

# The Basics of Christianity

## Mercy and Grace

### Titus 2:11-14

#### INTRODUCTION:

**Titus 2:11-14 (NASB95)**

**Genesis 3:1-7 (NASB95)**

**Titus 2:11-14 (NASB95)**

**John 14:6 (NASB95)**

#### BODY:

#### I. The Gospel is Grace Because it is Entirely Undeserved.

**Colossians 1:5-6 (NASB95)**

**Romans 1:18-21 (NASB95)**

#### II. The Gospel is Grace Because it is Absolutely Free.

**Ephesians 2:8-10 (NASB95)**

**Romans 10:17 (NASB95)**

#### III. The Gospel is Grace Because it is Abundantly Sufficient.

**Romans 5:20-21 (NASB95)**

**1 Timothy 1:13-14 (NASB95)**

**Acts 26:10-11 (NASB95)**

#### CONCLUSION:

**Acts 8:35-38 (NASB95)**

**Matthew 28:19-20 (NASB95)**

**Ephesians 4:4-5 (NASB95)**

**Acts 2:37-38 (NASB95)**

# The Basics of Christianity

## The Peace of God

### Philippians 4:4-9

#### **INTRODUCTION:**

This morning we are continuing with "The Basics of Christianity" series. The purpose for this series is so we can be more effective in our witness to those who have not accepted Jesus as their Lord and Savior. This morning we will look at the **Peace of God**.

#### **All Stand and Read Scripture**

##### **Philippians 4:4-9 (NASB95)**

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! <sup>5</sup> Let your gentle *spirit* be known to all men. The Lord is near. <sup>6</sup> Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

<sup>8</sup> Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things. <sup>9</sup> The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

#### **Prayer**

You will notice that verse 7 and the end of verse 9 are both talking about the ability of having the "**Peace of God**" in our lives.

##### **Philippians 4:7 (NASB95)**

<sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

##### **Philippians 4:9 (NASB95)**

<sup>9</sup> The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

In order to have peace in our lives, we must first understand the kinds of peace that exist.

- **Worldly Peace.**

Complete peace will never come to the world.

##### **Matthew 10:34 (NASB95)**

<sup>34</sup> "Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.

## Matthew 24:6-7 (NASB95)

<sup>6</sup> You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for *those things* must take place, but *that* is not yet the end. <sup>7</sup> For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom, and in various places there will be famines and earthquakes.

- **Spiritual Peace**

We cannot have **peace of God** until we first have **peace with God**. Peace with God requires that we have mended our separation from God due to our sin and we are no longer under His wrath. It is then that we can start seeking peace with others. This will produce the inner peace that we are searching for.

The **Peace of God** flows from our **peace with God**.

Our **Peace with God** has more to do with our **relationship with God**.

Our **Peace of God** has to do **with trust and obedience**.

## BODY:

### I. Rejoice in God's Character.

#### Philippians 4:4 (NASB95)

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!

So, what is Joy? **Joy is NOT happiness!** We tend to try to spend our lives trying to do things that we think will make us **HAPPY**. We pursue happiness.

The definition of **happiness** is *“A temporary feeling of pleasure based upon positive circumstances”*.

We are always seeking for positive events in our life that can make us HAPPY. But, what happens when things don't go your way? What happens when you lose your job and you can no longer pay the house payments on your house? You are no longer happy.

Regardless of the type of happiness we seek the end result is the same. When the **positive results from those endeavors end**, happiness goes away.

Christ offers us something much better than happiness. Christ offers us **JOY!**

The definition of **joy** is *“A persistent confidence in the character of God that transcends circumstances and leads to a sense of well-being”*.

**Joy is a mindset or an attitude.** It gives us a sense of well being because we have surrendered ourselves to God and know that He is faithful to keep His promises and will provide our needs.

**Joy is a choice, not a feeling.** We choose to have joy in our lives by our attitude and mindset because we have given God control of our lives. We can trust that our current circumstances will work out for good because we love the Lord.

