

Text:

John 14:27 (NIV)

[27] Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Introduction:

Two weeks ago we looked at the first four verses in John's first letter. We focused on how John said that He was an eyewitness to the life of Jesus. That is important for two reasons.

1. John knew Jesus to be a real person. Someone who lived and walked on this earth, a participant in the history of mankind. John was an eyewitness to the life and actions of Jesus Christ. He was an eyewitness to His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension into heaven. He was in the upper room when the Holy Spirit came. He heard the roaring wind, he saw the tongues of fire, he experienced the indwelling presence of the Spirit of God in his personal life. He lived his life based on what he witnessed. And an eyewitness is powerful testimony the truth and reliability of an event. All of the skeptics and critics of the ages have not been able to overcome the eyewitness testimonies of the men who knew Jesus personally and wrote down what they saw and experienced.
2. Second, we learned that although anyone can promise something like peace, Jesus' words are believable because He has the authority to make such a claim to peace for all those who believe in Him. He has that authority because He is God the creator of all that exists.

In a media driven culture there are many screens that grab at our attention all day long. TV, computer, iPod, Pocket PC, Smartphone, and even an eight foot screen at the front of the sanctuary on Sunday mornings. There are many individual pictures that convey a fraction of the message at hand. For example there is a famous painting that shows Adam and Eve being escorted out of the Garden of Eden. There is another one that shows Christ in his agony in the garden the night he was taken to be tried. If we could have a vision or an icon of what John is trying to tell us, and if we could put it on the screen before us, it might look something like this. On the left side of the screen we would see a beautiful angel. Toward the center of the screen we see Adam and Eve. They are being escorted out of the garden by the angel, for they have sinned and brought the consequences of their sin on all of their unborn children. Just outside the garden as they are leaving, they can momentarily see into the future. They see a vision of a rock under an olive tree and kneeling at that rock is a man they recognize as Jesus the creator. He is praying there, it is just before He is to be taken away and put

on trial.

John opened his Gospel with this idea of the creator becoming a man to pay the price for the sins of mankind.

John 1:3 (NIV) Through him (the Word) all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. (The Word is the creator.)

John 1:14 (NIV) The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. (The Word is Jesus.) We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (Jesus the creator became flesh so that He could give us peace. The glory John speaks of here is the glory of the resurrection, victory over death, and the penalty for sin. This is the peace that we are promised)

We are doing a series of sermons on the writings of John so that we can discover how we can have this peace that Jesus promised. Our focus right now is on John's first epistle. This epistle has many key factors that help us understand the peace that Jesus promises us. Let's read...

1 John 1:1-4 (NIV)

[1] That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. [2] The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. ("The Word became flesh") [3] We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. [4] **We write this** to make our joy complete.

The Author:

Who is the author of these words? His name was John. He was a fisherman by trade, with his brother James and father Zebedee. They may have even been in a business partnership with Peter and his brother Andrew. John became a disciple of Jesus, in fact one of Jesus' closest disciples. He is the only disciple who was not martyred although the world did try to kill him because of his faith in Jesus Christ. One commentator wrote...

"Tradition tells us that he was shipwrecked off Ephesus and arrived there in time to check the progress of the heresies that sprang up after Paul's departure. In the persecution under Do-mi-tian he was taken to Rome and the boiling oil into which he was thrown had no power to hurt him. Returning to Ephesus, he attested to the truth of the first three gospels, writing the fourth to supply what was wanting. He introduced the Jewish mode of celebrating the Easter feast. When all capacity to work and teach was gone—when there was no strength even to stand—he directed himself to be carried to the assemblage of believers, and simply said, with a feeble voice, "Little children, love one another." (New Unger's Bible Dictionary)

When you are reading John's writings remember that the man who wrote the Gospel of

John and the three epistles of John had previously been thrown into a vat of boiling oil. This is a man who was willing to die for the truth he had witnessed in the life of Jesus Christ. So every time you read John **REMEMBER THE BOILING OIL.**

The Purpose:

There are many reasons that people write. Some write movie scripts or books to entertain. Some write speeches to communicate great ideas to various kinds of audiences. Some write songs, prose, or poetry. Others write history or others kinds of facts used to inform and educate others. Preachers write sermons to communicate the transforming power of God's plan of Salvation. John wrote to communicate what he and others had witnessed in the life and actions of Jesus Christ. But as John wrote he made some very specific statements about the purposes he wished to communicate to those who read his writings.

