

“Peace in a time of turmoil”

(Phil. 4:7)

Dr. Richard S. Koole
Chapel Pointe
January 18, 2009

I. Introduction

A. The Inauguration on Tuesday

1. Hope springs eternal!
 - a. The desire and hope for peace
 - b. But is it possible?
 - c. The challenges facing President Obama
 1. Jobs and the economy
 2. A world churning with unrest and turmoil
 - d. The Middle East on the verge of all out war
2. The turmoil impacts all of us
 - a. Quarterly stock statements
 - b. Owe more for your house than it's worth
 - b. Your job in jeopardy
 1. Learned of three more people last Sunday
 - c. Stress on families and marriages
 - d. Churches in conflict
 1. How will they handle financial stresses?
 2. Will they be able to care for their people?

B. Everybody wants peace

1. Visiting the United Nations building in New York City
2. Its motto

“To have succeeding generations free from the scourge of war”

3. Formed right after WWII... the “War to end all wars”
 - a. USSR 25 million dead
 - b. China 8 million dead
 - c. Poland 6 million dead
 - d. Total of all nations 54.8 million dead
4. Since it ended in 1945—there has not been one single day of peace on earth!!!
5. And things appear to be getting worse

C. Is peace possible in 2009?

1. In Israel, Gaza, Iraq, Afghanistan?
 - a. Biblical prophecies
 - b. As Arabs clamor for the destruction of Israel
 - c. As Osama Bin Laden calls for an all out war against Israel
2. Is peace possible in your life?
 - a. Or will turmoil continue to take the joy out of your life?

D. Things that create turmoil in your life

1. Worry
 - a. Get CD from last week
 - b. A lack of trust in God
2. Bitterness
 - a. Can't stop thinking about a hurt or injustice

3. Dysfunctional relationships

- a. At odds with a member of your family
- b. Tension between husband and wife

*the absolute worst

4. Wanting what others have

- a. Never content
- b. Feel cheated

5. Fighting God's direction of your life

- a. Thinking he let you down...or doesn't care about you

6. Your job

- a. Friction with coworkers

8. Church

- a. So many have turmoil
- b. The last thing I want when I go to church
- c. Give me one place where I can find peace

E. Constant turmoil will take a toll on you

1. War can inflict much damage—

- a. Physically
- b. Emotionally
- c. Socially
- d. Spiritually

2. Battle fatigue

- a. Vets returning from Iraq

b. Selling books during the summer in college

*Staying with a vet in Jacksonville, Florida

*in the middle of the night

F. Are you suffering from “battle fatigue?”

1. And is personal peace possible?
2. Hundreds of books on the subject
3. Our text today shares the secret to finding peace in your life

II. Review

A. “The Best Year of Your Life” (from Philippians 4:6-10)

B. The connection between verses 6 and 7

1. Do this

(6) Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

2. And this is what will happen if you do the above

(7) And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

3. What do we know about this “peace that transcends all understanding?”

III. Characteristics of such a peace

1. It’s a “Supernatural” peace

(7) And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

- a. Why so special?

1. The peace “of God”
2. “which transcends all understanding”

3. Can't be explained in a human sense
- b. Things that will not bring you "the peace of God"
 1. *Can't be gotten from a "shrink"*
 2. *Not from "self-help" books*
 3. *Not from a good education*
 4. *Not from a fat bank account*
- c. A special peace that only God can give you
 1. And it's incredible
 2. In my life
 - a. I've learned to sleep at night
 - b. The burdens pastors are called to bear
 - c. My peace comes from knowing "God knows and cares"
 3. But I've tried not to cause unnecessary turmoil in my life
 - a. Enough without my help
 - b. Later, how to keep turmoil out

2. It's a "Surpassing" peace

(7) And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

- a. It transcends our ability to understand it
 1. People will wonder how you can be at peace
 2. It is one of the effective forms of testimony to the unsaved
 3. They will covet the peace you have
- b. This peace surpasses all understanding
 1. It's supernatural!!!

- 2. It's "of God"
- 3. It defies reason
- c. It begins when we start to trust God
- d. Personal instructions in Philippians 4
 - 2. "Be of the same mind in the Lord" v. 2
 - 3. "Rejoice in the Lord always" v. 4
 - 4. "Let your contentment be known to all men" v. 5
 - 5. "Don't be consumed with worry" v. 6
- d. This peace is usually seen best when you are in the middle of a crisis
 - 1. Meeting with a believer facing death
 - 2. Loss of job...and a family to care for
 - *testimony of peace
 - 2. Supernatural peace...no matter what 2009 may bring
 - 3. Daniel in the Fiery Furnace (Daniel 3:13-30)
 - a. Background
 - c. Walking with the Saviour!
 - d. No smell of smoke!!!
 - 4. Some of you will have to walk through the fiery furnace in 2009
 - a. You'll get to know Jesus much more intimately

3. It's a "Safe" peace

(7) And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

- a. "Will guard your hearts and minds"

1. The power of a “guarded heart”
- b. Guards you against—
 1. Fear—
 - a. Of losing your house or job
 - b. Of going hungry
 - c. Of rejection
 - d. Of failure
 - e. Of Satan
 - f. Of death
 - g. Of disease
 2. Distress
 3. Worry
- c. Will guard the way you think and the way you feel

4. It’s a “Secure” peace

(7) And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

- a. UN peacekeeping forces in The Golan Heights
 1. Baby blue helmets
- b. “in Christ Jesus”
- c. Jesus—the ultimate “peace-keeper”
 1. I want to be on his side!
- d. Jesus in the Garden (John 18:1-6)

(1) When he had finished praying, Jesus left with his disciples and crossed the Kidron Valley. On the other side there was an olive grove, and he and his disciples went into it. (2) Now Judas, who betrayed him, knew the place, because Jesus had often met there with his disciples.

