

# **The Bible Plan for Personal Peace**

(Compiled by Paul R. Blake from Multiple Sources)

## Introduction:

- A. God promises peace to His children, even in this tumultuous, fallen world; however, it is something that we must consciously pursue
  - 1. Prov. 3:1-2; Psalm 4:6-8, 37:11, 37; Isa. 26:3; John 16:33
- B. Peace quotes
  - 1. "The punishment of every disordered mind is its own disorder."  
(Augustine of Hippo, Confessions)
  - 2. "For most men the world is centered in self, which is misery: to have one's world centered in God is peace." (Donald Hankey)
  - 3. "No one has ever achieved peace of mind by examining and changing the world. True peace of mind can only be achieved by examining and changing oneself." (Joseph Rain)

## **I. THINGS PERSONS AT PEACE REFUSE TO BELIEVE**

(Developed from "10 Things Happy People Don't Believe" by Stephanie Hall)

- A. "Life is fair."
  - 1. No it is not. This is a fallen world in which sin and death exists.
  - 2. Happiness isn't about always getting what you want. People at peace understand that sometimes life doesn't turn out as expected
  - 3. What they do know, is that they can only do their best, forgive what doesn't work, and move on to what does work.
  - 4. Let go of the dreams and plans that cannot come to pass. What I was expecting in life at this point.
  - 5. Job 1:20-22
- B. "Suffering is bad."
  - 1. Suffering is an inevitable part of the human condition. You cannot live in this world without at least a little suffering.
  - 2. People at peace know a deeper, richer appreciation of life comes through surviving deep pain. We learn who we really are when faced with such burdens.
  - 3. James 1:2-4
- C. "I'm in control of everything in my life."
  - 1. As hard as we work, and as much as we try to plan it all out, we're just not in control of the people, the world, the circumstances around us.
  - 2. We cannot control the actions or thoughts of others. In order to find peace, we must accept this inescapable truth and learn to be proactive rather than reactive to life's surprises and mishaps.
  - 3. Phil. 1:12-14
- D. "People are obligated to love me the way I want to be loved."
  - 1. If our peace of mind is dependent on how other people feel about us, we will never be at peace. Some constantly worry about what others are thinking about them and feeling toward them.

2. We can't please everyone and we certainly can't force anyone to love us in a specific way. People at peace accept the way others feel; they are content to be known and loved by God
  3. We give others the benefit of the doubt and assume that they are loving us the best way they can under the circumstances.
  4. If troubled by the way others love us, trust them enough to say something about it to them, rather than harboring disappointment from unrealized expectations
  5. Mark 12:42-44
- E. "Everyone hates me."
1. This is a toxic belief and a delusion, yet sadly a great proportion of troubled people fall prey to this.
  2. People at peace with God and themselves face the world with a healthy dose of curiosity and nonchalance. They are interested in others, yet are not dependent on being loved in a specific way.
  3. 1Kings 19:14, 18
  4. It is enough to be loved by God - 2Tim. 4:16-17
- F. "I can't."
1. If we believe you are incapable and let that belief keep us from peace, then ultimately we give truth to a self-imposed fallacy. The only way to improve and succeed at anything is to try repeatedly until we succeed.
  2. Num. 13:30-32
- G. "I have something to prove."
1. Troubled people seek peace and happiness through the approval of others. Unfortunately, that approval is impossible to achieve because it is caused by lack in us that will never be satisfied.
  2. We should strive for the approval of God and a clear conscience
  3. Acts 24:16
- H. "It doesn't matter."
1. This is just an excuse. It's what troubled people tell themselves to avoid confrontation when they've been mistreated, or lack of courage they don't follow their dreams.
  2. Peace and happiness matters. Personal respect matters. Don't dismiss our needs to avoid responsibility for our own well-being.
  3. Prov. 29:25
- I. "My life would be at peace, if only I were [fill in the blank]."
1. "If only I were skinnier, prettier, smarter, had a better job, better house, better neighbors, better family, better church.
  2. It's okay to work on improving our lives, we're always in a state of learning, growing, changing; but, it is not good to make ourselves miserable and troubled by our weaknesses and limitations
  3. Phil. 4:11-12; 2Cor. 12:8-9
- J. "I'm too old."
1. We are never too old. Yes, we may look silly, and it may be harder than expected, but it's never too late to choose to be at peace.

2. We can choose it every day, whether we learn this early or late in life. Life is unpredictable. The only sure thing is we're all getting older only one day at a time.
3. Joshua 14:10-12

## II. THINGS PEOPLE AT PEACE DO DIFFERENTLY THAN OTHERS

(Developed from the writings of Stephen Covey)

- A. Express gratitude often. When we appreciate what we have, what we have appreciates in value. If we aren't thankful for what we already have, we will have a hard time ever being at peace with what God has given us.
  1. 1Thes. 5:16-18
- B. Deliberately choose to cultivate optimism. People who think optimistically see the world filled with opportunities; and, believing in opportunities gives hope that can sustain us, especially in trying times.
  1. Psalm 43:4-5
- C. Avoid over-thinking and social comparison. Comparing ourselves to others can poison our peace of mind. The only persons we should compare ourselves to are the persons we were yesterday and the Lord we want to be like tomorrow.
  1. 2Cor. 10:12
- D. Practice acts of kindness. Selflessly helping someone is a super powerful way to feel fulfilled and full of godly purpose. In addition, it builds peace with others and assures us of our peace with God. We cannot help but feel more at peace with ourselves.
  1. Prov. 19:22; Col. 3:12
- E. Build strong, healthy, lasting friendships. The most peaceful and happy people are those who have deep, meaningful relationships. It confers emotional health that often translates into physical health
  1. Prov. 18:24, 27:9, 17
- F. Develop strategies for coping. Bad things happen to everyone, including and often especially to persons at peace. The Adversary is jealous of them and increases his assaults against them trying to break their calm. It helps to have healthy strategies for coping with unexpected life changes.
  1. 2Cor. 4:8-9, 14
- G. Learn to forgive. Harboring grudges, rage, and hatred is horrible for our well-being and peace of mind. Even if your antagonist never repents, refuse to dwell on it. He hurt us the first time when he harmed us; we hurt ourselves a second time when we replay it over and over again in our hearts and minds.
  1. 2Tim. 4:14
- H. Learn to focus. The zone is a state in which it feels like time stands still. It's when we're so focused on what we're doing that nothing distracts or competes for our attention. Learn to shut out distractions; we have the power to decide and control what we with think and experience.
  1. Phil. 3:13-14
- I. Savor life's joys. Peace and contentment cannot exist without slowing down to enjoy the joyful moments. Slowly savor the moment; it will imprint a pleasant

memory that can help sustain us in unpleasant times. Take time to go away from everything, sit amid God's creation, and meditate and pray.

1. Matt. 14:23; Psalm 143:5

J. Commit to goals. Perseverance is key. Progress inexorably happens when we commit ourselves to accomplish our goals. Progress emboldens and gives us strength to persist longer and to hope stronger

1. Heb. 10:35-39

K. Practice spirituality. Recognize that life is bigger than us, or the next paycheck, or the next meal, or job, or house, or car, etc. We often think that ourselves and our needs are the be all and end all of our existence. We are an eternal spirit housed in a temporary body. The needs of the eternal spirit are far more important than the needs of the temporary body.

1. 2Cor. 4:16-18

L. Take care of the body. Nutrition and exercise are crucial to being well-balanced; but more importantly, it will facilitate health, which will in turn enable us to do all of the things listed above with peace and pleasure.

1. 1Cor. 6:19-20

Conclusion:

A. Phil. 4:6-9