

You Are, Part 2, Called to Live In Peace (Shalom)

Introduction:

- As we begin our journey into the writings of Paul we are going to start with a few of the really broad concepts that Paul deals with.
- The first of these concepts gets us to about verse 3 in most of Pauls writings.
 - It is a concept so central to Pauls mission that he opens every one of his letters with it.
 - The Concept we are going to talk about today is peace, or more to the point “Shalom”

1 - Language

A - One of the reasons I chose to use the Jewish translations of the Bible this year was to highlight for us all the differences in language:

- Differences that not only exist today, but that existed in the first century as well.
- When the NT was being written the language predominately used was greek.
- But, not classical greek:
 - Classical Greek is what you would find in the great literary works from Greek History.
 - It's a very flowery language, and is predominantly used by the more educated members of the Greek speaking world.
 - To them Classical Greek would have been similar to our original King James...
 - *Beautiful language, but not for the average reader.*
- The New Testament writers used “Koine Greek”, also known as fish market greek.
 - It was basically written so that anyone who was even slightly literate could read it and understand it.
 - Basically, it was kinda like the Message Bible
 - *Purposely meant to be basic and easy to understand...*
- After hearing that - *how many of us feel pretty dumb...*
 - If the Bible was written for the least educated in the 1st century then I must be a special kind-a stupid... The truth is that you shouldn't feel that way at all.
 - The the Bible was written so that it would be easily understandable to those it was being written too... *not for all people throughout all time - that would be impossible.*

- Think about it:
 - How many things do you completely understand today without them having to be explained to you?
 - Tell someone from the 1st century that *you want to give them your cell number* and they are going to think your out on a work release program
- Language, in every time period, and culture, is filled with truths that are unsaid but clearly understood by those living in that time.
 - Biblical languages are no different.
- One of the horrible things we tend to do to the Bible... is over complicate the message.
 - So often people claim to have found a truth in the passage that no-one else has ever found... *apparently even Jesus is wondering how He could have missed it...*
 - Here's the problem... the only thing in between the lines of our Bible is empty space.
 - No hidden mysteries to be unravelled by the super spiritual...

B - That being said...

- There are amazing truths that we, 21st century Christians, often miss because we, far too often, don't know the unspoken truths of the 1st century.
 - The exciting part for us is to learn what those unspoken truths are, and how they apply to us today.
 - This is one of the primary roles of a Pastor/Teacher
 - To teach and train the body for the work of the ministry.
- We are going to see one of these amazing truths today and it is found in one word... SHALOM ~ שלום ~ commonly translated as "Peace"

2 - May The Shalom of God Be With You

A - One of the reoccurring passages throughout Paul's writings is found in the greetings at the start of his letters.

- He always starts by introducing himself as Paul, an emissary of Messiah, or I Paul a slave to the Gospel of Christ, and so on.
- Then he always says something like: Grace and Peace to you...
 - **1 Thessalonians 1:1** *To the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. (NKJV)*
 - This true for all of Paul's writing: **Show Slide**

- In each of these uses the greek word translated peace is *eirene* (*ear-a-nay*)
- In common usage it basically means a mindset of peace, calm, and the absence of hostility.
- Today, we tend to think of it in this same way:
 - When we think about the peace of God, we tend to think of it as a sense of calm, and serenity.
 - The ability to find a sense of calm in the midst of personal crisis...
 - This is a good way to look at it, and is exactly what it means at its most basic level...
 - But... is there something that the first century church, or Paul himself, would have known about the word peace?
- Here is why I ask this question:
 - The NT was written in Greek, but translated Hebrew versions of the NT do exist.
 - In the Hebrew versions the word peace is very often replaced with Shalom even though other Hebrew words that mean “peace”, or “well being” could have been used.
 - For example:
 - **Romans 1:7** *To: All those in Rome whom God loves, who have been called, who have been set apart for him: Grace to you and shalom from God our Father and the Lord Yeshua the Messiah. (CJB)*
- Here is the same verse in Hebrew:

כָּל־הַקְּהָל בְּרוּמֵי יְדֵי אֱלֹהִים בְּחִירָיו וּקְדוּשָׁיו חֹסֵד וְשָׁלוֹם יְהוָה לָכֶם אֱלֹהִים אָבִינוּ וַיְשׁוּעַ הַמְּשִׁיחַ אֲדֹנָינוּ:
- Hebrew letters have sound attached to them, just like all letters, but they also have **pictographic meanings**.
 - The words are formed by using the letters (the pictures) that best represent what you are trying to say...
- The word Shalom comes from the root word **Shalam** meaning “Restore”
 - Basically: Restoration comes from the destruction of the authority of chaos and confusion.
- The word **Shalom** has one additional letter, but the root meaning should remain intact
 - Restoration is still implied, but the idea is a restoration to wholeness of being, of purpose, value, and worth.
 - You can easily see why this is so often translated peace, but there is so much more to it...

- The additional letter is **Vav** - its means to bind together
- Let me say it this way:
 - To find the peace that passes all understanding, the peace that brings wholeness, wellness, and restores your purpose and value...
 - You have to destroy the authority that has **bound you** to chaos and destruction...
 - The image associated with the Vav... **“Nails”**
- Now try to tell me that guiding hand of the Holy Spirit was not all over this...
- The power of God is not only found in the big stuff, but we can easily see Him at work in the details.
- In the very word that Gods people use to describe peace, a word that would have been given to them by the Hand of God Himself, we get a picture of the promises of God to restore the creation to the creator by the power of the cross.
- The one who can bring this peace is the one who allowed himself to be held to the cross by those same nails
- And I don't think it is an accident that our Savior is also called the Prince of Peace

3 - We have this peace in the person of Jesus

A - **Romans 8:6** *Having one's mind controlled by the old nature is death, but having one's mind controlled by the Spirit is life and shalom.*^(CJB)

- One of the hard parts of walking in the peace of the Lord is learning how to change the way we think.
- Our old life tells us to think one way and our new life in Christ tells us to live another.
- **Romans 12:2** tells us to ...*be transformed by the renewing of your mind...*
 - Our actions begin in our thoughts, when we learn to order our thoughts with the will of God we can walk in the wholeness and restoration of the Father...

B - **1 Thessalonians 5:23** *May the God of shalom make you completely holy—may your entire spirit, soul and body be kept blameless for the coming of our Lord Yeshua the Messiah.*^(CJB)

C - **John 16:33** *“I have said these things to you so that, united with me, you may have shalom. In the world, you have tsuris (tribulation). But be brave! I have conquered the world!”*^(CJB)

D - **John 14:27** *“What I am leaving with you is shalom—I am giving you my shalom. I don't give the way the world gives. Don't let yourselves be upset or frightened.”*^(CJB)