

# The Resurrection Brings Peace

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I love listening to worship music in the car. I love it in the house. I love to listen to it when I'm studying, when I'm reading. And I'm just telling you now, the music that you listen to on a regular basis is shaping your heart and your mind. The music that your kids are listening to on a regular basis, I promise you, makes a difference in their hearts and in their minds.

One of my favorite songs is an old Christian hymn. A lot of you probably know it: "It Is Well with My Soul." It was written in 1873 by a man named Horatio Spafford, and it's been encouraging believers for over 100 years. It's really all about the peace of God deep down in our souls, regardless of the circumstances that are going on around us.

It truly is an amazing song, and it just happened to come on this morning as I was driving in. I'm telling you, man, God did something in my heart in just a really neat way. I had my own private worship service in the car as I worshiped Him, thanking Him for the peace that is available in my life. It's only available because of Jesus.

I want you to listen to some of these lyrics. The song says, "When peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll; whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, 'It is well, it is well with my soul.'"

That's peace right there. It says, "Whatever my lot," meaning no matter what's happening in my life - good, bad, or ugly - I can say, "It is well with my soul." That's only possible because of the peace of God.

Whether you can articulate this or not, you know and understand that we're living in a world that needs some peace. There are hearts and souls of people all around us, all the time, that need some peace. And the good news is, we can have it.

## The Resurrection Brings Peace

We're in a teaching series right now called So What? Why does the resurrection of Jesus matter? On Easter Sunday, we saw that the resurrection of Jesus brings hope for us - hope for today, hope for tomorrow, and hope for eternity. Last Sunday, we saw that the resurrection of Jesus brings clarity - understanding to the Word, understanding to the promises of God, and understanding to our lives.

This morning, here's our title, if you're taking notes: The resurrection brings peace.

Open with me to John chapter 20. While you're turning there, no one is going to argue with the statement that our world needs peace. People's minds and hearts are unsettled. We desperately need it.

I saw it firsthand yesterday. I was at my son's 12-year-old baseball game, and I'm standing there coaching first base. One of our players got hit by a pitch on the hand. It sort of pinched his finger between the bat and his hand, and he's 11. It hurt him, so he fell down. He's crying a little bit, and the parents of the other team are heckling an 11-year-old. They're yelling at him and saying some of the most unkind things that you can imagine. I'd never seen this in a game like that before.

You'd be proud of me. I didn't yell at them. I walked over to those parents and was like, "Hey, what are we doing? Take a deep breath. Settle down. Get some perspective."

As I walked away, I thought, "Is our world really like this?" It is. It is. People are unsettled. They're angry. They're anxious. They're stressed. They're worried. When the slightest little thing bumps them or doesn't go their way, it's almost like they're on the verge of exploding.

Let me just say that if you're here and your heart and your mind are in turmoil, and if you've been feeling anxious, stressed, worried, angry, or unsettled, I want to encourage you and let you know that you can have peace because Jesus is alive.

John chapter 20, look at verse 19:

*On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews...*

— John 20:19

Pause right there. "On the evening of that day" - the day is Easter. This is still the day that Jesus rose from the grave. It's been quite a day, and the disciples don't know everything yet. They're locked in a room. Jesus was killed, and they are followers of Jesus, so they just assume, probably rightly so, that they're going to be next.

They're unsettled. Their hearts are anxious. Their hearts are worried. Their hearts are stressed. They're looking to the future, and it is uncertain.

Keep reading:

*Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." When He had said this, He showed them His hands and His side. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord.*

— John 20:19-20

I feel like that's an understatement. Of course, they're overjoyed. They're thrilled. They're pumped that Jesus is there.

*Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent Me, even so I am sending you." And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld."*

— John 20:21-23

This is a great way for the disciples to end the day. They go from being huddled up, scared, and questioning their futures to having seen Jesus and talked with Jesus. They know for sure that He is alive, and He's given

them a message. He said, "Peace. Peace is for you." He says it twice in these verses, and He's going to say it again in a minute.

