

Peace

Peace – Matthew 5.9

Have you seen, 'Extreme Survival' with Ray Mears? In one episode he goes to Siberia in Russia. This is a harsh place where temperatures can hit -70C. Yet when the young people go to school away from the area, they almost always come back to live with their tribe. In some cases children have to literally be lassoed (like a cowboy with a rope) to get them to school.. not exactly a problem in the UK. Why do the young people come back? Because of the sense of peace and stability they have in their community, the words of the programme, not mine. It makes sense doesn't it.

There is great contentment that comes with peace. At the end of World War II you may have seen footage of people celebrating in the streets in London. We also find that people with the greatest sense of peace often have very little.

When have you been most peace? What words do you associate with the word 'peace'? Have you ever really felt 'at peace' as people say? Why or why not?

Matthew 5.9 says, 'Those who work to bring peace are happy (or blessed) because God will call them his children.'

SOME QUESTIONS

1. This is easy – but complete this sentence – 'The Bible says that God will call me one of his children if I _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _'
2. Can you define what peace is: _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _
3. Are there any Bible verses you know (other than Matthew 5.9!) that talk about peace?
4. Are there any people you know or know of that you know have a real sense of peace? Why?

I know some people who seem to shine with the light and life of Jesus. I know other people whose eyes seem lifeless and dull. A great picture of this can be found in the 2nd part of the Lord of the Rings trilogy, 'The Two Towers' with King Theodred who is under the curse of Saruman and Wormtongue, until Gandalf releases him. If you have the clip, show it. It's a great clip of how evil can rob you of your joy, life and peace.

Read 1 Timothy 2.1-4. Summarise it in your own words in one sentence and compare with others. What about learning 1 Timothy 2.2 as a kind of memory verse as they used to call it..

So what else does the Bible say about peace?

- Matthew 6.25-34 we find Jesus telling us not to worry. The opposite of worrying is being peaceful (in the sense of feeling at peace with things)
 - 1 Thess 5.23 says that God is the God of peace (hint, hint, there is no other way to true peace). There is a way we can do this found in the second half of the verse – purity, belonging only to God.
 - Matthew 10.34 – Jesus says a pretty amazing thing – ‘Don’t think I came to bring peace..’ Read the whole verse. What did he mean?
-

Here’s a clue – some Christians trying to bring peace in a tribal country were all killed by rebels as they went about their mission. But their deaths have sprung people into action to bring peace in that nation.

- Galatians 5.22 – can you name the 9 fruit of the Spirit (note the word is ‘fruit’ not ‘fruits’!) as listed in Galatians 5.22-23?
-
-

- John 14.27 – Jesus speaks to his boys – ‘I leave you peace; my peace I give you. I do not give it to you as the world does. So don’t let your hearts be troubled or afraid.’

So there is a MASSIVE difference between worldly peace (like the ‘peace’ in Iraq or even ‘peace’ in the UK) and the peace that Jesus brings. If you’re a disciple of Jesus then Jesus has given you his peace already.

- Philippians 4.7 – God’s peace is so awesome, it’s beyond our understanding. It will also keep your heart and mind set on Jesus. So peace is a b-e-a-utiful thing.. (see Bruce Almighty the movie...)
- Isaiah 32.17 – God’s fairness will bring peace, so the prophet Isaiah said.. so what does it mean? Read it in the context of the chapter and Isaiah..

– Isaiah 9.6-7 – Jesus is called the Prince of Peace – power and peace will be part of his kingdom. Sounds good..

– Read Isaiah 26.3 – The Lord gives true peace to those who depend on him. So to get peace we have to have faith, depend and believe in Jesus and be active.

How do we get this kind of Jesus-style inner peace?

How do we see peace in our nation and our world?

YOUR RESPONSE TO THIS

How can you make a change in your heart, your community, your life? What physical, spiritual and emotional decisions and choices/action can you make to see a difference.. to bring peace.. to see Jesus move in your life and other lives? People say that 'charity starts at home'. You know what, if we want to see change, see Jesus over this nation in awesome power then it's got to start in our hearts. That means you and me.