There is a recurring phrase in John's writings that clearly show us the purpose he intended to convey at that moment. He is always saying, "I write", or "I have written". He wants his readers to understand that there is a very specific purpose for his writings. Let's look at some these statements of purpose. In them we will see a pathway to peace. So why did John write, what was his purpose? The first time he uses a phrase to declare his purpose in writing is found in his Gospel.

Belief

John 20:30-31 (NIV)

[30] Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. [31] But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by **believing** you may have life in his name.

Purpose for John's gospel.

"The miracles reported are highly selected with practical intent: (1) to prove Christ as the Messiah, the God-Man; (2) to show Him as the Saviour and Life-giver; (3) to cause men to believe on Him; (4) that they might receive eternal life."

"This purpose explains the fragmentary character and yet the essential unity of the book, its imagery, its symbolism and its characters, as well as its distinctive presentation of the Messiah, the Son of God." [New Unger's Bible Handbook]

The key word in this passage is believe.

"Believe - (Gk. *pisteuo*) Although belief as mere credence or confidence is exceedingly common and often the result of ignorance or deception and not grounded in facts of knowledge or truth, yet in a scriptural sense faith (or belief) in its larger usage represents four principal ideas. The **first** is personal confidence in God; **second**, a creedal or doctrinal concept of the essential body of revealed truth (Lk 18:8; 1Co 16:13; 2Co 13:5, Col 1:23; 2:7; Tit 1:13; Jude 3); **third**, faithfulness (or belief) as an evidence or fruit of the believer's trust in God (Ga 5:22-23); **fourth**, a designation for Christ as the object of faith (or belief) (Ga 3:23-25)." [New Unger's Bible Dictionary]

To believe is to be faithful beyond a head-knowledge of something or someone. To believe is to faithfully live out that head knowledge in our day to day lives. I can say that I believe that I should help those less fortunate than I, after all it is a command of the Son of God. But real belief brings me from head knowledge to real actions. John made this point very clear.

1 John 3:16-18 (NIV)

[16] This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. [17] If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? [18] Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.

The next purpose John states is **Joy**

1 John 1:4 (NIV) We write this to make our **joy** complete.

What brings true joy in a person's life? I have thought a lot about this as I am sure most of you have also. As I have examined my life, and the quest for joy, I have come to realize that true joy comes in the victories of life not in the things I accumulate. It is important to note that victory never comes without a battle. The struggle and pain of the battle is an important part of joy. What battle are you going through right now? John tells us in his first epistle that his purpose is that we will have joy. In his writings he shows us this very clearly. For example in...

John 16:17-20 (NIV)

[17] Some of his disciples said to one another, "What does he mean by saying, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,' and 'Because I am going to the Father'?" [18] They kept asking, "What does he mean by 'a little while'? We don't understand what he is saying."

[19] Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, "Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, 'In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me'?" [20] I tell you the truth, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to **joy**.

How would they have this joy Jesus is promising them? The world would have joy and rejoice when they put Jesus to death, and the disciples would grieve. Not only at the loss of Jesus but also because of their failures as they tried to keep promises made to go even to the death for Him. The disciples' grief would turn to joy when Jesus would come out of the grave. Joy in victory. John develops the idea of victory further in his writings. That brings us to John's next stated purpose, victory.

Victory through an Advocate

1 John 2:1-2 (NIV)

[1] My dear children, I write this to you **so that you will not sin**. But **if anybody does sin**, we have **one who speaks** to the Father in our defense—Jesus Christ, the

Righteous One. [2] He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.

There are different kinds of victory

- There is the victory that comes from winning
 - One of the 34 talents we have been talking about is the talent of competition.

“Competition is rooted in comparison. When you look at the world, you are instinctively aware of other people’s performance. Their performance is the ultimate yardstick. No matter how hard you tried, no matter how worthy your intentions, if you reached your goal but did not outperform your peers, the achievement feels hollow. Like all competitors, you need other people. You need to compare. If you can compare, you can compete, and if you can compete, you can win. And when you win, there is no feeling quite like it. You like measurement because it facilitates comparisons. You like other competitors because they invigorate you. You like contests because they must produce a winner. You particularly like contests where you know you have the inside track to be the winner. Although you are gracious to your fellow competitors and even stoic in defeat, you don’t compete for the fun of competing. You compete to win. Over time you will come to avoid contests where winning seems unlikely.” [Gallup University]

- Tiger Woods illustration

Woods revealed Wednesday he has been playing for at least 10 months with a torn ligament in his left knee, and that he suffered a double stress fracture in his left leg two weeks before the U.S. Open.

