

Assurance and Peace (2 Thessalonians [3:16](#))

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So if you turn to 2nd Thessalonians, Chapter 3, verse 16. Second Thessalonians, this is right at the end of the epistle, the very short letter. And Paul in his benediction begins this way.

Now may the Lord of Peace himself. Give you peace always in every way, The Lord, be with you all. So I've been dealing with this subject of assurance.

Christian assurance. It's a very important issue, I think, an important doctrine, something that needs to be addressed. We live in a world that's filled with anxiety.

Often that anxiety has come about because of the stupidity of our rulers. Or the wickedness of our rulers, the fact that they're corrupt. And easily corrupted.

I know that I was visiting with my sisters a few weeks ago in Canada, and they were telling me the UK is gone. England is gone. They've left, they let in all of these migrants.

Um, these are people who are not interested in assimilating at all. They do not hold the views of British people. In fact, their views are to get as much as they can, and to impose their worldview upon the Brits.

So there's no thanks. There's no gratitude at all. With these people.

And, um, most of them are Muslim, and anybody who takes 5 minutes to educate themselves about what Muslims believe, and what the Koran teaches, should know, it's not a good idea to invite 1000000s of Muslims into your country unless you want to have women raped and kids raped. Unless you want to have, um, them congregate and vote in on block so that your city turns into a Muslim city and then the impose Sharia law in it. Help us, Lord, because we are foolish.

We are foolish. It doesn't take long to understand that Muslims believe, and this is not an anti-Muslim thing this is an introduction. This is the cause of a lot of the unrest that we find in the West nowadays.

It doesn't take a lot of work to understand that Muslims believe that when they get together and they, uh, put a mosque together, legally or illegally, usually illegally, that that is a claim for, uh, Muslims staking a claim of ownership of that land. Okay? You might think that they believe what you believe, and they have the same opinions you do.

They don't. And if you look at their teachings, and if you listen to what their imams say, and so on, you would understand that. And so we have become our own worst enemies.

We know that the West has been heavily influenced by Christian values. That's why you have the freedoms you have, because Christianity speaks about the ability to have your free will, to have public, to have your personal ownership of property, and so on so forth, freedom of speech. These all come, not because they're historically true.

They come as fruits of Christian worldview, and the historian Tom Holland is documented that in his book, *Dominion*. Many other people have done that too. But we can foolishly throw that away by taking it for granted.

We can foolishly think that, uh, inviting other people in and not checking them for what they actually believe and what they think and what they'll do, is just a mark of compassion. It's not. It's a mark of foolishness.

You wouldn't do that in your own home and you shouldn't do that with your country. My country has done that. You say, well, why do you start this way?

Well, because of the fact that there is little peace in the world due to foolishness due to corruptness, due to man's propensity to mess things up. In the midst of what's going out on in the world then. And I just gave you an example.

There are other examples of course, too. In the midst of that, how is a Christian to have peace? How are we to have assurance?

And that is something that I think is addressed here by Paul at the end of 2nd Thessalonians. Now, before speaking about this piece, we need to actually identify what kind of peace, Paul, is referring to, because this view of peace, the Greek term is *irene*, you might have heard of the word *ironic*, which means peaceful or peace. The word can mean very different things, just as it can in English.

It can refer to social calm, social rest. So that, uh, nationally, in a country, in a state and so on. There is a, there is a feeling of safety, a feeling that you're not going to be attacked or you're not watched all the time or, you know, you're not trapped all the time.

That sense of, I can go, where I can, I go, I can say what I can say, and uh, I'm not going to be attacked or vilified for it. That's social idea. Then there is the idea of harmony between individuals so that there is rest between neighbors, nest rest between people, and accord between individuals.

Then added to that, there is this idea of security and safety. It's not the same thing exactly as social rest. It's just this fact that there is actual security and safety around.

Then there is the view of, uh, and this is important, of course, the harmony, or the agreement that there is between God and man. Now, any reader of John chapter 3 knows that a sinner, somebody who is not covered by the blood of Jesus Christ, is still an enemy of God. God is his enemy.

And the wrath of God hangs over an unsafe person. So they might be doing okay. There might be, uh, free wheeling it down here, But they need to understand that according to biblical teaching, when the life ends, they face the wrath of God.