(3) So Judas came to the grove guiding a detachment of soldiers and some officials from the chief priests and Pharisees. They were carrying torches, lanterns and weapons. (4) Jesus, knowing all that was going to happen to him, went out and asked them, "Who is it you want?" (5) "Jesus of Nazareth," they replied. "I am he," Jesus said. (And Judas the traitor was standing there with them.) (6) When Jesus said, "I am he," they drew back and fell to the ground.

- e. Power beyond description!!
- f. This sounds great, but how do I get it?

IV. How to obtain such a peace

1. Make your peace with God

a. Salvation

1. Prior to salvation—man is at war with God!
2. Now that's frightening!
3. Salvation ends the conflict

a. Colossians 1:19-21

(19) For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in Jesus, (20) and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. (21) Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior, but now he has reconciled you (through the death of Christ)

b. Romans 5:6-11

(6) You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. (7) Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. (8) But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (9) Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him! (10) For if, when we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son, how much more, having been reconciled, shall we be saved through his life! (11) Not only is this so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

4. Your first need is for salvation
5. And your second need is for surrender

b. Surrender

1. Peace only comes from “unconditional surrender”
2. Japan
3. Quit fighting God for control of your life
 - a. Both hands in the air
 - b. Trust Him
 - c. Carrie Underwood, “Jesus take the wheel”

2. *Be prepared for battle*

- a. Every believer is called to battle for the cause of Christ
 1. This is different from the peace this verse is talking about
 2. This is part of the “Conflict of the Ages”
 3. This is spiritual warfare
- b. External conflict will persist
 1. “The conflict of the ages” (Ephesians 6:10-13)

(10) Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. (11) Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. (12) For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. (13) Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

2. “If you want peace, prepare for war. If you want war, prepare for peace”
- c. Our church will always face conflict
 - a. We’re on the frontlines
 1. A priority target of Satan’s
 2. Fighting for the souls of our children
 - b. My experiences with supernatural attack

1. Requires supernatural peace!

3. Make your peace with the people in your life

- a. ...But ***internal*** peace can be obtained
 1. It is *supernatural*...from God
 2. It surpasses human understanding
 3. It cannot co-exist with worry and anxiety
 4. It guards you during times of crisis

Death of Stephen—(Acts 7:56)—“and he said, ‘Look! I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God!’ (v. 59) “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.”

- b. It demands your attention to the people around you
 1. That’s where most turmoil exists
 2. You are called to be a “peacemaker”
 - a. ***“Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the sons of God”***

V. Things that will produce peace in your life

1. A soft answer

- a. Proverbs 15:1 ***“A gentle answer turns away wrath, but a harsh word stirs up anger.”***
- b. Be careful “how” you say things
 1. The problem with emails
- c. Board meetings and mature leadership
 1. Dan K
 2. Mature pastors
 - a. My growth
 - b. It is never okay to be harsh

d. Relationships with family

1. How do you respond?

2. *Giving the benefit of the doubt*

- a. Assume the best of the other person
- b. Don't be so cynical

3. *Letting go of past hurts*

- a. How have you been hurt in the past?
 1. Is it still an open wound?
- b. You become the victim of your bitterness
- c. Seem to enjoy being bitter
- d. A word of advice, "Let it go!"

4. *Forgiving someone who has hurt you*

- a. What it will do for you
- b. Even though they haven't asked for your forgiveness
 1. "Let it go!"

5. *Really listening to other people*

- a. Listen to what they are saying
 1. Instead of preparing your response
- b. Try to consider what they are feeling
- c. What might you have done to hurt them?
 1. Searching for the kernel of truth

6. *Obeying those in authority over you*

- a. Kids in lifelong rebellion against parents

- b. When employees “hate” their boss
- c. Resenting God’s authority over you

7. Thinking before you respond

- a. Slow things down
- b. Walk away and pray about your response
 - 1. Ask God for some wisdom
 - 2. James 1:5 *“If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.”*
- c. Don’t get in a hurry

8. Realizing that you aren’t always right

9. Recognizing that some things aren’t worth fighting over

10. Accepting the fact that life isn’t a trip to Burger King

- a. At Burger King you can always have it your way
- b. Life is not a trip to Burger King
- c. You can’t always have it your way

V. Summary

A. Peace begins with you and God

- 1. The conflict raging in the *unsaved*
- 2. The conflict raging in the *saved*
 - 1. The battle for control
- 3. Make peace with those around you
- 4. The beauty of a soul at peace with God and man