cry out to Him when our hearts are broken and He will **comfort us** (v. 18). He even promises to keep the **bones in our body** from breaking (v. 20). I know that this promise applies primarily to the Lord on the cross, but I claimed it for myself when my doctor told me I could not walk on my ankle. The evil people will get their just rewards someday (v. 20), but you can be sure that no one who takes refuge in the Lord **will ever be condemned** (v. 21). That's the kind of assurance I want you to have in Christ Jesus! Are you willing to pursue His peace?

**Thursday**, February 9 (read Matthew 11:25-30)

*"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28)*

God reveals His formula for **rest** and **peace** to those who seek Him and are willing to change and become like little children (v. 25-26; see also Matthew 18:1-4). Sadly, many Christians want to have only enough of Jesus to deliver their souls from hell, so they never seek and pursue **peace** and **rest**. Jesus has authority over everything and He desires to reveal His Father's love to each believer (v. 27). As a result, He issues one of the most beautiful invitations found in the Bible (v. 28). He promises **rest** to anyone who will truly come to Him in obedience. He promises to walk beside us with His yoke upon our neck so that we will never fail in any assigned task (v. 29). Compared to what the world offers, His "yoke is easy and [His] burden is light" (v. 30). Are you seeing how much most of His children are missing?

**Friday**, February 10 (read Isaiah 53:1-6)

*But He was pierced for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon Him, and by His wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:5)*

You may want to read Isaiah 52:13-53:12 for the entire account of the life, death and resurrection of our Lord written 700 years prior to the events taking place. I just want to remind you of the tremendous price Jesus paid for our **peace**! Can we afford to ignore it? The first two verses in today's reading prophesy that most who hear His story will not believe it, particularly the virgin birth (root out of dry ground). There was no halo around His head to make Him stand out in a crowd. He was "despised and rejected by men" and suffered much, because He came to earth to die for our sins. "We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (v. 6). Can you read this and continue to live in willful sin? This is a question you must answer for yourself! Can you disobey Him and expect to have peace? The Scripture clearly teaches you cannot!

**Saturday**, February 11 (read Isaiah 26:1-4)

*You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you. (Isaiah 26:3)*

I want to close my devotions on **rest** and **peace** with this passage from Isaiah. God is talking about a time when the Jews will live in peace in their own land, a possibility that was greatly damaged when the United States refused to support Israel in the United Nations recently. Nevertheless, God will continue to return them to their homeland. After He calls the true Christians home in the rapture, He will turn His attention to His chosen people during the tribulation. After seven years of tribulation, He will return with us to set up His earthly kingdom for 1000 years. Only then will they (and we) have perfect peace. To the extent that your mind is focused on Jesus, however, you can experience more **rest** and **peace** in this world than you ever thought possible. Trust in the Lord and keep looking up—fully rely on God (KLUFROG). The best is yet to come!