How do we get rid of the wrath of God that hangs over us, that follows us, that will meet us at the end of this life. Well, we trust in the loving sacrifice of Jesus Christ, who gave himself up in our place, as our sin substitute to take our sins upon him, and give us peace and reconciliation with God. Yes, that kind of peace, so that God is no longer our enemy.

God will not come after us for our sins. Because all of our sins are covered. In fact, God is in Christ, our father, our loving father.

That reconciliation that the gospel brings, that certainly is an important piece, isn't it? There's also the holistic realm of prosperity and rest and um, of a sense of being where you belong. This shalom idea, which you find in many places in the Old Testament.

That's going to be in the kingdom. That's to come. That's for those who go before us into glory.

They have this complete riddance from their experience of any trouble, of any sorrow, of any disquiet. They know they're with God, they belong with God, they're going to be with God forever. And then there's this final view.

Which is what we might call a disposition of the soul that is quieted by the knowledge that God is for them. That even though they are not what they ought to be, even though they're not the perfect Christian. Even though they still fall and fail, that God has forgiven all of their sins.

That God is for them that when they realize that maybe they're not walking with God correctly, they can quickly turn that about. By turning towards God, by confessing to God, and having that relationship restored again. Because of God's mercy.

That basic understanding that between them and God is, is, and never will be, uh, a state of hatred, or, um, a state of being at odds with one another. Now this kind of piece is not 1st and foremost, something that we bring about in our lives. According to this text and other text that we're going to look at, just a couple, this kind of piece is given to us by God on the basis, of our reconciliation with Christ.

It's something that's brought by the Holy Spirit. It's something that we have. And it may be something that we're getting too used to.

So used to, maybe that we don't take advantage of it. We don't acknowledge it in our lives. We don't allow it to guide us in our lives.

It's this kind of piece that we're not going to look at. Jesus in John [14](#), 27 says, peace. I leave with you.

My peace I give unto you, not as the world gives. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Now, let's pick that apart really quickly.

Jesus is bestowing something, yes? I leave you with peace. It's my peace.

It comes from me, to you. It's not like the world. When you see the world with their bumper stickers of, you know, peace and when they speak of peace, they're not speaking of biblical peace.

They're not speaking of something that is from God. That's not something between heaven and earth. They've got a completely different notion.

They've got a utopian notion that we'll never be brought about. Jesus here is saying, this is my piece. This is the piece that comes from me, the 2nd person of the Trinity, as sent forth by the Father, the 1st person of the Trinity, and bestowed to you, through the 3rd person, the spirit.

But he says, let your hearts be troubled. Neither let them be afraid. So, That means that even though Jesus can bestow peace.

The disciples' hearts and by extension, our hearts may be troubled. Do you see that? Peace is being offered, peace is being given.

But there's some response that's necessary also, some realization that's necessary for us to actually enjoy that piece. Our hearts should not be troubled. We should not be afraid, not as disciples felt afraid.

Jesus had told them he was leaving. What was going to happen? Were they going to be cast to the winds?

What employment would they take up? What would happen to them now? He said, like, not your hearts be troubled.

Let them not be afraid. Here is my piece. And Paul is saying something similar to that here.

May the Lord of peace himself give you peace. Always in every way. May he give you this piece.

You see, according to our text here, and according to the John [14](#) text, peace is part of God's nature, it's part of something that is in him inherently, and it's something that he wants to pass on to us. God is not a God that sits out somewhere in heaven behind a curtain worrying about what it's going to happen. There's no anxiety.

No troubled waters. No one answered questions. No disturbance in God.

God and his emotions. God and his, uh, thoughts, God and his dispositions, they are all in complete tranquility. And always will be in tranquility.

In himself. So peace is part of God's nature. Now being drawn to Christ, being drawn to God, means to be drawn closer and closer to his being, to his nature, to who he is.

And so the closer one comes to God, as long as one understands one's been reconciled to God, and he doesn't, you don't come to him as a judge, the closer one comes to God, the closer one comes to his peace. The closer one comes to his love. The closer one comes to his wisdom.

And that's a good thing in and of itself. But then there's this other More important aspect than that, which is, When God comes to us. That God of peace who comes to us and bestows peace on us.

That is a great gift. It is a great grace. That's what Paul wants.

