

How to Enjoy True Peace of Mind



Walking Through the Land of God's Promises (Part 5)
by Derek Prince

It's good to be with you again sharing with you some of the Keys to Successful Living that God has placed in my hand through many years of personal experience and Christian ministry.

Yesterday I dealt with the problem of mental torment. I explained how to obtain release from this kind of torment. My subject for today follows on very naturally from this. It is "How to Enjoy True Peace of Mind." These two fit together like the two opposite sides of a single coin, one negative and the other positive. How to obtain release from mental torment is negative; how to enjoy true peace of mind is positive. And bear in mind that we need the positive just as much as the negative.

There is a kind of condition of a mental vacuum and almost invariably if we maintain that vacuum long enough, some evil force will press its way in and regain control of our minds. Therefore, one essential part of our protection is to have our minds garrisoned with the peace of God. This is what the New Testament clearly teaches us.

First of all, we need to know that we have peace with God. There is no kind of peace of any reality or permanence unless there is a right relationship with Almighty God. Scripture says in the prophet Isaiah, "There is no peace for the wicked." To those who are in rebellion or opposition toward God, to those who are leading lives that are not subject to God's laws and requirements, there is no peace, there is no way that such persons can have peace. Therefore we have, first of all, to make sure that we've been reconciled with God. Paul says in Romans 5:1:

> "Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ..." (NAS)

And in verse 11 he says that through Jesus we have received the reconciliation. The word "reconciliation" indicates that there was a need to be reconciled. By our carnal nature and our sinful lives, we were at war with Almighty God. We were not subject to His just ordinances and requirements, we are not leading the kind of life that brought glory to God and so we had to repent and we had to accept the reconciliation

that's extended to us by God through Jesus. Because Jesus on the cross was identified with our sin and rebellion, the judgment for that sin came upon Him and He paid the full and final penalty for our sins by His death. So we can be reconciled to God through the death of Jesus.

Being reconciled and receiving God's promise of forgiveness, Paul says we have been justified by faith and so we now have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The word "justified" is an important word. It could be interpreted "we have been rendered righteous." Because when we believe in Jesus and His death on our behalf, His righteousness is imputed to us, or reckoned to us, on the basis of our faith. Personally, the definition of justified that I like best is: just-as-if-I'd never sinned. That's beautiful, isn't it? When the righteousness of Jesus has been reckoned to me by God, then I'm righteous. Not with my own righteousness, but with His righteousness. And bear in mind the righteousness of Jesus never knew sin, it never knew guilt. The only reason that He paid the penalty was that He paid it on our behalf, but He had no penalty to pay for Himself. So think in terms of being justified. Say to yourself, "I'm justified, just-as-if-I'd never sinned. I have peace with God. God holds nothing more against me. I've been acquitted."

That the great basis for mental peace. Once we know this, we have God on our side and that makes all the difference in life.

Paul goes on in Romans 8:31-32, speaking on behalf of those of us who've received this reconciliation, who believe, according to Scripture, that we are justified. Paul says:

> "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? [That's a good question. Who can be against us if God is for us? Somebody expressed it this way: One plus God is a majority in any situation. Paul goes on:] He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" (NAS)

So because God was willing to give Jesus His most precious treasure, His only begotten Son, then we know that such love as that will hold nothing back that is good for us or that we need. If God gave up Jesus, there's nothing good He'll ever withhold from us. God is on our side. He's for us. The resources of heaven are at our disposal. That's the basis of mental peace. Once we really comprehend by faith that we've been reconciled with God, that we are justified, that we are reckoned righteous with the righteousness of Jesus, that we can say, "Justified, just-as-if-I'd never sinned," then we can move on into the complete and full provision of God for our mental peace.

