



WESTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

“SHALOM”

John Galbreath
Bible Study Series

Text: John 14:27
Date: July 16, 1967

About Westminster's Galbreath Bible Study Series:

This lesson is one taken from a sermon preached by John Galbreath at Westminster Presbyterian Church on July 16, 1967.

To complete the lesson, we suggest that you begin by reading the designated Bible passage (John 14:27).

Next, review the outline of the sermon. Reflect on the chosen scripture and how you would “fill in” the remainder of the message from the chosen passage.

Then, review the study questions posed about the lesson — whether by yourself or in your small group.

Finally, share your thoughts on the Galbreath Bible Study blog on the Westminster Intranet.

The hymns that Sunday were "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee," "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go," and "O God of Love, O King of Peace." The anthem was "Go Not Far From Me, O God." There was also a note saying "In warm weather men should feel free to remove their coats."

In the envelope was a small piece of paper noting "Jesus said: He that cometh to me I will in nowise cast out. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

There was another card with the following prayer:

We bring our many prayers. Some of us are bereaved and need the consolation of faith. Some of us have shared the joys of weddings, of visitation with loved ones, and would share our lifted spirits with Thee. Some have met perplexity this week and do not yet know where to turn for wisdom. Clarify our thoughts. Make clear to us our own motives and guide us aright. We pray for America in our conflict within. Our sins, the sins of our fellow men and even the sins of our fathers bear such tragic fruit in the conflagration at the heart of our cities. Be with those who have suffered, with those who have sinned. Keep us from self righteousness. We pray for Thy guidance on our nation in conflict abroad. We yearn for the end of hostility. Open Thou those doors of peace and grant us wisdom to enter.

I. "Peace I leave with you."

A. Shalom

1. Perhaps it was in a popular song that you recently heard this word.
2. Possibly a TIME article about Israel.
3. You may have a Jewish friend who shares this greeting usually reserved for those of his own faith.

B. "Peace."

1. It is the word used in a benediction I pronounced this morning in a baptism -- and again yesterday in a wedding -- and on Friday in a funeral.

"The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift up the light of his countenance upon you and give you peace."

a) *To be at peace is man's deepest longing.*

2. The one prayer most universally uttered across the world is for peace.

C. The peace we seek goes beyond a truce in Vietnam.

1. American needs peace within her borders.

a) *The conflagration at the core of our cities.*

b) *A parent whose teenager did not come home last night.*

c) *The small shopkeeper whose life's savings are bound up in his stock.*

d) *The wife of the police officer or fireman.*

e) *The youth themselves whose desperation has reached this pitch.*

D. We seek peace for those of our own church family, and for neighbors who are so alienated from themselves that they are driven by drugs or alcohol.

E. We seek peace for our young people

1. They have the drive to be adult, but cannot marry, cannot enter a career.

F. "Shalom" means wholeness -- fulfillment.

1. Goes beyond absence of conflict.

G. "Shalom" -- a most appropriate greeting and salutation at leaving.

1. Dave Garaway's sign-off.

II. My Peace I Give Unto You

A. None of us would say this.

B. Shalom -- was uniquely the mark of the Messiah.

1. While the salutation was as common as "hello" and "good-bye," it would never be truly fulfilled until Messiah should come. "On earth peace, good will to men" -- Isaiah 9:2-7. etc.

2. The triumphal entry was a dramatization of his role as Prince of Peace.

3. "My peace I give unto you" was not only a benediction, it was a Messianic proclamation.

C. The Peace of Christ is a reconciliation of men with God.

1. There had been peace-makers before and since.

a) *Our own generation will be marked by the martyr peacemaker Dag Hammarskjold.*

2. Alienation from God has made it impossible to find peace with ourselves or our fellow men.

a) *It is in having made peace with God that ultimate peace may be found.*

b) *We think of the tormented woman taken in sin.*

c) *Clergyman friend called to hospital.*

(1) Nurses warned the patient was a hellion, though nearly 80.