Remember, I told you, we cannot have **the peace of God** until we have **peace with God**.

How can we have **peace with God**?

Paul tells us, first of all, to rejoice always. What can we rejoice in? How about Christ dying on the cross in order to reconcile us to God by His grace. An accomplishment that we could not do on our own.

**God created mankind through Adam to live in harmony with Him.** It is a vital part of our make-up.

**Satan initiated a war against God.** Adam, as the representative of mankind, voluntarily joined Satan in this war against God when he and Eve partook of the tree of good and evil and brought sin into the human race. **The peace of the universe was shattered** and that Great War invades every aspect of life. Now, instead of light and joy and peace, a massive shadow rolled over all of creation. **This shadow of sin infected everything as a cancer** eating away at a once healthy body.

We were separated from God by sin. Jesus came to offer peace with God to mankind. Because of Christ, we can enter into a new, loving relationship with God. We can have what Adam had before the Fall...and more.

**This peace did not come at zero cost...**nothing ever does. As Perfect Justice God could not simply pretend that nothing had happened. The crime of rebellion had been committed, the war had been started, **Perfect Justice requires perfect punishment.** In order for peace to exist between God and man, someone had to take the punishment.

In order for us to have peace with God again, **Jesus** - God as a human being - **had to take the punishment for our rebellion.** He had to pay the price for our sins. The pain, suffering and work of the cross was the cost to bring an offer of peace from God to man.

Now, Jesus offers complete forgiveness to **all who will accept Him as Lord and Savior.** Our rebellion and warfare against God can be forgiven. We can have peace with God and eternal life with Him.

**Romans 5:1 (NASB95)**

5 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

**This is a very good reason to rejoice in the Lord Always!**

## II. Rest in God's Nearness.

**Philippians 4:5 (NASB95)**

<sup>5</sup> Let your gentle *spirit* be known to all men. The Lord is near.

Once we have found peace with God, we can then start establishing peace with each other. Now that Jesus has completed His primary mission of bringing peace between God and mankind, He also brings peace between all people who have accepted forgiveness from God. As we are at peace with God, we can be at peace with each other on every level.

**Ephesians 2:14-18 (NASB95)**

<sup>14</sup> For He Himself is our peace, who made both *groups into one* and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, <sup>15</sup> by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, *which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances*, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, *thus establishing peace*, <sup>16</sup> and might reconcile them both in one body to

God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. <sup>17</sup> And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; <sup>18</sup> for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.

**All Christians are now at peace with God and each other.** Both Jew and Gentile. But, we know this is a process. Although we are saved and original sin is removed, we still struggle with individual sins and sometimes make war on those to whom we are supposed to be at peace with. **Lord, please forgive us when we fail to find peace with one another!**

How did Paul tell us to find peace with one another?

### **Philippians 2:3-5 (NASB95)**

<sup>3</sup> Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; <sup>4</sup> do not *merely* look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. <sup>5</sup> Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus,

If our “gentle spirit” is known by all men, it is because we “**Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus.**” Before Christ’s ascension to heaven, he promised us “**lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.**” We have the Holy Spirit within us to give us direction every moment of our Christian lives. Once we have **peace with God** and others then we can start working on having the **peace of God** in our lives.

### **III. Replace Worry with Prayer.**

#### **Philippians 4:6 (NASB95)**

<sup>6</sup> Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

We all tend to get anxious about circumstances in our life. What are some things we are anxious about?

- Marriage
- Finances
- Health
- Shelter
- Food and Clothing
- Transportation
- Job
- Work Load

#### **Luke 12:22-30 (NASB95)**

<sup>22</sup> And He said to His disciples, “For this reason I say to you, do not worry about your life, as to what you will eat; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. <sup>23</sup> For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. <sup>24</sup> Consider the ravens, for they neither sow nor reap; they have no storeroom nor barn, and yet God feeds them; how much more valuable you are than the birds! <sup>25</sup> And which of you by worrying can add a single hour to his life’s span? <sup>26</sup> If then you cannot do even a very little thing, why do you worry about other matters? <sup>27</sup> Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; but I tell you, not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. <sup>28</sup> But if God so clothes the grass in the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you? You men of little faith! <sup>29</sup> And do not seek what you

will eat and what you will drink, and do not keep worrying. 30 For all these things the nations of the world eagerly seek; but your Father knows that you need these things.