This provision is stated as clearly as anywhere that I know by Paul in Philippians 4:6-8, where he says this:

> "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 comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (NAS)

Notice that significant and beautiful phrase, "the peace of God which passes all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." That's in line with what I said about the danger of a vacuum. You can't leave your mind empty because if you do some evil influence of pressure will come in. You've got to fill it with the peace of God and the peace of God will guard your mind. The Greek word means "garrison your mind," hold your mind so that no evil pressures or tormenting influences can find access to your mind. Then Paul goes on in the next verse:

> "Finally, brethren, [and this is the conclusion] whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things." (NAS)

Well, we've already looked at the beautiful promise, "the peace of God which passes all comprehension shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." But remember, in order to claim the promise, we have to fulfill the conditions. So now let's look at the conditions. The first condition is renounce anxiety, "be anxious for nothing." Every time anxiety begins to move in on your mind, refuse it, answer it. Say, "I'm justified, just-as-if-I'd never sinned. God holds nothing against me. I have peace with God. God is on my side. All God's resources are available to me. I refuse to be anxious. It's not sensible or logical to be anxious when I believe that." So the first condition: renounce anxiety.

Second condition: pray about everything. We're probably familiar with that old hymn which says:

> "Oh, what peace we often forfeit,
> Oh, what needless pain we bear
> All because we did not carry
> Everything to God in prayer."

Many times, mental peace is not there simply because we do not pray. We get into a problem or a situation and we try to handle it in our own resources without praying and turning to God for His wisdom and His resources which are available to us as soon as we pray.

Third condition: always be thankful. That's absolutely essential. It's not enough to pray, we must pray to God with thanksgiving. A thankful heart is usually a peaceful heart but an ungrateful person really cannot know true and lasting peace. Ingratitude is just opposite to the whole nature of God.

The fourth condition: think about the right things. And Paul tells us what are the right things. Let me just go through his list again: whatever is true, but it's not enough that it's true because some things are true but we shouldn't think about them. We shouldn't think about people's faults, failings, even though they may be true because there's a lot of other qualifications, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, let your mind dwell on these things. You have the power to focus your mind on what you wish. You can focus it on the bad and the negative or you can focus it on the good and the up-building.

And then, if you're still having problems, invoke the Holy Spirit. Remember, you can call upon Him to help you. Let me just illustrate this as I close with a simple example from nature. In many countries (I think particularly of Egypt), there are two kinds of birds: those that feed on carrion (or rotten meat), and those that feed on fresh meat. Each bird finds what it's looking for and the same is true of our minds. We can feed our minds on carrion or we can feed them on fresh meat. We'll find what we're looking for. But if you look for the positive, the good, the up-building, the edifying, you'll find it.

Okay, our time is up for today but I'll be back with you again next week at this same time, Monday through Friday. Next week I'll be continuing with this same theme, "Walking through the Land of God's Promises." In Joshua 13:1 the Lord reminded Joshua: "...very much of the land remains to be possessed." The same is true for us today as we explore the land of God's promises. The promises I'll be dealing with next week will be related to wisdom in various practical forms including finding the right mate and dealing with problem children.

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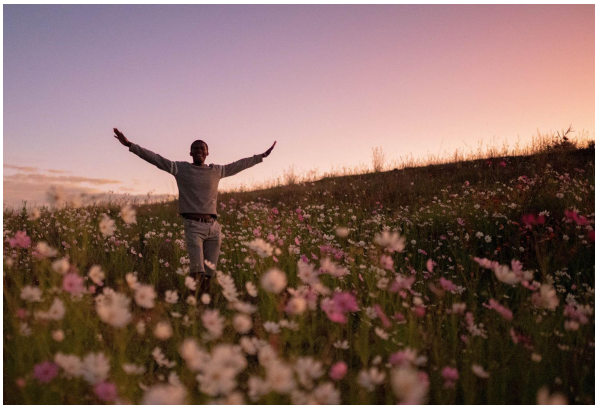

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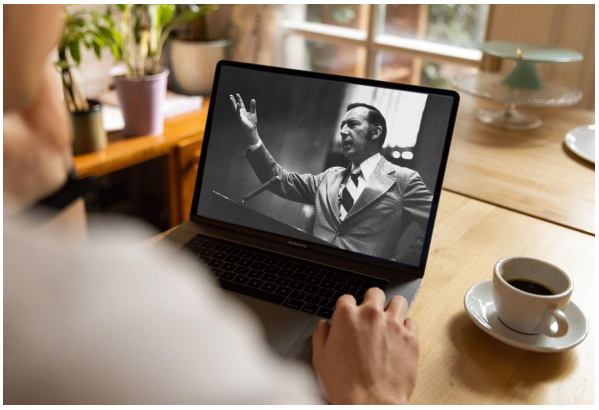

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