

The Rest of Peace

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INI – SDG

Isaiah 9:1-7 Nevertheless the gloom *will not be* upon her who *is* distressed, As when at first He lightly esteemed The land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, And afterward more heavily oppressed *her*, By the way of the sea, beyond the Jordan, In Galilee of the Gentiles. ² The people who walked in darkness Have seen a great light; Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, Upon them a light has shined. ³ You have multiplied the nation *And* increased its joy; They rejoice before You According to the joy of harvest, As *men* rejoice when they divide the spoil. ⁴ For You have broken the yoke of his burden And the staff of his shoulder, The rod of his oppressor, As in the day of Midian. ⁵ For every warrior's sandal from the noisy battle, And garments rolled in blood, Will be used for burning *and* fuel of fire. ⁶ For unto us a Child is born, Unto us a Son is given; And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of *His* government and peace *There will be* no end, Upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, To order it and establish it with judgment and justice From that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

Let's start this evening by agreeing that I am right. Think of all the time we could save at meetings if I just made all the decisions. Think how peaceful everything would be if everyone just agreed with me all the time. The only problem is that I'm not always right and I don't always know the best way to do things.

We sometimes think that peace comes if we can control everything. >/Part of the problem is that people don't need empty words but promises that they can count on. We can tell someone it'll be alright, but we both know we can't back up that promise.

Jesus is the wonderful counselor because he can back up his promises. What he tells us will come to pass. He can comfort us not with empty words but with sure and certain promises. Our peace rests on him not on us.

His words of peace are not always what we expect. Sometimes he has bad news for us. However, in Jesus all bad news is only temporary. Whatever earthly tribulation we suffer the promise of life to come remains.

Jesus comes to us as the wonderful counselor bearing words of peace. Our peace is not dependent on our ability to say the right thing. It rests on Jesus' promises.

Mighty God

Our peace rests on Jesus because he is the one strong enough to hold it.

Jesus is the mighty God, but he does not use this strength or this power for his own selfish purposes, but he uses it to give aid to his people. There is this wonderful passage in Hebrews.

Hebrews 2:16 For indeed He does not give aid to angels, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham.

Our peace rests on him who uses his might to give us aid.

Most of us learned in school the difference between kinetic energy and potential energy. The Hebrew language makes this same distinction. The word for mighty here implies a kinetic strength, a strength that is active, that is in motion, that is doing things.

Jesus' strength isn't just showing off big muscles but is him using his power on behalf of his people.

The prophet Hanani reminds king Asa:

2 Chronicles 16:9 "For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him.

Jesus is looking for opportunities to use his power on your behalf. Our peace rests on him because he has the strength to maintain it.

Everlasting Father

Fathers make lots of foolish promises. We do it in an attempt to reassure our children, but they are often promises that we cannot keep. Even those that are within our control, sooner or later we aren't there.

Vanessa was watching a therapist analyze the movie finding Nemo the other day. Marlin, Nemo's father, made lots of promises that he could not keep. Marlin was bound and determined to give his son peace, to keep him safe. Yet, there came a time when Marlin could no longer be there for his son.

Jesus is the everlasting father. Both his promises and presence are always there. He has the power to make good on his promises. He is also always there, everlasting. He told his disciples "**Lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age.**"

There is an important scene in Finding Nemo, where Marlin and Dory are hanging on a whale's tongue. Dory tells Marlin, "You have to let go."
"How do you know it will be ok?"

The world has no reason to believe that it will be ok. We do. We can let go because we know our everlasting Father will be there. Jesus is our everlasting father. His promises are true, and he is always there to fulfill them.

Our peace rests on him because his promises and presence are everlasting.

He is our prince of peace.

In Luke 10 we hear about two sisters named Mary and Martha. These sisters looked for peace in very different ways. Martha wanted to control everything and get all the work done. Mary wanted to sit and listen to Jesus. Martha thought she was right and asked for Jesus to back her up. Jesus however sided with Mary. Peace doesn't come from controlling everything but from Jesus who has the strength and power to fulfill all his promises.

Our peace rests on Jesus. It comes from sitting at his feet, not by being in control and making sure everything is perfect.

Amen