

Peace Be With You

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Preacher: Donnie Griggs

[0 : 00] Hey, everybody in eastern North Carolina and beyond. My name is Jesse, one of the pastors here at One Harbor Church. Man, so glad that you're able to join us on our online service and participate with us in our online service.

Before we get to it, just one quick announcement, and it's this. We're going to be releasing three videos throughout the week. This is just to help you grow during this time of isolation.

We want to continue to help you grow as a disciple of Jesus. The first video is what we're calling the Monday Minute. It's going to be released on Monday, and it's just a short, encouraging video to start your week with.

The second one is a video we're going to release on Wednesday, and that one is about the topics of growing in isolation. So these videos are meant to be watched with others.

Don't consume them by yourself. Watch them with others, whether that's family or friends around the table or online with your small groups. But there'll be discussion questions at the end of that where you can just have these great times of discussion and encouraging and challenging one another in your walks with Jesus.

[1 : 05] And the last one is going to be a video released on Friday. It's a Friday Bible study, and that one focuses on theology and doctrine and the study of God's Word. All right.

Before we jump into the singing part of our online worship service, I just want us to briefly pause and just search our hearts. Let's just search our hearts for a moment.

In these uncertain times, let's ask ourselves, where are we looking for peace and hope and security? Do we look to the news? Do we look to the experts?

Do we look to our leaders for a promise of a secure and bright future, putting our hope in them, that they can give us some kind of guarantee that it's all going to be okay?

Well, here's the thing about promises. It's very critical who is making them. Because when we think about it, no expert, no leader, no human being has the power ability to give 100% guarantee about what tomorrow is going to be.

[2 : 02] And so I want us to stop, and I want us to read about the only one, the one God who can give us that hope, who is a promise maker, but he is the one God who is faithful, and he is a promise keeper.

He is the God of the Bible. And I encourage you right now just to stand with me. If you're comfortable doing that, hey, no pressure. But I just love kind of taking a posture of prayer and activating ourselves.

And I'm going to pray a psalm. It's Psalm 121. Would you just pray it with me? And as I pray it out loud, man, make it your own. Listen to the words. And as you're agreeing with it, confess, yes, I believe that, or amen.

Yes, that's true. All right? Let's pray. Psalm 121. I lift my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come from?

My help comes from the Lord. Lord, that is our confession. Our help comes from you and you alone, the Lord who has made heaven and earth.

[3 : 03] And Lord, you promise us this. He will not let your foot be moved. He who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel, he who keeps his church, he who keeps his covenant people will neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is your keeper. The Lord is your shade on your right hand. The sun shall not strike you by day nor the moon by night. The Lord will keep you from all evil.

He will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and forevermore. Amen.

Good morning, One Harbor. It's good to be back with you again. Let's sing Promise Maker.

Promise Maker. Promise Maker. Promise Maker. Promise Maker. Promise Keeper. You finish what you begin.

[4 : 04] You see it through to the end.

You see it through to the end. The Lord our God is ever faithful Never changing through the ages From this darkness you will lead us And forever we will sing You're the Lord our God You're the Lord our God And in the silence In the waiting Still we can know You are good Yes He is And all Your plans are for Your glory

Yes we can know You are good Yes we can know You are good Who is He?

The Lord our God is ever faithful Never changing through the ages From this darkness you will lead us And forever we will sing You're the Lord our God We won't move And we won't move without You We won't move without You You're the light of all and all that we need And we won't move without You We won't move without You You're the light of all and all that we need Sing we won't

And we won't move without You We won't move without You You're the light of all and all that we need And we won't move without You We won't move without You You're the light of all and all that we need Yeah The Lord our God is ever faithful Never changing through the ages From this darkness you will lead us And forever we will sing You're the Lord forever And forever we will sing You're the Lord our God

[7 : 41] And forever we will sing You're the Lord our God You're the Lord our God We're going to sing a well-known song called It Is Well.

