

Raise your hand if you are tired of war and fighting. I sure am and my guess is that you are as well. We have the war in Ukraine that has been going on for a while, and now a war in Israel. Then on top of that there is the war on terror and other conflicts around the world. And then on top of THAT there are the conflicts we have within our families, with friends, coworkers, community members, with those of an opposing political ideology, etc. Conflict is something that constantly surrounds us. Conflict is something that we love to avoid but it still always finds us. No matter how hard you try, there will always be someone at “war” with you. Can there ever be any peace?

YES!

Jesus said, ***“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.”*** (John 14:27)

And what does this peace do?

“And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:7)

And what is the Good News of this peace?

“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.” (Romans 5:1-2)

FACT: There will NEVER be world peace, no matter how much Miss America pageant contestants desire it.

FACT: There will ALWAYS be conflict in the world. Why? We are sinners.

FACT: There will ALWAYS be hate and racism and division.

FACT: There is hope.

Through faith in Jesus, there is peace, and not as the world gives (actually, the world does not want to and cannot give this peace). It is a peace that Jesus secured through his death and resurrection. It is a peace that gives us the hope of eternal life with God. It is a peace that brings comfort in the midst of the un-

peace of this world. It is a peace that is yours through no effort of your own. It is a gift.

I am doing a funeral for a family friend whose parents have died recently. In our preparations she mentioned the John 14:27 verse above. It was one that gave her mom great peace toward the end of her life. She was in so much pain and could not bear anyone touching her. But, when she heard that verse, she squeezed her daughter's hand. Peace. Her physical pain was not taken away but rather hope filled her heart and she was at peace. What a special moment for the two of them. And this peace can be for you as well.

"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."

Amen!