

A PLEDGE OF PEACE

- INTRO:** Last Sunday, in preparation to coming to the Lord's Table, we looked and uttered a cry for mercy.
 -the effect of God showing mercy is the grace of God unto justification and the fruits that flow from it.
 -The question that stands before our conscience continually is, "How shall I appear righteous before the face of God?"
 -There is one hunger and thirst in the heart of the godly: Righteousness!

I. **LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD.**

- A. Listening: the LORD speaks.
1. The Psalmist says for himself and for the congregation, "I will hear what the LORD will speak."
 2. He and the people have already cried out to the Lord. Now, listen. Two ears, one mouth...use accordingly!
 3. Here is God's answer to the Psalmist's earlier cry.
 4. This is not a new Word of the LORD, but rather the Psalmist takes himself to what the LORD has already spoken.
- B. The LORD speaks peace.
1. The Bible tells us that there is no peace to the wicked (Isa. 57:21). They are like the troubled sea which cannot rest.
 2. Peace in Scripture is used to denote prosperity and harmony. The opposite is discord, rebellion, and enmity.
 3. Peace is in being right with God, experiencing the forgiveness of sins.
 4. True peace is a quietness of heart, soul, and conscience that comes from knowledge that God is not angry w/ us.
- C. To whom and for whom is this speech of peace?
1. God speaks words of peace to his people.
 2. His people are further identified as his saints, the meek ones, those who are consecrated to him.
 3. Peace comes to those who by grace know and love and serve God, walking in his commandments.
 4. Identified in our text are the genuine people of God distinguished from those who carry merely the title.

II. **THE APPARENT PARADOX**

- A. The two couples:
1. How can we who are sinful, under God's anger, experience peace?
 2. How can a holy, righteous God have mercy with his sinful people?
 3. Pictured in verse 10 are two couples in harmony that appear to be diametrically opposed to each other!
 4. Can mercy and truth walk together?
 5. Can righteousness and peace kiss?
 6. Some interpreters view vs. 10 as the fruit of reconciliation. Rather I take it here as the means of reconciliation.
- B. The dilemma of mercy and truth:
1. Mercy, an attribute of God, is the desire to see someone happy and blessed: himself and his people.
 2. Mercy is God's pity upon us the helpless ones who are perishing
 3. Mercy is then also God's work & power whereby he stoops down to help and deliver us from misery and sin.
 4. Mercy says, I desire not the death of the sinner but that he lives."
 5. Truth is God's Word that says, "I will in no means clear the guilty" and "The soul that sinneth, it shall die."
 6. Does not truth prevent mercy, and mercy keep truth from being vindicated?
- C. The dilemma of righteousness and peace:
1. Righteousness is conformity with God's law. Gods and his law are the standard that all will be judged by.
 2. God created us righteous, but we by our rebellion in Adam plunged ourselves in sin and guilt.
 3. We are by nature unrighteous, all of our thoughts and deeds filthy rags. There is no righteousness in us.
 4. Righteousness is that virtue of God that always rewards the good and damns the guilty. No exceptions.
 5. How can the righteous and pure God have peace and harmony with sinners? "There is no peace to the wicked.
 6. "How can these two be harmonized and kiss? How can we be harmonized with God?"

III. **THE HARMONY REVEALED IN CHRIST AND HIS CROSS**

- A. Harmony is found in God himself.
1. We confess the simplicity of God. This is an aspect of his oneness.
 2. God is one in all his attributes and works, perfection.
 3. There is no disharmony, no conflict, and no contradiction amongst his attributes or works.
 4. God is love, is truth, is light, is righteous, etc. These attributes are not separated but like facets of a diamond.
 5. God's love is always just, never revealed except in the way of perfect justice, fulfilling the his demands.
- B. The harmony is revealed in Jesus Christ and his incarnation.
1. Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. No man cometh unto the Father but by him.
 2. Always we are redeemed by judgment.
 3. Jesus Christ was sent down to be our substitute, paying the penalty for our sin, and bringing the perfect obedience.
- C. Reconciliation and peace with God through the cross of Jesus Christ.
1. What great mercy God shows when God gives us the gift of righteousness, a righteousness that comes from heaven.
 2. This righteousness God obtains for us through the suffering and death of his own Son.
 3. This righteousness he gives to us through the work of the Holy Spirit and by faith (Rom. 1:17, 3:26).
 4. By his eternal love and grace, sending his Son to suffer for us, he imputes righteousness to us.
 5. Thereby we have peace with God (Rom. 5:1).
 6. Righteousness and peace have kissed each other! Reconciliation through the cross of Jesus Christ.