Look at verse 24:

*Now Thomas, one of the twelve, called the Twin, was not with them when Jesus came. So the other disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." But he said to them, "Unless I see in His hands the mark of the nails, and place my finger into the mark of the nails, and place my hand into His side, I will never believe."*

— John 20:24-25

Our focus today is the peace of God in our hearts and in our minds, but we need to address this conversation with Thomas before we go on. He wasn't there when Jesus appeared the first time, so he didn't have the same experience as the other 10 disciples.

When they tell him about it, this is massive news. Think about what that looked like. I would imagine that all 10 of the disciples wanted to be the one to break the news to Thomas. They're running to Thomas, they get to him, and they're all talking over one another, just excited. You know how you get when you're excited and there's good news. It's bubbling out, and Thomas is probably trying to figure out which one to listen to and what's going on.

Then it finally clicks: "Wait a minute. What are they saying? They're saying Jesus is alive? No way."

He didn't believe it. He says, "I've got to touch the scars, or I'll never believe."

Have you ever heard the nickname "Doubting Thomas"? This is it. This is where it comes from, and I'd say that he earned the title.

Now, you might read it and think differently. You might think, "Give the guy a break." But I want you to really think about what's going on here. The people he trusts more than anybody in the world - his friends, the guys who have been there with him, whom he's traveled with and done ministry with for years - are saying Jesus is alive and He's giving us peace.

This is a 10-to-1 scenario. Ten of them are saying Jesus is alive, but still Thomas says, "No, I've got to see it for myself."

Forgive me, but I'm going to spoil the ending of this passage for you. In just a few minutes, he does see Jesus, and he does believe. Jesus says, "Very glad that you believe, but blessed are those who haven't seen Me alive and yet still believe."

Who's He talking about there? You and me. We haven't seen Jesus alive, but because we've heard that He is alive, we've heard the message of the gospel, God has stirred in our hearts, and we have believed. We've placed our faith in Him. Jesus says that we are blessed.

Let's pick it back up in verse 26:

*Eight days later, His disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." Then He said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see My hands; and put out your hand, and place it in My side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." Thomas answered Him, "My Lord and my God!" Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen Me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."*

— John 20:26-29

Jesus says to Thomas, "Put your finger here. I know that's what you wanted. Put your finger there in My hands. Give Me your hand. Place it in My side. Do not disbelieve, but believe."

Then Thomas answers, "My Lord and my God!" This is a declaration from Thomas. He's saying, "Jesus, You are Lord. Jesus, You are God. Jesus, You're alive. You really are alive in the flesh. You're not a ghost. You're not a dream. You're not a vision. You are alive in the flesh."

Jesus shows up again, and what's the message? For a third time, the message is, "Peace be with you."

There's so much jammed into this sequence of events. I'm telling you now, we could take this in a lot of different directions. There's a lot of content here that we could spend the next several weeks on. I understand that. But this morning, I want to drill down on two specific things, both related to the peace of God in our lives.

We're going to look at how Jesus interacts with His people, and then we're going to look at how, in those interactions, He brings the peace of God to our lives.

## How Jesus Interacts With His Followers

First, we learn here in this text that Jesus has unlimited access to our lives.

Think about that. Jesus has unlimited access to our lives. The disciples are in a locked room. It's locked from the inside. They're trying to keep anyone and anything out. They're hiding. They're limiting access.

Well, that doesn't stop Jesus.

The same applies to us today. There's nowhere in your life that Jesus cannot get to. He can get all in your heart and all in your mind. He knows your thoughts, every last bit of them. Jesus can get to your body where no doctor can get. Jesus can get into the depths of our souls like no friend, spouse, or counselor can.

I want you to understand that no matter how heavy things might be in your life, there is no depth where Jesus cannot reach you. That part of your life that you have closed off to every other person in this world, Jesus can get right there. He's got access even to that.

Second, as we see Him interacting with His followers, understand this: Jesus is not afraid of our fear or any other big emotions we might have. He's not afraid of the mess of our emotions.

Their fear was real, and like them, we've got real fears. We might fear for our future or our kids' futures. We might be wondering about our kids as we see them grow up: "Are they going to be okay?" There might be fears in this room about our finances or fears about our relationships.

