

The peace of Christ

Intro:

Friends, we are talking about things that concern the *local church*, or in other words the *local visible church*.

More specifically things that concern *Faith Baptist Church*. Nine letters of the apostle Paul (Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians) are written to *particular churches*. I take these letters to be *the* most important parts of the NT for churches to understand because they tell us *how we are to be*.

Paul in Colossians 3-4 is telling a church (just like us) what we need to be working on as a church.

One of the great blessings of a local church comes from when a church is at *peace*. In fact, as Paul brings this section about *putting on* Christian virtues to an end, he mentions *love* and *peace*. When these crowning virtues are present it is wonderful!

Psalm 133: 1 Behold, how good and pleasant it is
Let's read Psalm 133

We as a local church *must* strive to live in love and peace with each other, because we are family!

Listen to what Jesus says about this in **Mark 3:31-35**

1. See it? I'm sure you do, but so what?

Well, in this little family of God here in Cheboygan, it is imperative that we love each other and be at peace with each other. This is only possible because of Jesus.

- A. Jesus has given us peace **with** God, Rom 5:1
“Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Phil 4:5-7)

- C. There is also a peace *with each other* that we must to maintain, “Be at peace among yourselves.” (1 Th 5:13)

To be at peace with each other is very important for a **local church**. In Ephesians chapter 4 Paul wrote: “I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, **urge you** to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, **eager** to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

I take this to imply that we are to work towards making the visible church as unified as the future universal church will be.

2. Let’s look at this verse carefully: Col 3:15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body.

Now, our text says that we are **called to peace**, and therefore we must *let the peace of Christ rule [or judge] in our hearts*, and with each other. This **must** mean in connection to our life together as a local church. Notice those words *called in one body*: this is referring to the local church. I assert this because he is not calling them to let peace rule among people they are not connected to or are separated from, he is talking about the people they are doing life among.

I’ve made it clear that while the *universal or mystical body of Christ* is a true and right teaching, however, the universal church, but it as yet, has *never* been assembled and will **not** be until the return of Christ and the glorious resurrection of the dead in Christ.

In the meantime, we deal with and are affected by the local church, because it is composed of people, who provide endless opportunities for conflict, but we should not be a place of combat, but a place of love and peace.

times without setting the world on fire.

James Madison Pendleton says that love in action “holds together in beautiful symmetry all parts of the Christian character.” On the peace in v.15 he says, “we are called to enjoy the peace of Christ, and to have peace among [ourselves] in one body, the church.”

3. Love each other and be at peace.

For a church to be at peace means that while we may not always agree, we must remain peaceful as a fellowship. Our disagreements are to be *flavored with loving restraint* and completely devoid of animas^[1], malice^[2], and *pride*^[3]. This is hard, because we *tend* towards animas, malice, and pride – don’t we?

Well, we have an entire church letter devoted to the issues of being a church with no peace, 1st Corinthians, and the leading commentary on their issues is in 1 Cor. 3:1-23. We must take note of these things, lest we become like the church at Corinth: *affluent, gifted, and horribly divided*. It is no coincidence that Paul’s definition of love *appears* in the letter to the Corinthians. He calls the divided church to *practice true love* and then enjoy the peace that it produces.

4. Let’s think about the phrase *in one body* or a *single body*.

Paul uses the metaphor of a *body* to describe the local church often. This helps us to see that we are bound to each other, and each part of the body is *dependent* on the other parts, and *one distressed* part affects the whole.

So, your *peaceful attitude* must rule *you*, so that you can bless the body. **In a healthy body harmony prevails among the various parts. (F.F. Bruce)** A local physician told me this state is called, “**Homeostasis**: the tendency toward a relatively stable equilibrium between interdependent elements, especially as maintained by physiological processes.”



I. Possess the Peace of God

Many people have a false sense of peace—peace born of ignorance, indifference, or deception. This is akin to the deadly calmness just before a waterfall. True peace refers to:

1. **Peace with God:** If you are reconciled through Jesus Christ, live confidently in that reconciliation (Romans 5:1). This leads to peace with God's providences, which comes from fully submitting to the Divine will. Instead of desiring to change your circumstances, change your mindset to love your place. If forgiven, don't dwell on minor issues—it's like debating trivial legal points when the main case is already settled.
2. **Peace God Commends:** Perfect peace with God and subsequently with all people. Consider the offenses of others against you insignificant compared to what God has forgiven you. Even in the worst situations, we should not fear or seek revenge but embrace peace on earth and goodwill toward all.
3. **Peace God Works in the Soul:** This peace is not self-created. Transforming our hearts from wild to peaceful is a divine act.
4. **The Peace of God:** A term denoting supreme excellence, like "mountains of God." This peace surpasses all understanding, being the holiest, deepest, and eternal.

II. Let This Peace Rule in Your Hearts

1. **Need for a Ruler:** Peace requires governance. Anarchy breeds chaos. Even the worst king is better than mob rule. In a household, lack of clear leadership



our inner storm.

3. **Yield to God's Peace:** Judge all actions by this peace and avoid anything that disrupts it. Anger harms you physically and spiritually, hindering prayer, scriptural engagement, and a clear conscience before God.

4. **Practical Application:** With this peace, you can face any situation calmly, wisely choosing when to speak or act. Without it, you become vulnerable and regretful of your actions.

III. Strengthen Yourself by God's Spirit with Arguments for peace

1. **Personal Well-being:** You can only be truly happy and spiritually healthy by maintaining God's peace.

2. **Church Prosperity:** Disputes weaken the Church, and most conflicts arise from trivial matters.

3. **Glorifying God:** Constant anxiety and criticism impede your ability to honor God.

4. **Calling to Peace:** If you are not peaceful, you have not embraced your calling as a peacemaker.

5. **Unity in the Body:** Just as body parts must cooperate, so must the members of Christ's body for His glory to shine.

IV. Occupy Your Minds Healthily—"Be Ye Thankful"

1. **Maintain Peace with God:** Thank Him for both miseries and mercies.



6/30 Ruled by Peace

Updated automatically every 5 minutes

(Adapted from C. H. Spurgeon) [1]

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[1] a usually prejudiced and often spiteful or malevolent ill will
(<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/animus>)

[2] desire to cause pain, injury, or distress to another
(<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/malice>)

[3] exaggerated self-esteem (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/pride>)

[4] Joseph S. Exel, [*The Biblical Illustrator: Philippians–Colossians*](#), vol. 2 (New York; Chicago; Toronto; London; Edinburgh: Fleming H. Revell Company, n.d.), 235–236.