And within it is this biblical principle of lament. And what lament is, is just being real with where we're at, with the feelings that we may be having and the season that we find ourselves in.

And yet taking that, taking all that we are to the Father. And I don't know about you, but I have felt these sort of unexpected waves of grief at unexpected times.

I'll wake up at like two in the morning and just grieve the fact that I'm not sending my kids off to school in the morning or that I can't call my friends up to hang or to have a little cookout in the backyard.

And yet I'm just feeling like it would be the worst possible thing if I were to allow myself to recede into deeper and deeper levels of grief. But actually what we should be doing in this time is taking those emotions, being real with where our heart is at, bringing it to Jesus and remembering the truth of who our God is, the never-changing God, the one who knows the beginning from the end, but also the great comforter who wants to be with you in this time.

[9 : 13] So as we sing, I want for us as a church just to grieve well, but also to lament well and to point our hearts to where our hope is. Let's sing that song. Lord, Lord, Whatever, my Lord, Thou hast taught me to say It is well, it is well, it is well with my soul.

I'll sing it is well with my soul.

Lord, it is well with my soul.

Sing my sin, my sin, oh, the bliss of this glorious thought.

What has he done with it?

[11 : 19] Oh, he's nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more.

So praise the Lord, praise the Lord, oh, my soul.

It is well, it is well. It is well, I see it is well with my soul.

It is well with my soul. It is well with my soul. It is well with my soul. It is well with my soul.

And Lord, won't you haste the day when my faith shall be sight.

[12 : 27] Let the clouds be rolled back as a scroll.

Let's sing the trumpet. Let's sing the trumpet. Let's sing the trumpet. Oh, it is well with my soul.

Oh, it is well with my soul. Oh, it is well with my soul. Oh, it is well with my soul.

Oh, it is well with my soul. We will stay. And by your power we are changed.

And in your presence we will say that it is well. Lord, in your presence and in your presence we will stay.

[13 : 40] And by your power we are changed. And in your presence we will say that it is well.

Lord, we want to be married. We want to be your friend. Lord, forever and ever and ever.

In your presence we see who you truly are. Be it as well. Lord, it is well.

With my soul. Lord, it is well.

It is well with my soul. Amen. Father, that is our declaration this morning.

[15 : 00] Despite the seasons, you are good. Despite fear and grief and anxiety, you are good. And we thank you that you're a loving Father who we can bring our hearts to in this moment.

And you remind us of truth. In your name we pray. Amen. Amen. Guys, it's so good to be with you this morning. You know, as we tried last week, this is a cool little moment.

Maybe just to send a text to a friend or a loved one who you wish that you were alongside worshiping this morning. Just encourage them. Let them know you love them, that you miss them, and that you're praying for them.

And we're going to transition now into a time of prayer. Morning. My name is Tom, one of the pastors at One Harbor. And I so want to say it's good to see you all this morning, but I can't, obviously.

I hope you're all doing well. And I want to talk to you just for a few moments about prayer, about being on mission. We've already been on mission in a physical way, by isolating ourselves as much as possible.

[16 : 05] We've done that because we love our community. We don't want to be part of the spreading of this virus. And so we've been on mission in that sense. But there's another way we can be on mission today. And that's this amazing gift that God's given us called prayer.

That is this tool we can use to change people's lives and to change the community and to change what's happening around us. And really it's this great privilege that we come before the Father. And we say, Father, there are these needs in our area.

There are these needs in our lives. There's these needs in people's lives. And we ask Him to come and intervene. And we have this privilege. It's mission. It's serving the community. And that's what we're asking you to do today.

So I have a couple of things that I think we should be praying for. And let me run through them quickly with you. All medical personnel in all scenarios. We know that hospitals are ramping up.

We know that resources are in short supply. We hear that all the time on the TV. So let's pray into that. And then let's pray for the families of all those who work in hospitals and other medical facilities.