That's what Jesus wants. Is God giving himself to us. Yes, in a small measure, especially down here.

But God, if you are in Christ, has given you his peace. Yes, he has. He's given you his peace.

And what I want to ask you here is to basically small questions. Do you realize that he's given you his peace? Have you forgotten about it?

Have you forgotten about how you were before you knew Christ? And then the 2nd question is, uh, Are you allowing that piece to dictate the kind of person you are, the kind of relationship you have with God and other people? Are you letting that piece do what it's supposed to do in your life?

Or are you because you are taking too much control of your life, because you are worrying about things that God has told you not to worry about, because you are concerned about

maybe people or things or circumstances that are out of your control. These things you're allowing to take that piece away. Or keep that piece at arm's length.

Is that happening to any of you today? Yes. Thank you, Frank.

I know it. There are more than you that are in that position. If that's true or if that's something that you recognize.

Then the answer to the 1st question about, ah, have you taken that piece for granted? Have you forgotten about it? is to just ask yourself, you know what?

What am I concerned about? What am I disturbed about? Am I disturbed about the judgment of God?

Coming up? How am I disturbed about going to hell? Are you?

I mean, if God's your father, if you've been taken out of Adam and put into Jesus Christ, if he's now your brother, Okay, if the Holy Spirit's been given to you as a down payment, An earnest of that which is to come, Why would you ever be worried about going to hell? If you're not worried about going to hell, then tell yourself that, oh, okay, that's dealt with. God has reached out to me.

I've accepted his grace. I've accepted his salvation. It's a full salvation.

It is a great salvation that's yet to completely overwhelm me, but will one day overwhelm me, and bring me out into the golden shores of glory. If that is true of me. Okay, well what?

How can I build on that? What am I worried about? Am I worried about the direction that God may take my life?

I think that's one that disturbs us, that can take away our peace. And to that, we must say, look, according to James, every good and perfect gift that comes to us, comes to us from God. God may allow us in his providence to go through the valley of the shadow of death.

God may allow us to go through difficult times through tests through difficulties. But we know that God is a God who is good and good comes from God. And good is something that God wants us to experience.

Yes, in this life, with evil and difficult things because that's the kind of world we're living in. But God is a God that gives us good things. So if we're afraid of the future, if we're concerned, if we have unanswered questions in our life, We need to stop and we need to say, well, 1st of all, God's good enough to me that I know I'm not going to hell.

I've utter peace between me and him, the cessation of all kind of hostilities. There isn't, God is not hostile towards me, it's all. And then secondly, that God... gives me good things. And will give me good things. And will lead me into his paradise.

And I can trust him. I don't have to. I'd like to have my question answered.

I'd like to know what's before, but that's not what he's called me to. He's called me to living by faith. And I should have faith in his goodness.

And when we realize that, we can allow his peace to work in us, like it should be working in us. Like he wants it to work in us. Paul says, May the Lord of peace himself give you peace always and every way.

He can say that because he knows. And this is at the beginning of nearly all of his epistles that God wishes us grace and peace. Paul is his mouthpiece, grace and peace, not from the apostle Paul, but from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

So peace and God's nature and your reliance, or your connection to God's nature, assures us that we can have peace in this life. Now, if you'll turn to Colossians [3](#) and verse 15, Steve read this passage out earlier. And this passage, by the way, in Colossians [3](#), you know, passages like that are why I became a Christian.

Because I'd read all of this. I'd read Machiavelli, and I'd read Aristotle, and I'd read some of the Greeks, and I'd read Bertrand Russell and some of the other people, and none of them, none of them, actually spoke to... Yes, but how do you live in this life?

What makes a good person and so on? And you read these things and it tells you, humble yourself, serve others, put others first. Trust God.

Be this way. And that's what I needed to hear. And Christianity.

That's the only uh, worldview that actually tells you that commands that of you. And he does it because of the character of the God who speaks through scripture. So Colossians [3](#) and verse 15.

Let the peace of God. Rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body and be thankful. Don't forget gratitude.

Don't forget being thankful. If you're not thankful to God, you won't have that peace, okay? You have to be thankful.

You have to acknowledge God. What he's done. What he's doing now, what he's going to do.

