

Principles to Peace

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The world today is filled with strife and contention! Nobody is immune. Even those who are even-tempered and try to be friendly to all, are sometimes confronted with situations where tempers flare and hurtful words are exchanged.

Jesus Christ is referred to as, “The Prince OF Peace” (Isa. 9:6). And those who are *followers* of Christ—that is, those who are Christians—should be striving to live that same way of life which Christ lived. Christ Himself said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God”! (Matt. 5:9).

The Apostle Paul, likewise, exhorts us to live *peaceably* with **all** men! “If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men” (Rom. 12:18).

Thankfully, God’s Word—the Holy Bible—does *not* leave us clueless as to how to *achieve* peace in our everyday lives. In fact, “peace,” is a subject which the Bible speaks a great deal about!

A Fruit of God’s Holy Spirit

In Galatians 5:22-23, Paul lists the fruits of the Spirit. These “fruits” of the Spirit are the very attributes of God’s own character. And those *Godly* attributes are *imparted to* a Christian through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit... which is Christ living His life in us (Rom. 8:9-10; Gal. 2:20).

In Paul’s list of the fruits of the Spirit, which fruit was listed third? “Peace”!

Do you, as a Christian, ever feel that you are *lacking* “peace” in your life? Well, whenever we do feel that way, we should **ask** God for **more** of this “fruit of the Spirit.” After all, what did Jesus Christ say? He said, “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much **more** will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who **ask** Him!” (Matt. 7:11).

Likewise, the Apostle Paul, said this: “may the Lord of peace Himself **give** you peace always...” (II Thess. 3:16).

Now, when a person receives God’s Spirit... and he thereafter *asks for* (and receives) “the spirit of peace” from God... does the person (from that point forward) automatically *have* peace, in all his relationships with others? Or... does that individual have **his** part to play, in employing certain godly principles which will help bring *about* peace?

Well, obviously, the latter is the case. And, for the remainder of this article, we will examine that very issue... “Principles to Peace.”

Principles TO Peace

Principle #1 Walk in HUMILITY!

Humility *precedes* peace! One cannot live a life of peace *without* humility!

What is the *opposite* of “humility”? **Pride!** And scripture says that “**By pride** comes nothing but **strife** [‘**contention**’—*KJV*]...” (Prov.13:10). “Strife” and “contention” are the *opposite* of peace!

Therefore, if we want to avoid contention, then we must *eradicate, eliminate, and abolish* any—and all—*pride* from our lives. In other words, *walk in humility!*

Satan the devil is the *author* of “contention.” And Satan has this world believing that you are a coward, if you don’t *strike back*, at every “put-down.” Yet, that is *not*, how Jesus Christ (“the author of peace”) reacted! We are told that when Christ was reviled, He reviled **not**, in return! (I Peter 2:23).

Now, since this subject of “humility,” is *so important*, let’s very quickly consider 3 sub-points:

(1) Be willing to **yield!**

“But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, **willing to yield**, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown **in peace** by those who **make peace**” (James 3: 17-18).

Being “willing to yield,” *requires* “humility”! Yet, in *doing* so, it helps bring about “peace.” So, the next time that contention begins to escalate, consider this important principle of humbly *being willing to yield*.

(2) “A **soft answer** turns **away** wrath”

For a myriad of reasons, we all experience occasions when individuals make offensive or spiteful remarks toward us. Immediately, our instinct is to respond in kind. However, it is far better to be led by God’s Word, *than* by our natural instinct. So, the next time someone makes a stinging remark, remember this admonition in Prov. 15:1... to respond with a “**soft answer.**” By doing so, the situation—more often than not—will be *immediately de-escalated!* And, again, employment of this principle requires *humility*.

(3) Esteem others **better** than yourself!

The Apostle Paul says this: “*Let* nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in **lowliness** of mind [that is, in **humility**] let each esteem others **better** than himself” (Phil. 2:3).

Principle #2 Be quick to FORGIVE!

Do you want our heavenly Father to **forgive** *your* sins? Well, Jesus Christ plainly says that God will **NOT** forgive your sins... **unless** you forgive others! (Matt. 6:14-15).

Later, in chapter 18, Christ gives a *parable* concerning that very issue. And, that parable reveals even *more*... it reveals that God requires that our forgiveness of others **must be from the heart!**

That parable is given in Matthew 18:23-35. Notice the latter part of the parable:

‘You **wicked** servant! I forgave **you** all that debt because you begged me. Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?’ And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

“So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.” (verses 32-35).

Yes, God’s Word absolutely *requires* us to forgive “from the heart”! And not only that, scripture also shows that we should be *quick* to forgive! “‘Be angry, and do not sin’: **do not let the sun go down on your wrath**” (Eph. 4:26). “leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. **First be reconciled to your brother, and then** come and offer your gift” (Matt. 5:24).

Finally, consider Paul’s exhortation: “Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice” (Eph. 4:31). Each and every one of those things which Paul said to put away, promote the very **opposite** of “peace.” And, Paul then tells us what to **replace** those things with: “And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, **forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you**” (verse 32).

Again, an extremely *important* principle in promoting peace, is to **forgive** others... *quickly*, and *from* the heart. Likewise, Christians should make a habit of giving others “the benefit of the doubt.” We should also be willing to *overlook* things that aren’t all that important.

Conclusion

Through God’s Spirit dwelling within us, we can partake of the very fruits of God’s Spirit... and *thereby*—to a degree—have *the very mind of Christ* (Phil. 2:5). And, we should *have* that mind *as* we *interact* with our fellowman!

The Christian should be extremely *thankful* to God for giving us the “fruits of His Spirit.” Oftentimes, we need to ask God for *more* of the “fruit of **peace**.”

As we *employ* in our daily lives these Biblical “principles to peace,” we can come *ever closer* to truly “living *at* peace... with *all* mankind.”