If we were really honest and we bared our souls in here, there are probably a lot of people who have this fear, wondering, "I don't know if I'm enough for my family. I don't know if I'm enough to make the impact that God's called me to make."

We see here that when Jesus steps in, we have a Savior who comes to His children even when they're afraid. Look at this: He doesn't wait for them to figure it out. He doesn't wait for these big emotions to calm down. Not at all. He steps in, no matter our condition.

People don't do that for one another like Jesus does. Think about your life. There are people in your life, and there are seasons in their lives - or even seasons in their day - when they've got emotions, they've got things going on, and it's just a little much. We don't want to step into it.

A silly example of that is the people who work in your office. You know you're not talking to them until they've had two cups of coffee in the morning. You watch them, and you make sure they go to the coffee pot twice. Then you know, "Okay, they're probably at a state that I can handle."

You might have people in your life whom you don't deal with when they get hungry. Don't tell him - do not tell him that I told you this - but my youngest, when he gets hungry, is really challenging to deal with. He gets angry, and the emotions are big. We've got to get some food in him before we deal with him.

We just don't want to mess with some of the issues. Jesus isn't like that. He doesn't wait for those things to calm down. He's not scared of our emotions. He's not scared of what's going on. He's right there with us.

That's actually number three: Jesus gets in close.

What does He do? The door is locked, and He's there. He's not throwing a rock at the window, saying, "Hey, guys, I've got a message for you." He's not calling through the door. He's not playing games with them.

What does John 20 say? He stood among them.

In this moment, they are living with the reality that Jesus is in their presence. He is with them. Today, we live with that same reality. Jesus has said, "I'll never leave you or forsake you." Jesus said in the Great Commission, "I'm going to be with you always, even to the very end of time."

If you're a follower of Christ, the presence of Christ is with you. He wants you to know that, to be aware of that, and to walk through this life day by day, moment by moment, hour by hour, knowing that He's alive. He's there. He's got access. He's not scared of our emotions, and He gets in close.

He does all of that, and He's got a message for us. What is it? Not once, not twice, but three times Jesus said, "Peace be with you."

## The Peace Jesus Gives

Because of the resurrection, because of Easter, and because Jesus is alive, we can have peace.

That sounds nice, doesn't it? We like peace. We like those moments when we're by ourselves, our phone's not

ringing, and we see the sun going down. It's peaceful. We like those moments when we're sitting by some water - the ocean, the lake, whatever - and there's nobody around. We just get to listen to the sound of it. It's peaceful. Walking through the woods with no cars, just hearing birds, is peaceful.

All of our hearts are drawn to that. Why? Because when we look in the New Testament, we see that peace is a gift from God.

Let me define it for you real quick. Peace is a state of tranquility, stillness, or quietness in our souls that goes above and beyond our current circumstances. This is key.

Here's what that means: The circumstances around us do not determine whether we have peace in our hearts and in our souls. This is an inside-out reality, a gift from God.

Even if you're not watching a sunset, if you're stuck in Houston traffic and you've got people honking and gesturing at you all afternoon, I'm telling you, you can have peace in that. Maybe you forgot to do your taxes and you were up really late one night this week. You can have peace even in the midst of that.

Why? Because it's something God does in us.

*Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times in every way.*

— 2 Thessalonians 3:16

Not just in good times. Not just in happy times. May the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times, in every way. It's a gift from God, and it shows up in many ways in our lives.

I want to share three that I pray we'd hang on to this morning.

#### ### Peace With God

Through Jesus, you and I can have peace between us and God.

If you look back at the end of verse 19 and the beginning of verse 20, there's a series of events there that we can miss if we read too fast. In verse 19, Jesus says, "Peace be with you." It's the first thing He says to them. He appears in the room and says, "Peace be with you."

Then what does He do? Look at verse 20: "Look at My hands, and look at My side."

He declares peace, and then He shows them the scars. Here's what He's communicating. He's saying, "You can have peace because of this. I made peace for you with God on the cross."