Be thankful in all things. But this passage reminds us that the God who is peace and the God that gives us peace is a God that gives us peace to rule in our hearts. And so the question is Are you allowing the peace of God to rule in your hearts?

Now that word that's used there for rule, it means to uh, uh, make decisions, administrate, guide. Is the peace of God allowed to guide you?

Is it allowed to have some kind of administrative authority in your life? You say, well, why can't love do that? And why can't these other attributes do that?

Well, they can in a sense, but you see, if you don't have peace. If you don't have this steadiness about you, then how can you think clearly? How can you exercise faith clearly?

You need to allow the gift of peace that's been given to you to come into you and control you. That's something that you have to decide to do. You've got to give up control.

You've got to give up. Decision making, as it were. And let peace in.

You say, well, that feels and that sounds risky. Because I don't want control of everything. And I want to be able to worry about things.

Because if I worry about things, then I feel like I've got some kind of hold and grip on them. No, no, that's not wise. What you need to do is understand that God looks at you, he knows your circumstances.

He wants you to be at peace with the fact that he's there looking after you. And that if you let go and you just trust God, that his peace will come into you. What's that great passage in Philippians [4](#) that we often quote to each other when, you know, we're going through hard times.

Be anxious for nothing. Well, can't I just be anxious for this little thing over here? But what about a big thing?

I mean, I need to be anxious about that, don't I? Be anxious for nothing. But in everything, by prayer and supplication, with Thanksgiving, Let your request be made known to God.

Why? Because he's there. He's listening.

He's looking. He cares. And the peace of God that passes all understanding will keep your hearts in mind in Christ Jesus, wise, because there's some kind of magical thing going on.

No, it's simply that you are giving. Your burdens to God. And then the PC is already given to you can come in, can work in your life, can give you that assurance that God does understand, does care.

And you're going to be okay. Job 34:29 says when he, God, gives quietness, who then can make trouble? Okay, well, God has given you quietness.

Don't be a troublemaker. Don't be your own troublemaker. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither be afraid, Jesus says, because he gives you his peace.

Let the peace of God rule in your hearts. The heart here is not simply the emotions, not principally the emotions. The heart is your mission control center, your personality, who you are on the inside.

Let the peace of God dictate. To that person. You say, how do I do this?

You know, what's the mechanics of this? Do I just kind of do this? Sit down on a hard wooden floor and do this for a while and finally I'll have some kind of peace.

No, it's just simply trust God. Let him in. I mean, he's in anyway as the Holy Spirit.

But he's, you're not allowing the Holy Spirit to do what he wants to do in your life. You're not trusting God. You're not leaning on God.

You're not acknowledging God. You're not saying, well, this is something that's way out of my control. Nothing I can do about it, but you know what?

I can just give all of that over to you, Lord. And when I give that over to God who is in control and does know, and we acknowledge that and we thank him for that, There's no place for anxiety or care. The peace that's already within us can now work.

In us. Do you see? I'm talking here about peace in the sense of the knowledge of being okay because of God's fatherly care.

That's the peace of God he's already given you. That's the piece that Paul's talking about. You're already reconciled to God if you're a Christian.

But are you a Christian that feels off kilter. Anxious, worried about this or that. It's a very human thing to do.

You don't stop being a human being when you get saved. You just become more of a human being. But as faulty, as those who see through a glass darkly, we understand that things can perturb us, things can upset us, things can make us feel uneasy.

And the answer to it is actually quite simple. God has already given us peace, his peace. But God doesn't force things on us.

This is something about God. He doesn't force things on us. He tells us, and then he wants us to respond in the way that we ought to respond, the way that we ought to respond, folks, to God and the peace that he's already given to us is to let that peace rule and operate freely in our lives.

God is good, and God is the God of our peace. Let's pray. Heavenly Father, we acknowledge, Lord, that you are God of shalom.

And you always in all every epistle, and in the words of Jesus our savior. You wish us peace. And so father, we confess to you that sometimes, many times, we either take this piece for granted, and we don't actually identify it in our lives.

Or else, more commonly, perhaps we don't allow it to rule, to work in our hearts. Forgive us for this, Lord. And help us as weak and faulty children.

Help us, law, to let that piece in and let it rule. Let it do what it's purpose to do. And we thank you, Lord, in the name of our Savior.

Amen.