

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:27

Relevant Studies—“24” (Hours Before the Cross)

Lesson Five—Peace in the Midst of Trouble

This week we will take a final look at John 14. Recall that the chapter began with Jesus comforting His disciples—Jesus knew He was about to go to His death, yet put His anxieties and anguish aside and focused on His disciples. He had demonstrated His servanthood by washing His disciples’ feet, and told them He was about to die. He had predicted Judas’ betrayal, and Simon Peter’s denial of Him.

In our previous two lessons covering chapter 14, we saw that Jesus comforted His disciples by promising that they could trust in Him, just as they trusted in God; that there was a place for them in heaven; that He would return; that He would take them to be with Him; and that He would send the Holy Spirit, who would be with them forever.

As we finish our study of chapter 14, we will look at a few more profound promises Jesus made to His disciples as He continued to comfort and encourage them before His departure. Jesus promised His disciples that they would do what He had been doing—and even greater things, and that He would do whatever they asked of the Father in His name. He also promised them His peace.

Jesus was possibly 4 to 6 hours away from His arrest, and likely realized the urgency of what He needed to impart to His disciples. Everything He did and said in these 5 chapters of the Upper Room Discourse are the final and most profound instructions of His three years with the Apostles.

Day One—Greater Things Than Jesus Did?

1. Read all of Chapter 14, taking mental note of all the promises Jesus gave the disciples (and you and me).

In John 14:12 Jesus said that those who had faith in Him would do greater things than He had done! This did not mean greater in quality, but greater in quantity. Christians today have a greater capacity to reach the world than Jesus did. We also have the expanded message (the book of Acts, the Epistles, and the book of Revelation). While Jesus never taught outside of Israel, we now have the whole world with whom to share the Gospel! That is not the totality of what Jesus meant, but it is the most important.

2. Now, focus on John 14:11-15 and answer the following questions regarding these greater things we are to do:
 - a. Whose work was Jesus doing, and how was He able to do it?
 - b. What evidence did Jesus use to prove that He is in the Father and the Father is in Him?
 - c. Why would those who have faith in Jesus be able to do even greater things than He?
 - d. Why would Jesus do whatever His believers asked in His name?
 - e. What did Jesus say He would do for His followers?
 - f. What is the key to Jesus doing anything and everything? (Be brief—we will study this in more depth in the next couple of days.)
3. How will Jesus enable us to do the things He did?
4. Considering what you read in the gray box on the previous page, together with the answers to your questions, does this also mean that there would be miracles through the disciples, and the followers of Christ throughout the centuries?

Days Two and Three—In Jesus’ Name

In John 14:13-14, Jesus gave an amazing promise—that His disciples could ask for anything “in His Name”, and He would do it! We often read this promise without fully understanding what Jesus meant, and can become very discouraged or disappointed when we ask for things “in His Name” and they don’t work out as we expected.

Jesus used “in My Name” seven times in this discourse. He was not talking about simply using His name as a ritual that we tack on after every prayer. Prayer must proceed from faith in Christ and be consistent with His character, His will, and His Word. By making this promise, the Lord was not giving us a blank check signed “In Jesus’ Name”. (I used to hear that concept taught a lot in some of the hyper-faith circles that I briefly traveled in.)

1. Read 1 John 5:14-15, keeping in mind what you've just read in the gray box. What do you think Jesus meant when He said, "You may ask me for anything in My Name and I will do it"? Discuss your thoughts below or on the back of this page.

2. Praying in Jesus' Name will actually limit your requests. Early in my Christian walk, I was mentored by a pastor's wife who asked me to join her in prayer. She had been very upset with a woman in our church, and prayed such a hateful prayer of vengeance upon this woman that it made my blood run cold. She ended the prayer, "In Jesus' Name."
 - a. Why would a prayer like this not be something to which you could honestly attach "In Jesus' Name"? List some other prayers that you or others may pray that would fall into the same category.

 - b. Now list some things that you may and should pray in His Name.

3. The believer approaches God by the power of the Holy Spirit and in the Name of Jesus. Look up the following verses and explain how Jesus intercedes for us.
 - a. Romans 8:34

 - b. 1 Timothy 2:5-6a

 - c. Hebrews 7:23-25

4. Now, think about Jesus interceding for us to His Father. If we pray a prayer that He would never pray, do you think He would take that prayer to God? Think about your own prayers—do you sincerely believe you pray in Jesus' Name (most of the time)?

5. What about prayers you ask that are NOT answered and you have believed with all your heart that they were the Lord's will? Share a time when you were very disappointed in God because of an unanswered prayer. Share also if you learned anything from this.

Day Four—The Prince of This World

1. Jesus referred to Satan as “the prince of this world” three times in the Gospel of John. What does He say about him in each of the following passages?
 - a. John 12:31

 - b. John 14:30-31

 - c. John 16:11

2. We know from our study of John 13:2-3 that Satan had no hold on Jesus or the events that were to take place. Now read 1 John 5:18-19: Who IS under control of the Satan? Who IS NOT under his control?

3. Read 1 John 3:8 and Hebrews 2:14-15. Explain what Christ did regarding the prince of this world.

4. Read Hebrews 12:2, and examine Jesus’ attitude toward the cross. What is “the joy set before Him”?

We are victors over Satan, just as Jesus was, because of His work on the cross. Also like Jesus, the devil has no hold on you and me because we too love the Father and do what our Father tells us to do. We are children of God, and the prince of this world is not our prince!

Day Five—The Peace of Christ

“For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His Name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace’ (Isaiah 9:6 NKJV). The messianic prophecy of a child being born who will be the ‘Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace’ has its fulfillment in the life of Jesus. What does the Bible tell us about ‘peace’ and this ‘Prince of Peace?’ What is peace? According to Webster’s dictionary, peace is a state of tranquility, quiet, calm, freedom from civil disturbance; a state of security—being secure within a community, freedom from oppression, strife and disorder; in harmony in personal relations; untroubled by conflict, agitation or commotion. Is peace desirable? Do you have it? Would you like to have it? How may we receive true peace? Jesus, in His last discourse with His disciples before His crucifixion said to them, ‘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 NKJV). How is it that Jesus could give His disciples ‘peace’ when He was about to suffer on Calvary and His disciples would soon go through the worst experience of their lives up to that time? Just three days later, at evening on the day of His resurrection, Jesus came and stood in the midst of His disciples and said to them, ‘Peace be with you. Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord’ (John 20:19, 20 NKJV). What a Prince! Death and the grave could not hold Him.” (Taken from allaboutJesus.org.)

1. Satan is not our prince, but Jesus is our Prince of Peace! Review our memory verse, John 14:27. (Have you been meditating on it?) How is the peace Jesus gives us different from peace the world gives? See if you can fill in the blanks in the sentences below.
 - It is a _____, not earned or the result of some man-made treaty or covenant.
 - It is _____, not temporal.
 - It is _____, not physical.
 - It _____ from us, although it is our choice to receive it and live in it by the power of the Holy Spirit.
2. Read Philippians 4:5-7 and let it penetrate your being. Do you have the Peace of God through Christ that transcends all understanding? Maybe? Sometimes? Spend some time in quiet and reflection—perhaps do some journaling, either in your journal or on the back of this page. Perhaps you will feel led to write out a prayer “In Jesus’ Name” for whatever is troubling you. The Lord is near to you! I pray that all of you will have more of the Peace of God that transcends all understanding through Christ Jesus.