He went to the cross. He took the pain. He took the punishment. And He gave us what? He gave us peace.

Romans 5:10 makes it very clear for us:

*For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life.*

— Romans 5:10

That peace with God comes from the cross. That's not an isolated moment in the Bible. That is a consistent message throughout the entirety of it.

Colossians 1:19-20 says the same thing:

*For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross.*

— Colossians 1:19-20

Because of Jesus, you can have peace with God. What a comfort to us. It is great news for our hearts and our souls. We can rest. We can be still, knowing that because of Jesus, we've got peace with God. That peace works its way through every aspect of our lives.

### ### Peace in Our Hearts and Souls

Second, through Jesus, we can have peace in our hearts and in our souls.

I shared earlier, and you agreed with me - I heard it - that people are on edge today. They're unsettled in their spirits. It's a sad reality of our world today.

Imagine that tomorrow you go where you always go - work, school, your neighborhood, home, the gym, wherever you go. Imagine that you have this X-ray vision, not to see through walls, but to see into a person's thoughts or into a person's heart and soul, to really see what's going on there. You see what people are thinking and how people are feeling.

I'd imagine that if the studies are right, and I think they are, you'd see a bunch of anxious, overwhelmed, stressed-out, overstimulated, unsettled, and maybe even angry people.

I counsel with people often. There are a lot of heavy hearts and a lot of people carrying around a lot of weight that God never intended for them to carry, spiritually, mentally, and emotionally. A lot of people are walking through life feeling like every problem is dependent on them to solve, that they have to make something happen. They're just unsettled, and they can't find that place of peace.

I was talking to a group of parents the other night, parents who are approaching seasons of life with their kids. As they're talking, I'm thinking, "This is awesome. I'm so happy for these kids. I'm so happy for these families. These are moments of celebration."

But the parents are wound so tight. They are so stressed about seasons of life that should be an absolute joy.

On some level, I get it a little bit. I understand. There are a lot of distractions. There are a lot of issues in our world today. There's a lot of sin in our world today. It's easy sometimes for our minds or our hearts to drift or struggle to find peace.

But I want you to hear me this morning: It does not have to be that way. God did not design it to be that way. In the relationship we have with Christ, it is not supposed to be that way.

The Bible promises us peace in our hearts, peace in our souls, and peace in our minds. That's available for

everyone who believes in Jesus.

Look at what Philippians 4 says:

*The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

— Philippians 4:5-6

That's key. Because Jesus is alive, because He's here, and because His presence is there in your life, don't worry about anything. Instead, in everything, by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God.

Then something will happen:

*And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

— Philippians 4:7

Look at verse 7 again. The peace of God, which we can't understand, will - not maybe, not possibly, not hopefully - guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

Think about the mental imagery of that verse. The peace of God will guard your heart and your mind in Christ. Scripture is painting an image of soldiers setting up a perimeter around something valuable that they're trying to protect. Think of bodyguards around a person. They're not going to let anything in that can bring harm. That's their job.

God promises that when we come to Him like this, He sets up guard. He sets up guard, and the cares of this world are not going to break through. They're not going to disrupt that internal peace that we have with God.

I want you to read it. The Lord promises to guard our hearts and minds, meaning stuff isn't getting in. It is blocked out.

But I want to make sure you understand this so you don't leave disappointed. This is not a promise that He's going to clear your world of anything that might stress you out. That's not what this says. You understand the difference, right?

He's not going to let it in in a way that disrupts the stillness of your spirit and your soul. But Jesus did say in John 16 - we'll look at it later - that in this world, you're going to have trouble. Even when you are covered up by that trouble - financial trouble, relational trouble, marriage trouble, trouble at work, school, or home - He promises that we can have this peace of Christ that transcends all of it.

Recently, I've had two very detailed and specific conversations with men in our church. They were separate conversations, separated by a couple of weeks, and both men had received very serious cancer diagnoses.

Both of them wanted me to know what was going on so I could pray and minister to them and their families. As they walked me through it, they said, "This is what's going to happen to me. This is what's going on. This is

what the doctors are saying. This is how concerned they are."

