

there is no peace as Jeremiah 6:14 warns us about. I pray that all those listening who are not truly in Christ may become so uncomfortable and so distressed and troubled about your lost condition by nature that you cry out to God for His mercy, and receive by grace through faith in Christ His blessed peace now and forever!

How wonderful, indeed, is the peace that God gives and works in the heart. For abundant sin He shows by His Word and Spirit the superabundant Saviour from sin always and again; for the storms of life He shows by His Word and Spirit the safe refuge and hiding place found with Him. With the fierce battles against sin, Satan, the world, and hell, He shows again by His Word and Spirit how we are and can be more than conquerors time and again through the Saviour, our Lord Jesus Christ. Listen to the following verses telling us what the God of peace promises. Romans 16:20, *“And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly.”* I Thessalonians 5:23, *“And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.”* Yes, so also hear Hebrews 13:20&21: *“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do His will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ; to Whom be glory for ever and ever.”* This is God’s promise to all His own as also mentioned in Isaiah 26:3, *“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee: because He trusts in Thee.”* So says Peter in his last verse of his first epistle, *“Peace be with you all that are in Christ Jesus.”*

I have said much in reference to our text, II Thessalonians 3:16. What I hope, having heard this message, is that this text will become very precious to you, and I encourage you to treasure it for yourself and to pass it on, praying it also on behalf of others as Paul did for the Christian believers in Thessalonica long ago. *“Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.”* Indeed, For Jesus’ sake and in His Name, and to His praise, Amen.

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**BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST**

*Radio Ministry of the FREE REFORMED CHURCHES of North America*

*Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)*



#### A FULL GOSPEL PARTING WORD

Listen to the Apostle Paul’s parting word of blessing written in II Thessalonians 3:16. Paul wrote beautiful parting words in all his letters to the churches, and this verse too is very special. Paul writes, *“Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.”*

Notice with me the fullness of this text in regards to the gospel message of the Bible. *“Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means. The Lord be with you all.”* This verse tells of the Lord of peace and is referring to the Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah called the Saviour to come, *“the Prince of peace”*, and Paul tells us about the Saviour Who had come and suffered and died and rose again and returned to heaven that He is *“the Lord of peace”*. When Jesus was born, the angels said, *“...on earth peace, good will toward men.”*[Luke 2:12] Just before Jesus ascended into heaven, He said to His disciples, *“Peace be unto you!”* [Luke 24:36] In John 14:27 we hear Jesus also say to His disciples, *“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world gives, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”*

What is this peace that the Lord of peace gives? Well, it is a many-sided peace but it is especially referring to peace with God. The deepest, best, and most worthy peace of heart is that peace in relation to God, the Holy One! The Bible teaches, and all history proves, that by nature no one has this peace with God, not since the fall into sin with Adam & Eve, our first parents. Sin has brought a fearful break and separation between us and God and God and us, and no one left to himself or herself lives in peace with God. Sin has spoiled that peace relationship beyond repair. Mankind may try, and has tried, all kinds of ways on their own to restore a relationship of peace with God, but to no avail. But now the gospel message is all about God Himself working to restore peace with sinful rebellious man.

And that way of peace is in and through the Lord Jesus Christ and His saving work accomplished for us and applied to us. When a person confesses his or her sin and trusts in the Lord Jesus as the one and only Saviour of sinners, then again we may be, by grace, restored into the favor of God and have the peace of God that passes understanding. Looking to Jesus no one needs to be afraid of God any longer, for the sin which divided us from Him is blotted out through Christ Jesus and His saving work on behalf of sinners, and the distance, the great gulf which our sin has caused between

us and God, has ceased to be when Jesus is our refuge. His cross bridges the gap! Yes, Jesus' once for all sacrifice has accomplished perfect reconciliation before God for sinners like you and me, and through Him we may find and have everlasting peace. In this regard, II Thessalonians 3:16 fits well with John 3:16.

Peace because sin is forgiven and washed away is the sweet fruit of justification and Paul writes in Romans 5:1, "*Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*" He also tells about the peace that comes with living a life of holiness in dependence upon God and His renewing sanctifying power. In Romans 8:6 we are told, "*To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.*" Peace in view of eternal life and no fear of death is a peace that money cannot buy.