(2) "There is nothing you can do for me. I've been a reprobate and now I have to face up to it." "Are you sorry?" "By authority committed to me in the name of Christ, your sins are forgiven." He wept, became an ideal patient. Died at peace.

III. Now as the World Giveth, Give I Unto You

A. The world's peace is transient.

1. The cease fire in Israel has been broken every day since it was declared.

2. The "war to end wars" -- we smile at our naiveté.

3. Those engaged in labor relations know how fragile industrial peace is.

B. "Give I unto you."

1. A policemen can command us to keep the peace.

2. We may tell a friend we wish them peace.

3. Only God can give peace.

a) *When I first told Joan "I love you" I was not giving a report on my endocrine reactions -- I was making love.*

(1) I was making a commitment.

b) When Jesus said, "Not as the world giveth" -- he was committing Himself to us, inviting us to commit ourselves to him.

IV. Let Not Your Heart Be Troubled: Neither Let It Be Afraid

- A. This does not mean we will no longer have frustration or anxieties.**
- B. It does mean that, grounded in an ultimate trust in God, we can afford to look at our frustrations for what they are.**
- C. Ruth Osbourne**
 - 1. She sold her house and had an apartment in Washington. From her window, she showed Joan and me the law office of her father, and on the hill the cemetery where her beloved Al and Sonny had been buried. "That's where I will be."**

Study Questions -- Part I

Bible Reading: John 14:27

John 14:27 says: Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be fearful.

- What do you think of when you think of Jesus' peace? How does it differ from what we envision when we think about human peace?
- Why do you think the verse couples the concept of peace with not being troubled or fearful rather than referring to bravery or some other concept?

Study Questions -- Part II*Sermon :*

- I.A. Why do you think that one of the few Hebrew terms that Christians use is Shalom?
- I.A.2. What might an article about Israel in July of 1967 be discussing? What might a similar article discuss today?
- I.A.3. Do you use the greeting shalom? If so, under what circumstances do you use it?
- I.A.3. Do you think Christians ever use Salaam in the way they might use Shalom?
- I.B.1 Do you use the term peace when you pray?
- I.B.1. Peace is such an important concept in the Bible. Why don't you think it is included in the Lord's Prayer?
 - 1.B.1.a. Do you agree that to be at peace is man's deepest longing? If not, what would you consider to be?
 - 1.C.1. At the time this sermon was preached, we were still deeply involved in Vietnam. As this study is being written, we have troops remaining in Iraq and are still deeply involved in Afghanistan. What parallels do you see in these situations? How are the involvements different?
 - 1.C.1. Where do you think we need peace within our borders today? Which of Dr. Galbreath's examples seem most valid today? What examples might you use that are more reflective of our time?
- 1.D. In what ways do young people need peace today?
- 1.F. If someone had never heard the word Shalom, how would you describe the concept to them?
- II.A. What might people think of us if we offered them "our" peace?
- II.B. Do you think true peace is possible on earth until Christ returns?
- II.C. What do you think is involved in feeling personally reconciled with God?
 - II.C.1.a. If you have never heard of Dag Hammarskjold, you might want to look him up online. Whether you do or not, who would you describe as peacemakers since 1967?
 - II.C.2. Do you think it is possible for people who don't know God or believe in Jesus to find true peace? How do you think they might find it?
 - II.C.2.c.2. Do you know someone like that patient? What do you think it takes to get someone to make that admission? Do you think most people would ask for that forgiveness if they truly believed it was available? How can we share with people what they need to know about God's grace in forgiveness?
- III.A.1. Do you think Israel is closer to peace or further from peace than it was in 1967?

III.A.2. Do you think the world will ever again think that a confrontation is the worst that will ever be?

III.B.1. Are there times when you try to bring peace to others? How do you approach it?

III.B.3.a.1.b. When Jesus commits to us, what can we do to return that commitment?

IV.A. What frustration and anxieties do you continue to fight rather than giving them to God?

IV.B. How do you keep your frustrations in perspective?

IV.C. How do you react when someone shares with you their plans for after their death? Does it make you consider your own plans? Do you simply try to change the subject? Or is it a perfectly comfortable topic for you?