

THE FRUIT OF PEACE

Philippians 4:4-9

Galatians 5:22-23

Awareness

Before listening, reflect:

- What does “peace” mean to you?
- Describe a time you experienced unexpected peace? What led or contributed to that experience?

How many times have you found yourself longing for peace? In a world where conflict and strife are common, many of us wish for peace daily. Maybe you wish for inner peace or peace in a relationship or community, or maybe you long for the ever idealistic “world peace.” But what are we really longing for when we identify a desire for peace? Is it possible to experience peace even in the midst of conflict? In scripture, we find that God’s peace is multi-dimensional. Recognizing this allows us to receive God’s gift of peace and work to cultivate the fruit of peace in our relationships and interactions with the people and world around us.

Listen: [*The Fruit of Peace*](#)

Reflection

After listening, consider:

- In segment 1, guest Shiao Chong talks about peace as being three dimensional. How does this perspective aid your understanding of the spiritual fruit of peace? Can you see the different dimensions of peace in your life?
- Reread Philippians 4:8. What do you think of Chong’s suggestion that verse 8 describes the ways in which we spread peace to others? How might Christians better spread peace in these ways? Do you agree with Chong’s hypothesis that we tend to have a negativity bias and “focus on the bad things...the specks in other peoples’ eyes”? Do you see this bias in your life? If so, what is one thing you could do to begin reshaping your perspective?
- Where have you seen examples of Christians as poor witnesses to God’s peace? Do you think it has harmed their mission? Describe the consequences you observed. Consider this reflection from Christopher J.H. Wright about true peace from his book *Cultivating the Fruit of the Spirit: Growing in Christlikeness*: “Paul shows us what true peace among believers means (when they accept one another and work hard to live at peace with others, even when they disagree). It means that they have the mind of Christ. It means they can truly sing together with one voice in their worship. And it means that they will bring glory to God the Father” (p. 65). How can we as believers be peaceable even when we disagree? What does it look like to practice peace when in conflict?
- In segment 3, host Dave Bast claims anger is the enemy to peace and Chong reminds us that anger often stems from issues of pride. In his book, *The Fruit of the Spirit is...*, J.V. Fesko observes that in the absence of peace we find anxiety and fear (p59). Think about a time or situation when you experienced a lack of peace. Do you think fear or anxiety led to the lack of peace? How can identifying the root causes

of our conflicts help us achieve or practice peace?

Related Passages

- Romans 5:1
- Ephesians 2:11-18
- Colossians 1:19-20
- 2 Corinthians 5:18-20
- Number 6: 22-27
- Matthew 5:9
- Matthew 6:25-34
- Romans 14
- John 14:27
- Colossians 3:15
- Romans 12:17-18

Conclusion

In *Fruit of the Spirit*, Stephen F. Winward writes, “No Christian should be content to enjoy inner peace: he is called to be an active agent, one who establishes peace in the realm of personal relationships” (p. 113). Reflect on your life. Where are you experiencing peace? Where do you need greater peace? Where is God calling you to be an agent of peace?

Are you ready and willing to prayer this prayer commonly attributed to St. Francis of Assisi?

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:
where there is hatred, let me sow love;
where there is injury, pardon;
where there is doubt, faith;
where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;
where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek
to be consoled as to console,
to be understood as to understand,
to be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive,
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.
Amen.

