

Daily Devotional, April 13,2020 Living in the Peace of Jesus

Most times when I arrive home after a vacation, I find there are often things I want to change. Getting a chance to relax, also gives us a chance to contemplate. And this can trigger a longing to establish new practices or abandon old ones. So generally, after Easter, and having experienced the Lenten season, just like coming home from a vacation, I begin listing things I wish to change.

But here we are in a completely different world of unusual practices already. Our old routines have already been abandoned, and new practices keep adjusting on a daily basis. So, with the end of our Lent and Holy Week devotionals, I find myself discovering daily practices that are *new every morning*.

Meditating on the silent confidence in the forgiveness of Jesus and the promise of eternal life in Him, I plan on living in this confidence even into each uncertain day that lies ahead. I don't want the noise of the media and the world dictating to me the person I should be, how I should think or act. I want to live in the assurance that God has lovingly created me to carry out God's plan for my life. In that regard, nothing has changed

I want to hear God's voice above all the voices of the media and the internet, above the voices of family and friends (though I love you all dearly). I want to live a life of surrender to God's ways, no matter how difficult, or how against the ways of the world it may be. And when I make mistakes—and I know I will—rather than living in guilt and shame, I want to live in the forgiveness that God grants me, which shields me from brokenness and loneliness.

In John 20:19-23, Jesus appears to His disciples right after his resurrection: *On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord. Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."*

Here, the disciples are hiding in fear. Knowing what has happened to their master, they fear for their own lives and lock themselves up in a room. And into that fear, Jesus appears, and He speaks peace.

What room have you locked yourself into? Is it a room of fear? A room of guilt? A room of unforgiveness? Jesus comes into that room and speaks peace.

I'm going to say that again, Jesus comes into that room and speaks peace.

And as we can see from this passage, He speaks peace twice, a double dose. He doesn't hold back.

Jesus speaks peace as many times as we need to hear it.

What consolation! In this unsure period of history, I need peace. I don't just need it for this day, I need it hourly and sometimes in an instant. And Jesus gives us His peace, He gives us His peace and then goes a step beyond and breathes the Holy Spirit into us.

Where do you need peace today? Are you fearful of the future? Jesus says, "Peace be with you". Are you worried for family and friends? Jesus says, "Peace be with you" Are you grieving a loss? Jesus says, "Peace be with you". No matter what you are facing in these indefinite times, or at any other time in the future, Jesus speaks peace as often as you need to hear it. And the Holy Spirit continues to live within you every day beyond. That thought alone brings me quiet and rest. I pray that it will do the same for you.

Prayer: Jesus, thank you that you are the Prince of Peace, and that you bring peace into all our circumstances.

Help us to live in your peace Lord, and to listen to the voice of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Be with us as we go about our daily routines and help us to know we are fully loved by you, fully accepted by you, and fully forgiven by you. In your most calming name, **Amen**