They just laid it out and said, "I'm going to struggle."

As they walked through this very heavy news, in separate conversations independent of one another, both of them looked me in the eye and said, "All of this is bad, bad, bad, bad. But don't worry about me. I'm in perfect peace."

They weren't lying. I could see it in their eyes. I could see it on their faces. Their voices weren't shaking. They're good.

It wasn't, "I'm at perfect peace because I know God's going to heal my body." They weren't saying, "I'm at perfect peace because I know this is going to work out and I'm going to go back to normal." That's not what they were saying.

They were saying, "Listen, don't worry about me. I'm at peace whichever way God wants to take this. The peace of Christ is guarding my heart and mind."

These men had peace that we can't understand. They didn't manufacture it. They weren't faking it. They were living out a promise of God in their lives.

I'm just telling you, the peace of God is real. It's real. It makes a massive difference in our lives. You can experience it only through Jesus. It's a peace that passes understanding, a peace that doesn't make sense. It is a work of God in our lives.

Wherever your heart is today and wherever your mind is today, it can rest in the peace of God.

#### ### Peace With Others

Third, I want you to understand that through the life of Jesus, you can have peace with others.

I'm going to move quickly through here, but you can have peace with other believers. Ephesians chapter 2 talks about how these two groups of people who did not like each other - hate is a strong word, but that's how they were - Jews and Gentiles in the city of Ephesus, can be one family because Christ has broken down all that hate between them and made them live together in a place of peace.

We see that in our church family. There are a lot of different people here, a lot of different backgrounds here, a lot of different life experiences here, and a lot of different life choices here. Listen, because of Jesus, we're knit together in peace. We choose to love one another. We choose to show up for each other. We choose to support one another. We can have peace with other believers.

Second, we can have peace in our relationships.

I'll highlight two. Husbands and wives, you can have peace together because of Jesus if you live with Christ and do what He's called you to do. Ephesians chapter 5 says that if your marriage is a picture of the Word of God - love and sacrifice, submission and respect - then your home is going to be full of peace and joy.

Parents and kids, it's the same thing. I'm just telling you now, people talk about parents and kids butting heads and there being a lot of friction. You can live in a home of peace.

Moms and dads, live out Deuteronomy chapter 6. Teach your kids above all, not just with your words but with your actions and your lifestyle. Teach your kids to love the Lord your God with all their heart, soul, and strength.

Kids, do what God said in Ephesians chapter 6. Honor, respect, and obey your parents, that it may go well with you. You will live in peace in your home. Jesus says that for us.

Not only can we have peace with those close to us, but we can also have peace with the world because of Christ.

Again, just to be clear, I don't want any misunderstandings here. I'm not saying that every person in this world is going to be peaceful with you. I'm saying that you can respond in peace to them, no matter what happens.

Here are the words of Jesus:

*I have said these things to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*

— John 16:33

Here's what that means: Even when the world around us is bringing us nothing but trouble, we can respond in peace because Jesus lives in us.

Peace is really nice. It is really nice to have a calm heart, soul, and mind, regardless of the challenges of this world. The promise God has for you is that you can live with that kind of peace every single day.

## Growing in the Peace of God

You might be thinking this morning, "How? Give me some specifics." I'd love to. Let me give you two.

This is for believers. If you're a Christian and a follower of Christ, I'm going to give you two ways this peace becomes a reality. If you're not a believer, I'm going to share with you at the end of our time together what it means to trust Christ. That's where you find this peace.

For the believer in the room, if you want that peace to grow in your life, step one is this: You need to grow in your relationship with God.

This is not an arbitrary thing I'm just pulling out of the air. This is what the Bible says:

*May God give you more and more grace and peace as you grow in your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord.*

— 2 Peter 1:2

This is an abundant mentality. May God give you more and more grace and peace. When? As you grow in your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord.

Jesus has said He's our peace. He's told us that in Him we can have peace. It all comes from Him.

Let me just ask you: Why would we expect the peace of Jesus to calm our hearts and minds if we're not walking with Jesus? He's the source. It all comes from Him.