In order to overcome our anxiety, we need to **discover God** and **discover the bridge of hope** (which is through Christ Jesus). On one side of the bridge is **anxiety**; on the other side is the **Peace of God**. **A bridge is not helpful unless one actually crosses over it.**

### **#1 Leave our worries behind.**

We will need to focus on circumstances that need to be left behind and start developing the “mind of Christ”.

### **#2 Look ahead to God's Peace.**

We will need to trust God to supply all our needs and put our faith in Him. **Can we make it across? Yes!** With the Lord you can cross. It is essential that we deal with our worries now before they get worse. We only need a little hope to cross.

In one sense it will take a life time. On the other hand, you will see dramatic improvement once you put your hand in His. Remember we will be replacing our worries with God's peace. We need to know what our goal is. The clearer the goal, the more we will be able to obtain it and not be side tracked.

### **Luke 14:27 (NASB95)**

*27 Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.*

**The peace Jesus gives is NOT WORLDLY, it is SPIRITUAL. In fact it is one of the fruits of the spirit.**

## **IV. Dwell on What Glorifies God.**

### **Philippians 4:8 (NASB95)**

*8 Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, dwell on these things.*

We are told over and over in the scriptures to dwell or keep our minds on spiritual things. We are to meditate on the Lord. We all meditate. Whatever it is that dominates our thoughts each day, is that thing that we meditate on. It could be the circumstances of our lives that we listed earlier, such as,

- Marriage.
- Finances.
- Health
- Shelter
- Food and Clothing.
- Transportation.
- Job.
- Work Load.

If it is not an **attitude in ourselves which was also in Christ Jesus**, then we are thinking about worldly things instead of spiritual. We are looking after ourselves instead of trusting in the Lord.

## V. Practice What Glorifies God.

### Philippians 4:9 (NASB95)

<sup>9</sup> The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

Not only must our thoughts dwell on God, but our actions must also glorify God. There are many unrighteous actions that do not glorify God. These will be actions that we do for our own selfishness.

### 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 (NASB95)

<sup>9</sup> Or do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, <sup>10</sup> nor thieves, nor *the* covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God.

Christ was our perfect example. We are to “be like Christ”.

### CONCLUSION:

The Father guided Jesus into some very difficult circumstances. Jesus did not just escape them. Jesus lived under the threat of murder for at least one year. He didn't know where the funds for ministry would come from. Other disciples around Him were dependent upon Him. People's expectation of Him was high but wrong! Jesus was betrayed. His disciples were eventually scattered.

Jesus' whole plan at the end seemed totally ruined. He died. His disciples scattered. But Jesus didn't give up or lose sleep. He became all the more determined to trust His Father. This is the pattern He sets for us in all that He did, both in His life and death.

He did not try to control His circumstances. He allowed His Father to control them. He trusted His Father for everything that He would meet up with.

### **Jesus didn't worry - Why?**

Some of us might feel more discouraged than strengthened by looking at Jesus' life. The reason for this is that we think He is supernatural and is able to do all things - very unlike us. This is the wrong understanding of Jesus' ministry and keeps us from wanting to be like Jesus. It certainly keeps us from being like Him!

If we take a closer look at Jesus' life, you will find Him **not changing the events but trusting God through them**. There is every bit of difference between the two. It is crucial for us to understand the model Jesus gave us. Jesus was not doing His own will but His Father's. He only could do what His Father wanted. The Father would direct Him into terrible circumstances at times, but Jesus could trust His Father to give Him everything that He needed to carry out His Father's will. This is the exact situation for our own lives if we are God's children.

**Using the example set forth by Jesus is the best way for us to have the peace of God.**

### [The Family of God.](#)