Paul's parting word to the Thessalonians is so rich for it tells us of the Lord of peace Himself giving peace. The source of real peace with God and with self and with others is found with the Lord Jesus. When you know and have His peace not only does it affect your relationship with God but also with self and with others. Peace with self and others is only found as we have peace with God. Sadly, and tragically, we live in a world where so many are looking for peace and a life of peace with self and with others but they leave God out of the picture. But apart from God and the peace He obtained for sinners like us through His Son Jesus Christ, there just is no peace. Are you lacking true peace in any way? Don't look primarily to people to find peace, but call upon the Lord of peace and He will lead you in the way of true peace.

Indeed, notice what the text says. "*The Lord of peace Himself give you peace.*" The text says "*give you peace*" not merely offering it to you, or arguing with you that you ought to have peace, or showing you the grounds of peace, but "*give you peace!*" He has the power to breathe peace into the heart and to create peace in your soul and mine. As we read in Isaiah 57:19, "*Peace, peace, to him that is afar off, and to him that is near, saith the LORD; and I will heal him.*" Are you looking for peace, peace with God and peace with others and peace with yourself? Don't look to other humans or manmade sources of help, but look to the Lord of peace and see if He can't and won't help.

Listen, in fact, to what Paul further says. "*Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means.*" Did you notice that? In this word from Paul we have a reflection of the heart of God and His good will towards all who trust in Him, in and through Jesus Christ! God is out to give people peace not just sometimes, on the rare occasion or with that special event, but at all times! Always! The salvation the Triune God has accomplished for sinners like us, even for as many as believe, is a complete salvation found from beginning to end, all in Christ Jesus. What then can

really take away your peace trusting and following after Him? You and I are invited always to go to Christ Jesus the Saviour for peace, and He is always ready to give it more and more, without end. Don't be living by a standard lower than what God Himself calls for and gives Himself for!

Paul even becomes bolder in his prayer to God for the Thessalonians. "*Now the Lord of peace Himself give you peace always by all means.*" Yes, also "*by all means.*" This text not only proclaims Jesus is the source of peace and that He has supply for our peace always, but it also proclaims that God has so many means to lead us in the way of real peace now and forevermore. He can use all means to bring people into peace and to lead us onward in the way of peace. The Lord of hosts is not limited to one single means to lead sinners and saints in the way of peace. His means are infinite to bring sinners to conviction and conversion before Him, and His powers and resources are unlimited to lead in the way of everlasting peace. God's hand is not shortened and Paul prays that God will by all means, in every way, always give peace to the believing Thessalonians, that peace that passes understanding, that peace that makes all of life so peaceful and joyful, fulfilling and fruitful!

As I am unfolding this text, don't you find it a very rich text indeed? And then notice yet what Paul further adds, "*The Lord be with you all.*" Paul knows Christ Himself is our peace and when He is with us day by day as Saviour and Lord, what peace indeed we may have at all times in all places always, by all means! Having peace with God comes with daily fellowship and walk with God Triune through His Word and Spirit.

Are you living in peace with God and reflecting and radiating God's peace as revealed in Christ? In Isaiah 57:20&21 God's Word says, "*...The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked.*" Do you know and acknowledge this too? How dreadful to live and die without peace and to face an eternity never having peace of any kind. Here on earth people may hide their restlessness still with this and that, but in hell to suffer endless eternity with never a moment's peace in any respect will be torment beyond description! Let me urge all therefore to take to heart the gospel while it is still proclaimed in your hearing. What is frightening too is that anyone should be assuming all is well and they are at peace while not living in a relationship of personal faith and daily repentance before God. Too many think a little religion, a few so called good deeds, membership on the church registrar or participation in the sacraments will give the peace needed, but as mentioned before, only Christ gives peace. We must go to Him confessing our sins and sinfulness and belong to Him in true faith shall we know and have the peace of God and the salvation of the Lord that leads to life eternal. The Bible warns about holding to false religion and self-deception where people are healed only slightly but not radically, and they call peace 'peace' when