It would be crazy for you to go to an apple tree day after day looking for oranges and then get frustrated that no oranges are there. You've got to go to the source.

I'm telling you that there are a lot of Christians today who have that same unsettled spirit, who are living on that same edge as some people in the world. It's because they're not looking to Jesus. They're not growing in their relationship with Him.

Spiritually speaking, they've become stagnant. They're not seeking to grow. They're not picking up their Bibles. They're not going to the One who has said He is our peace.

It's there. It's there. Scripture says that we'll experience it more and more as we grow in our knowledge of Christ.

As we grow in our knowledge of Christ, we're growing in the knowledge of our love for Him and His love for us. We're growing in the knowledge of His promises to us. We're growing in the knowledge of His sacrifice for us. We're growing in all of these different realities of God.

As we grow in that, the natural result is that we begin to live with this peace, stillness, and confidence in what He's doing in our lives.

The Center for Bible Engagement studied 400,000 Christians in North America. I want you to understand that this was a study of believers. Those who read their Bibles, meaning they're growing in their knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, experience less than half the amount of worrisome or anxious thoughts as believers who do not read their Bibles.

Science is proving the Bible true.

A.W. Tozer, a brilliant theologian - maybe you've read some of his stuff. It's good. If you haven't, pick it up - said, "The nearer a man is to God, the calmer he becomes."

Think about people in your life who just walk through life with a steadiness and a calmness. They don't get shaken. They don't get rattled. I bet this is true of them: The nearer a man or woman is to God, the calmer they become.

Grow in your relationship with God and let His peace change you like only His peace can. I'm going to tell you, it starts right here. That's a very practical way to do it.

Second, if you want that peace that's found only in Jesus, talk to Him. Spend time in prayer.

That's what Philippians 4 says:

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*

— Philippians 4:6

Then, and only then:

*And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

— Philippians 4:7

When does it happen? It's when we make the active, conscious choice to pray rather than to worry.

He tells us that when we go to Him, His peace will guard our hearts and minds. When we pray, we're showing that we're dependent on God. We're saying, "We need You, God. Our hope, our trust, and our faith are in You, God." He promises to show up.

But I want you to understand that the opposite is true as well. Think about this. When we neglect to pray and choose worry, we're making it look like everything depends on us, that our problems are going to be solved by us.

I know we never say this out loud with our words, but when we neglect to pray, the reality is that our actions are communicating to Jesus, "Hey, Jesus, You can sit this one out because I've got it."

Listen, that's not the recipe for peace in your heart and life. Jesus gave us the recipe: Pray.

When you feel worry starting to creep in - and we all do; I do, you do - let it be this natural alarm bell that goes off in your brain and reminds you to pray. Let it remind you to flip a switch, stop right there, and offer a prayer to the Lord. Allow His peace to do what He promises it will do: guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus.

There's nothing like the peace of God in your life. Don't make it complicated. Do what He's told you to do to find it. Read your Bible. Grow in your knowledge of Him, and spend time in prayer.

I promise you this: Do that every day this week, and next Sunday you're going to be different in your mind and in your heart. You're going to experience the peace of God like maybe you haven't in a long time.

The more you do it, the more the peace of God just falls on you, regardless of the circumstances.

## It Is Well With My Soul

Back to that old hymn, "It Is Well with My Soul."

Horatio Spafford wrote that at a time when he should not have had peace. He lost almost everything in the Great Chicago Fire of 1871. He was building things back up and wanted to go on a mission trip with Moody and his people to Europe in 1873.

He was getting ready to board the ship when some last-minute business popped up, so he stayed behind. He sent his wife and four daughters across, and he was going to meet them later.

On November 22, 1873, the ship carrying his family hit another vessel out in the middle of the ocean. In 12 minutes, it sank. It was gone.

His four little girls drowned. All four of them.

His wife was picked up floating on a piece of wood. She survived. She was taken on to Europe, and she sent him a telegram. The message said, "Saved alone. What shall I do?"

Can you imagine reading that? Imagine, as a parent, just being shattered, learning, "I've lost my kids - all of them - in the most tragic way."

