

Readings

Scripture

²⁰ Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, ²¹ equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. ...

²⁵ Grace be with all of you.

- Hebrews 13:20-21, 25 (*English Standard Version*)

²⁵ At that time Jesus declared, "I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that you have hidden these things from the wise and understanding and revealed them to little children; ²⁶ yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. ²⁷ All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him. ²⁸ Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

- Matthew 11:25-30 (*English Standard Version*)

Reflection

Peace has come to mean the time when there aren't any wars or even when there aren't any major wars. Beggars can't be choosers; we'd most of us settle for that. But in Hebrew peace, shalom, means fullness, means having everything you need to be wholly and happily yourself.

One of the titles by which Jesus is known is Prince of Peace, and he used the word himself in what seem at first glance to be two radically contradictory utterances. On one occasion he said to the disciples, "Do not think that I have come to bring peace on earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Matthew 10:34). And later on, the last time they ate together, he said to them, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you" (John 14:27).

The contradiction is resolved when you realize that for Jesus peace seems to have meant not the absence of struggle but the presence of love.

- Frederick Buechner, *Whistling in the Dark*

"Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

- Matthew 11:28-30 (*English Standard Version*)

Sermon Outline

The Lessons of Love from Hebrews

Hebrews 13:20-21, 25; Matthew 11:25-30

Consider Jesus

Brad Anderson

Learning to love God will mean learning to do His will... (Hebrews 13:21, 25)

How is this dynamic of grace understood through the closing words of Hebrews?

It was the God of peace who led Jesus Christ forth from the dead to shepherd us out of death... (Hebrews 13:20)

It is the God of peace who equips us to do his will through Jesus Christ...

(Hebrews 13:21)

It will be the God of peace who receives glory forever and ever through Jesus Christ our Lord... (Hebrews 13:21)

Reflection Questions (taken in part from the Serendipity Study Bible for Groups)

- The word benediction means to bestow a blessing, specifically with words and typically at the end of a service. What have the words of Matthew 11:28-30 meant to you so far this year? Describe the experience and how that has developed over the past several months.
- How do the words of Hebrews 13:20-21 express or summarize lessons that have been taught in earlier portions of the book? Can you now identify some of the specific passages in the book of Hebrews where those lessons were taught?
- Grace is the understood dynamic of learning to love God and learning to do His will. Read John 15:12-17. Describe the stated dynamic between loving Jesus and doing what he commands. How is this dynamic impossible without grace? Read John 15:1-11. How does the illustration of the vine and the branches express the living dynamic of grace in our lives?
- What illustrations has the author used in the book of Hebrews to express the living dynamic of grace in your life?
- How is the peace identified in Hebrews 13:20 related to the commands given in Hebrews 13:17-19? How does submission bring about peace? How did the submission of Jesus to the will of His Father bring about peace for God's people?
- What are your top three take-aways from our time in Hebrews? Is there something God is leading you to act upon or digest further or apply directly? Take time to share this with a friend in our community of faith (Hebrews 10:24-25).