[17 : 05] They've got families as well that they have to care for and then do this amazing job that they do serving our communities. And then secondly, I want us to pray for all the school feeding endeavors.

The schools in the area are feeding thousands of kids every day. For many kids, only meal they get. And we need to pray for the volunteers, the workers. We need to pray that the resources just keep flowing in the amazing way that they have done so far.

And where we can help with that. Let's also pray for Meals on Wheels. They're out there doing an amazing job. And man, God bless them. God resource them. God give them whatever they need. And then the third little thing I'd like us to pray for is just for those who have either lost their employment, have lost their income, or businesses that are struggling, or businesses that are having to make some huge decisions.

Let's pray that the government stimulus package and all the fruit of that comes through really quickly to people's lives. What a gift that is. And then let's ask God to help us with people around us where we can maybe be a blessing to them.

Where we can help in some way and help the shortage that they may have. And then let's do that together. Let's go to prayer.

[18 : 21] Let's take five minutes and let's pray together. Let's pray together.

Let's pray together.

Let's pray together.

Let's pray together.

Thank you.

[20 : 56] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[23 : 26] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[26 : 30] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[29 : 22] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

you weeping? That's just such a tender question. Like God actually cares how we're feeling. He cares when we're sad. He wants in on our worries. He wants in on our fears. He wants to meet us there. He wants to give us what we need more than anything else. He wants to give us peace.

[31 : 38] The disciples, we see twice, they're locked in a room afraid of the Jews. Jesus is gone, the one who always stepped out and took on the Pharisees, you know, and instead of making them do it, Jesus was always the one defending them. Now he's gone and now they're terrified, locked in a room, huddled all together and twice Jesus barges in through their locked doors into their little fearful huddle and he comforts them. So, you know, however you're doing right now and I know you're probably acting like you're fine and telling everyone you're fine because that's what we try to do but however you're really, really doing, Jesus cares. God cares. He cares how you're feeling. He knows how you're feeling and he cares about how you're feeling and maybe you're like Thomas and you really are feeling layers of doubt that you've never experienced before. Jesus knows that and he wants to draw close to you, come to you in that moment. He wants to help you to believe in him. So, Jesus comes and Jesus says three times, he says the phrase, peace be with you. Now, culturally to us, I think this word is a little lost on us, right? I don't know about you, when I hear the word peace, I kind of think of like peace signs with your hand, kind of hippie sort of movement kind of thing and I think that causes this term peace to lose some of its meaning. It might even make you think like, gosh, Jesus, that's great but what we really need is something else, right? Something more tangible but I think that's the second point is that peace is actually what we need most in a crisis. Peace is actually what we need most in a crisis. So, when Hurricane Florence hit, we as a church, we, you know, put our hands up alongside all the other churches in the area and said, hey, we want to help. We want to help and people from around the country, you know, really from around the world begin to say, well, how can we send you resources? We want to help you and stuff started showing up and we didn't know any better and so we were like, we'll take it and then what we had signed on to receiving was literally 18-wheeler, you know, truckloads full of crap, right? That's what was rolling into our parking lot and I, me,

I was driving the forklift which is already a problem you can imagine but there I am forklifting off pallet after pallet after pallet of total junk. Nobody needs this stuff, right? Let alone us in the middle of this crisis and so I want to just speak to that and say that's not what Jesus does. He doesn't see us in a crisis and say, well, I got some peace. Will that help? And you're like, well, not really but no, actually like what Jesus gives us is what we need the most. He doesn't come and give us, you know, a bunch of stuff we don't need. He doesn't give us sentimental platitudes and, you know, really nice little cliches. He doesn't come and say hakuna matata or something like that. Jesus comes and he gives us what we really need. Three times he says to them, peace be with you. So what's with this word peace? What is it that that's really so good about that word? Well, I love what renowned commentator Alec Moutier says. He says regarding that passage in Isaiah chapter 9 verse 6, he says that this peace, what it really meant was fulfillment in life. You know that you'd lived a full life. You felt like you'd done everything in your life that you wanted to do. It meant well-being. It meant freedom from anxiety. It meant relational harmony. It meant the absence of conflict and it meant the full realization of God's favor. That's what peace meant. And that's what Jesus came to bring into their darkest hour.