Spafford gets on a boat, and he's going to Europe to meet his grieving wife. In the night, as they're sailing, the captain says, "We're about at the spot where that ship sank not too long ago."

Now he knows he's over the same waters where his four little girls drowned. He's overcome. He's overwhelmed by the work of God in his heart, and he sits down and writes these words: "When peace like a river attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll; whatever my lot" - whether I've lost my little girls or not - "whatever my lot, God, You've taught me to say, 'It is well. It is well with my soul.'"

Spafford experienced a profound peace in his soul that transcended unbearable suffering.

The peace of Christ is bigger in your life than whatever you're facing right now. Tragedy, heartbreak, whatever you're facing, the peace of God transcends our circumstances.

Jesus knows that. It's why three times He tells His disciples, "Peace be with you."

It's available in Him, not apart from Him. In Him alone.

Grow in your knowledge of Him. Talk with Him in prayer.

If you're here and you've never trusted in Jesus as your Savior, I'm telling you that if you trust Christ and Christ alone, you will experience peace in your heart and soul that is from God, unlike anything you have ever experienced.

Would you bow with me this morning?

## Invitation and Prayer

As we bow our heads to pray, I just want to encourage you. No matter who you are in here or what's going on in your life, I want you to lift up a prayer to the Lord, thanking Him that peace is available because of Jesus. Thank Him that you can have peace in your heart and soul.

You might not have it right now. You might be unsettled right now. You might not be a believer right now. But I want you to go to the Lord and thank Him that peace is available. It's available.

If you're here today and you're walking in that peace, and it's a picture of your life, remember that Jesus went to the disciples and said, "Peace be with you. As the Father sent Me, I'm now sending you."

Take that peace out of here. Share it with others. Let the peace of God overflow out of you onto those who are in your life. That's the plan. Let them trust in Christ because of the peace of God that's resting in your life.

If you're here this morning and you're a believer in Jesus, but that peace is not a picture of your heart right now, that's not your current reality. Maybe you're a little unsettled today or a little on edge today. I want to encourage you: Do what the Lord calls us to do.

He's not hiding this from us. He says, "Grow in your knowledge of Me."

Commit to Him this morning. Say, "God, I'm going to learn what I can. I'm going to learn more about You. I'm going to be in Your Word. I'm going to soak it up. I'm going to let Your promises shape my mind and heart. I'm going to let Your grace and Your goodness shape me, God."

Commit to being in prayer. Say, "God, when I begin to feel this way, I'm just going to pray. I'm going to pray. Maybe that means I'm praying 20 times an hour. God, whatever it takes, when I feel this way, I'm going to pray."

Ask Him to do what He promised: to let His peace guard your heart and mind in Christ Jesus. I'm telling you this: He will.

That's for believers who are a little unsettled and aren't experiencing the peace of God.

Finally, if you're here today and you've never trusted Christ as your Savior, you've never experienced this kind of peace from God. You might not even know what you're missing.

I'm telling you this morning that you can have peace like nothing you've ever imagined in your heart and in your soul, peace that is not dependent on the circumstances around you. It comes when you trust in Christ alone.

If that's you this morning and you've never done that, in just a minute we're going to stand up and sing one last song. We'll have some pastors and prayer partners down here. We'd love to pray with you.

If you're ready to trust Christ, just come to one of us and say, "I'm ready to trust Christ. I want that peace in my heart." That's all you've got to say. We'll look in the Word with you. We'll lead you through it. You can leave here a child of God, with the peace of God all over your heart and life.

If you're here and you want someone to pray with you about circumstances that are going on in your life right now, where you might be struggling to find peace, come on. We'd love to pray with you about it. Maybe there's something else altogether going on. Whatever it is, just know that when we stand to sing, that's your invitation. We'd love to pray with you.

Father, we love You. We trust You. We thank You for Your promise of peace in our lives, God. It's not something we fake, not something we manufacture, and not something that's dependent upon how our day went. It's peace because Your living Son, Jesus Christ, has promised it.

God, we're so grateful for the peace we have in Him. It's in Your name we pray. Amen.