Out of competition for two months because of April 15 surgery to clean out cartilage in his left knee, he suffered a double stress fracture in his left tibia two weeks before the U.S. Open.

Hank Haney, his swing coach, was with him in Florida when doctors told Woods the preferred treatment was three weeks on crutches, followed by three weeks of rest.

According to Haney, Woods looked at the doctor and said: "I'm playing the U.S. Open, and I'm going to win."

Every night, I kept thinking there was no chance he's going to play. He had to stop in his tracks for 30 seconds walking from the dining room table to the refrigerator.

"He was not going to miss the U.S. Open at Torrey Pines. There just wasn't any discussion."

And it was a U.S. Open that will be talked about for years.

Despite a torn anterior cruciate ligament and a double stress fracture, Woods

managed to win a major that required five days of flinching, grimacing and a long list of spectacular shots that have defined his career.

He went 91 holes on a leg that got worse with each day, finally defeating Rocco Mediate on the 19th hole of a playoff.

"The stress fractures that were discovered just prior to the tournament unfortunately prevented me from participating and had a huge impact on the timing for my return," Woods said. "I was determined, though, to do everything and anything in my power to play in the U.S.

(Excerpts from an AP article By DOUG FERGUSON)

Now there's a man with the talent of competition. He put himself at risk to win a game. He paid a high personal price in pain, an to his injured knee and leg to win the game. It paid off and he won a great victory. But not all of us have that kind of competition. Fortunately there are other kinds of victory that give us satisfaction in life. We can have joy even if we are not a great competitor in the field of some sport.

- There is the victory that comes from successful participation which is also winning. For example there is...
 - Victory in closing the loan on a new house
 - There is Victory in overcoming a relationship problem
 - There is Victory in having less pain today than you had yesterday
 - There is Victory in the realization that the major surgery you had is not the first thing you think about when you wake up in the morning
 - There is Victory in grasping a new concept or learning something new
 - There is Victory in taking a small step of recovery after a crippling accident
 - There is Victory in losing a pound
 - There is Victory in overcoming a old bad habit
 - There is Victory in overcoming sin and temptation

This is the kind of victory that John wants his readers to experience; victory over sin and temptation. In his writings he takes us on a journey of discovery, and offered opportunity. In his writings we will discover the way we can have the peace that Jesus offers. As we discover the way to peace we will also have the opportunity to accept that peace in our daily lives.

The next purpose John states is the idea of clarity.

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Clarity

1 John 2:7-8 (NIV)

[7] Dear friends, I am not writing you a new command but an old one, which you have had since the beginning. This **old command** is the message you have heard. (This old commandment is the commandment of Love.) [8] Yet I am writing you a **new command**; its truth is seen in him and you, because **the darkness is passing** and the true light is already shining. (This new commandment is based on the light that we are given to walk in.)

The clarity comes in understanding that the law was not some kind of list to mark off each day. Rather it was there to point to an underlying principle and that principle was love. If you love you fulfill the law.

The old command...

Deuteronomy 6:5 (NIV) Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

Leviticus 19:18 (NIV) Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people, but love your neighbor as yourself. I am the LORD.

The new command...

John 13:34-35 (NIV)

[34] "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. [35] By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

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Study Notes:

1John

Key phrases and words:

I write

- 1:4 for **joy** (what brings you true joy? I guess we should ask, what is true joy?)
- 2:1 **victory** over sin (think of a great victory, perhaps an Olympic victory that came out of hard work and a long struggle, Perhaps the story of tiger woods victory this past weekend)
- 2:7 an old command
- 2:8 a new command
- 2:12 forgiven sins
- 2:13 prior knowledge
- 2:13 overcomers of evil
- 2:13 know the Father
- 2:14 know the creator
- 2:14 strength in the word of God which lives within
- 5:13 know eternal life

The Details:

Other key words and how they relate to peace

Love

Brother

Walk

Belong

Children

Truth

Eternal life

Believe

Born

Sin

Fear

Hate

Evil

Overcome (Victory)

Confidence

Remain

Continue

Defence