He came as the prince of peace, giving out what only he had the authority to give, the ability to give, and that was peace, true peace. And to me, that's so beautiful. But another layer to this is the timing of it all. It's in a really dark moment that this happens, right? These guys had seemingly lost everything, like many of you may feel right now. They had walked away from their careers to follow Jesus. They'd hung their whole reputation on Jesus as the Messiah. And more than anything else, they had hung their hope for salvation on him. And now he was gone. And then Jesus shows up and he says, peace be with you. And I think that shows us this next thing, which is that Jesus gives us peace when it looks like all is lost. When it looks like all is lost, Jesus comes and gives us peace. You know, I think it's fairly obvious from the text. It was not obvious to them that Jesus was in total control of the situation. It wasn't obvious to them. All of their emotions were evidence that they did not think

Jesus was in control of this situation. They looked at the evidence. He's dead. Now his body's gone. And the conclusion that they had was, Jesus lost.

And we're lost. And why I think it's worth pointing to that is because the evidence that we see does not always instantly lead us to have faith in God.

[36 : 54] Sometimes it looks like we're lost. Sometimes it looks like it's hard to see how Jesus is in control.

But the thing about Jesus is he's in control even when it looks like he's not. Right now, a lot of evidence is stacking up. And it can be a moment where we feel like them.

We feel like all is lost. But Jesus is in control even when it looks like he's not. And it's actually in these moments, like in that moment that they were having, it's actually in these moments where we get to see Jesus in ways we never saw him before.

Like we'll look back on this time and we'll think we never would have known that about how good he was had we not gone through that. Right? So that's what Jesus does. He shows up. And you'll see that as we go through this series.

We'll see Jesus show up when it looks like all is lost. But then we read something else in this passage that can be a little unsettling, especially if you're new to this idea of Christianity.

[38 : 02] In verse 20, Jesus has just said, peace be with you. And then he said, it says, when he said this, verse 20, he showed them his hands, like the scars in his hands, and he showed them this hole in his side.

But then the disciples were glad. So something happened in this moment that they were glad, right? There was a level of gladness and a level of peace that came by seeing Jesus's wounds.

Now, that might feel a little bizarre, right? If you don't understand what's going on here. On the surface, it might look like they were glad that Jesus got hurt. I mean, why are they glad? Because he has scars.

Like what's going on here? And this is a window into the kind of peace that only Jesus can give, right? That's the next thing. Jesus, he gives us peace in ways that nothing else or that no one else could ever give.

So what are the things you and I are looking for right now? I mean, what is the reason we're glued to social media, glued to the news? What are we hoping to hear? Oh, the stock market's back. Or life's going to be back to normal.

[39 : 04] And we're all going to be able to go outside and do what we want again. Or, oh, we just found a giant shipment of ventilators. And now all these problems are going to be solved. Or someone found a cure. I mean, those are the things that like we're hanging like on every breath, hoping that that kind of stuff is going to be told to us each day that we wake up.

And I don't think that's bad. I want all those things too, right? We should be praying and trusting for all those things. But even if we get all those things, like when all that stuff finally works itself out, it's not going to fix this kind of other problem that was already there, which is the problem where we still die.

Like even if you don't succumb to this virus, you and I will all still die. And so Jesus, while he cares about this moment that we're in right now, the kind of peace he gives doesn't just help us in this moment.

It goes way beyond that. It goes way beyond the temporary trials and troubles and tribulations like we're facing in this moment. Jesus came not just to give us temporary peace, but to give us eternal peace.

Remember that word peace that the commentator speaks of in Isaiah. He says it doesn't just mean a lack of anxiety or relational harmony, which is good. Like we want all that and Jesus wants all that for us.

