

2026-08-23: Peace (Virtuous Women Fellowship)

Peace

Peace was given to the disciples by the Lord Jesus: "Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." (John 14:27)

Peace is one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." (Galatians 5:22)

Peace was accepted by the Jews as their official greeting: "Shalom"

Peace was the commandment the Lord gave to the disciples in their ministry: "But whatever house you enter, first say, 'Peace to this house.'" (Luke 10:5)

Peace was the greeting of the Lord Jesus after His Resurrection: "Peace be with you"

Peace is the greeting of the Church: "Peace be with you all" (Iринi Pasi)

The Lord Christ is called the King of Peace

What is this peace? How do we acquire this peace?

We can think of peace as being in three directions:

1. Peace with God
2. Peace with Others
3. Inner Peace

We pray for this peace in every liturgy:

1. **Inner Peace**: "The heavenly peace, send down into all our hearts, even the peace of this life graciously grant to us."
2. **Peace with Others**: "The leaders, the armies, the rulers, the counselors, the multitudes, our neighbors, our coming in and our going out, adorn them with all peace."
3. **Peace with God**: "O King of Peace, grant us Your peace, for You have given us all things. Acquire us to Yourself, O God our Savior, for we know none other but You. Your holy name we utter. May our souls live by Your Holy Spirit and let not the death of sin have dominion over us, we Your servants, nor over all Your people."

Peace with God

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1)

This is not a “feeling” of peace, but is a restored relationship with God. Christ took care of this on the Cross and reconciled us with Him. But I will not experience this peace with God unless I live the life of repentance and confession. This is peace in knowing that death does not have dominion over me.

- 'When I realize my many wicked deeds, and the thought of that awesome judgment comes to my heart, a tremble takes hold of me, and I take refuge in You, O God, the Lover of Mankind.," (Midnight Hour - Third Watch #3)

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

Peace with Others

“Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.” (Matthew 5:9)

Reconciliation Prayer is the beginning of the Liturgy because it is a reminder that if I don't have peace with my brother, I cannot bring my gift to the altar.

- Peacemaker does not mean I agree with everything everyone says
 - “I don't want problems” is a peacekeeper, not a peacemaker
 - Peacekeeper is one who avoids conflict
 - Peacemaker knows how to handle conflict appropriately
 - “But if anyone seems to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.” (1 Corinthians 11:16)
- Pride: Enemy of Peace
 - I want to be right
 - I want to come out on top
 - I want revenge because I am OWED it
- Being a Peacemaker is only one side
 - “If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.” (Romans 12:18)
 - If it is possible, as much as depends on you
 - Not everyone will accept your peace, but let me do my part
 - Psalm 119 pg 109
- Peacemaker puts the situation in God's hands
 - “But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.” (Luke 6:27-28)
- Forgiveness is the most practical tool for peacemaking
- Examples

- Sister/Cousin/Mother-in-Law/Friend/Mom/Daughter says something hurtful
 - Recognize that she is speaking in heightened emotions - she doesn't mean what she says
 - Recognize that I have done that before too!
 - Examine my own deficiency - what was she responding to? Did I say something wrong
 - Forgive
 - Pray on behalf of the relationship and the other person
- Friend comes and says "Did you hear about folan?"
 - See that this conversation will lead me to sin in gossip, it can hurt the person who is not here, it can hurt the person I am talking to, it can hurt their relationship
 - Knowing my own deficiency and my weakness with gossiping, I will choose to opt out of the conversation
 - I can say "I would rather not talk about someone who is not here"
- My kids are fighting with each other
 - "Who started it?"
 - "Stop. Tell me what happened. What could you have done differently?"
 - Always remember your children in your prayers, and also ask God for wisdom in raising them and teaching them how to deal with conflicts
- Argument with husband
 - "Fine, do whatever you want." (I convince myself this is me keeping peace... but I am still angry inside).
 - Peacemaker: I'm upset right now, I don't want to say something wrong, let's take time and talk about it when we're calmer.
 - GOOD: Walking away to calm down
 - BAD: Walking away to punish someone, to end it, to say "do whatever you want" or "ana maleesh da3wa"
 - Always remember your husband and your marriage in your prayers

Inner Peace

"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7)

Worry & Anxiety: Lacking Peace with something impending

- Healthy Anxiety: response to an impending challenge; healthy because it is what pushes us to tackle the challenge with wisdom. E.g. I am worried I won't have time to finish my tasks around the house because of my work schedule and my kids' schedule... So I work to make a schedule and a plan for time management so that I can complete all of my responsibilities.
- Unhealthy Anxiety: An unhealthy response to an impending challenge; unhealthy because I am focused more on my Anxiety than on tackling the challenge.
- The problem is not when I care - the problem is when I am PARALYZED.

- I can distinguish between worry and anxiety based on my response to them.
 - If my response is productive, then it's a healthy worry. If my response is unproductive, then it's an unhealthy anxiety.
 - If tomorrow I have an exam, and I have absolutely no worry - then what will motivate me to study?
 - As long as the worry is functional (not dysfunctional) and it motivates me to do things, then I am within the boundaries
- Examples
 - Children
 - My child is struggling in school - what if they fall behind? What if they don't make friends? What if I'm not doing enough as a mother??
 - **Unhealthy Response:** I spend the entire night imagining everything that can go wrong, comparing my child to other children, becoming overwhelmed
 - **Peaceful Response:** I identify what I can actually do - talk to the teacher, help my child, establish a routine, pray and put the problem in God's hand
 - Marriage
 - My husband and I are not communicating very well
 - **Unhealthy Response:** Replay the conversation in my head all day, assume the worst, become resentful, give the silent treatment (I may even justify this as peace), try to find the problems with what he is doing, figure out how to make myself come out on top
 - **Peaceful Response:** "I need to address this" - examine my own behavior, pray for him, choose a good time to talk and work towards reconciliation
 - Finances
 - We have bills coming up, a little worried about making ends meet
 - **Unhealthy Response:** Constantly checking the bank account, imagining the financial disaster, losing sleep, unable to enjoy the blessings God has given
 - **Peaceful Response:** Look at the budget, reduce unnecessary expenses, make a plan, see what resources are available to help, pray and entrust in God's hand.
 - Health
 - I notice something unusual about my body or my health
 - **Unhealthy Response:** ChatGPT, Endless online searches, worst case scenario, imagining every possible disease, repeatedly checking symptoms, consumed by fear
 - **Peaceful Response:** Make an appointment, get the right information, follow the doctor's advice, pray
 - Other People's Opinion
 - I am worried about what other people think of me... I keep replaying conversations, I am ascribing intention to every action - "she didn't invite me" - "she thinks I'm a bad mother" - "I said the wrong thing"
 - Here there's not even a good response - sometimes the worry just gives us questions, but no answers

Did you notice that in each of the examples, one of the peaceful responses was to pray? Because PEACE is a spiritual endeavor. This is the advice St Paul gave us when he said: "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made

known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7)

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