[40 : 13] But it also meant, I love this, Mochay says it means that the full realization of God's favor. This is beyond the horizontal conflict.

This is now addressing a vertical conflict between us and a holy God. What this peace meant was that it meant more than our relationships on earth got better, it meant that our relationship with God, our enmity with God was forever gone.

Our relationship with God was forever healed and restored. And after showing, Jesus says, peace be with you. Then he shows him his scars. Then he says again, hey, peace be with you.

Like back to back. I mean, why does Jesus keep saying that? Well, he says, peace be with you, but I want you to connect all the dots. Look at my hands and look at my side. Hey, peace be with you.

It's not just a, hey guys, it's going to be okay in this moment. It's a, guys, it's going to be okay forever. Like it's not just like I'm here in the room and you don't have to worry about the Jews right now.

[41 : 14] Look at my hands. Look at my side. Actually, you don't have to worry about death anymore. You don't have to worry about sin anymore. Peace be with you. Peace with God could be with us because Jesus had suffered and died in our place.

He didn't use some cosmic eraser to get rid of all of our problems. He used his own body and his own blood. And now Jesus, the Prince of Peace, had scars.

Not for his sin, but for ours. And this is why, if you're new to Christianity, this is why Christians don't treat Jesus like some vending machine where we just go and get peace whenever we need it.

Throw a few bucks in the offering. No, no, no. We, like them, we huddle around him. We cling to him so tightly. And that's because Jesus gives peace by giving us himself. Jesus gives us peace by giving us himself.

He's who we're really after. Mary Magdalene, she's weeping, grieving all that's lost, but she's especially, she's missing Jesus. She's even willing to, in the dark, buy a tomb, go and find a body laid somewhere and put it back.

[42 : 23] I mean, she just misses Jesus. And all Jesus has to do is say her name, Mary. And everything is right again in Mary's world. Everything's right again.

Her heart leaps with joy. All it took was knowing that he was there. Everything was better. And that's the thing, guys.

All it takes is knowing that Jesus is here. That he's with you and me. That's all it takes. And everything's better. Circumstances can still be the same.

But because Jesus is with us, man, everything's better. It's like the old song goes, because he lives, I can face tomorrow. And if you're new to Christianity, again, that's one of the greatest things you should know.

So Jesus doesn't just give us peace like a present. Here you go. Here's some peace. I hope it helps. The peace that Jesus gives us is his presence. Ephesians 2 says that he himself is our peace.

[43 : 25] So he doesn't just, here's some peace, guys. Good luck with that peace. I hope it helps you. No, he steps into the situation and he himself is our peace. It's him. So we don't come to Jesus to get some peace.

Thanks, Jesus. No, we come to Jesus to get Jesus. And by getting Jesus, we get peace that we could never have imagined. Lastly, and I know so much of this passage is not getting touched on with the time we have, but I trust this is helpful.

We see this in verse 21. Jesus says, as the Father sent me, even so I'm sending you. So peace be with you. As the Father sent me, even so I'm sending you.

Jesus is in return to give them peace and then he's sending them out to be givers of peace. Jesus gives us peace to share with a hurting and confused world.

But disciples don't binge on the peace that they get with Jesus like they found the last stockpile of toilet paper. Right? If anyone listens to this, like, sermon after this coronavirus thing, they're going to think all these toilet paper references through this are just bizarre.

[44 : 31] But you and I, we know what this is all about. They're not just, like, you know, juggling toilet paper, like, just rolling around in peace all by themselves. They would go and tell the whole world about this peace they have in Jesus.

In fact, many of them would even go to jail, stand on trial, and get killed telling the world about this peace they had been given. The peace that Jesus gives us is to be enjoyed, but it's also to be shared.

It's not to be hoarded. It's to be given out. So I want to just read one last passage for us from someone who had received peace and now helps others get it and give it.

That's in Philippians 4, verses 4 through 9. Paul says, Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I will say rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone that the Lord is at hand.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God in the peace of God, which surpasses understanding.

[45 : 29] It just surpasses all understanding. It will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there's any excellence, if there's anything worthy of praise, hey, think about these things.

Focus on these things. What you've learned and received and heard and seen in me, practice these things. And I love this. The God of peace will be with you.

Paul, a fellow sufferer, calls them not to focus on their suffering, not to give into anxiety, but to pray and to be thankful. And he promises them that this unexplainable peace of God will come.

And he says, it'll guard your heart and it'll guard your mind. And that word guard literally means a guard, like a military officer who would be skilled offensively and defensively, which means this peace comes and it guards you and I against our own thoughts and our own feelings and our hearts and our minds.

And it guards us against the outside stuff that wants to overtake us and cause us to coil up in a ball of anxiety. The peace of God comes and it guards us. Our hearts and our minds are vulnerable to attack and the peace of God comes and it helps us.

- [46 : 44] But not just us, it helps others. And so Paul says, hey, you and others, those around you, help each other to think about certain kinds of things. Focus on certain kinds of things.
- Fix your attention on lovely, commendable, pure, just things. And he says at the end, and the God of peace will be with you. I love that. He doesn't say the peace of God will be with you.
- He says the actual God of peace. The actual God of peace will be with you. That prince of peace, that one who walked in that room and said, peace be with you, is with you.
- And he's with me. Jesus said in John 16, 33, I've said these things to you that in me you may have peace. In me you may have peace.
- In this world you'll have tribulation, but take heart because I've overcome the world. For those of you who are watching, you may not yet be followers of Jesus. I don't know why you're watching this.
- [47 : 43] Maybe for the first time you're kind of going, I wonder if any of this is true. Well, as we read in this passage, this was written down, not just so that you and I could feel a little better, but so that we may believe Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the God King who's come, the Son of God who came, and that by believing you and I may have life in his name.
- That's our prayer for you. And if you want to talk about that, we'd love to talk to you. You can call us or email us or maybe you have some friends who are Christians. You could talk to them. But that would be the greatest miracle of all of this is that in this moment you actually see Jesus for who he really is.
- Lastly, if you're watching it and you're already a follower of Jesus, think of Psalm 121. I lift my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come from? Man, like them, you and I are looking around for help.
- We're looking around for peace. And this is an exposing time for us to find out where that's really coming from. And I would encourage you to see Jesus coming into your home while you're watching this, like he came into their home.
- Knock at the door, ring the doorbell. He just barged in. See him coming into your home. Maybe he takes your hand and puts it in his hand. He takes your hand and he puts it in his side and he says to you what he says to them.
- [49 : 03] Peace be with you. He says it again. He says it again like he did to them over and over until it finally gets into our hearts. And we are like them glad because we've seen him.
- I would encourage you to, if you have the ability to take communion together, to celebrate and to honor that this Prince of Peace has scars for me and you.
- That he didn't just give us peace, earthly, relational, temporary peace, but he gave us eternal peace. Now, some of us are going to also be giving. This is another act of worship.
- We recognize that for, maybe for a lot of you, the way that you earn money has been temporarily suspended and we don't want you to feel any pressure. But for those of you who are still able to give, it's such a huge help to us as we continue to try to be a blessing to our community.
- You can mail checks in. I know we're not in this room together, but you can mail those checks in. You can give online. You can even text to give. We've tried to find ways to help you to be able to give in this moment, those of you who still are able to.
- [50 : 07] And I would encourage you to just to take a little bit of time now in your groups, maybe just with those who you're with at the house, wherever you're watching this, and to talk about this idea of where you're looking for peace, how you're feeling.

Be honest about how you're feeling. God already knows. So be honest. This is how I'm feeling and this is where I'm looking for peace. And then let's just pray for each other that each of us would look to Jesus more than we have been.

God bless you guys. Have a great week. God bless you.