

Finding Personal Peace

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I pray that you may find peace, help many others to find it, and pass it along.

My dear brothers and sisters, we have been blessed by the inspired teachings and the beautiful music that have touched us in this opening session of general conference. We thank you for your participation and for your faith.

Today I will speak on what I have learned about the miracle of finding personal peace, whatever our circumstances. The Savior knows that all of Heavenly Father's children yearn for peace, and He said that He could give it to us. You remember the words of Jesus Christ recorded in the book of John: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."¹

What He means by peace and how He can give it are revealed by the circumstances of those who heard Him speak those words. Listen to the account in John of the culmination of Christ's ministry. Fierce forces of evil were bearing down on Him and would soon come upon His disciples.

Here are the Savior's words:

"If ye love me, keep my commandments.

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;

"Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.

"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

"Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also.

"At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

“He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.

“Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?”

“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.

“He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and the word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father’s which sent me.

“These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you.

“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”²

I have learned at least five truths from that teaching of the Savior.

First, the gift of peace is given *after* we have the faith to keep His commandments. For those who are covenant members of the Lord’s Church, obedience is what we have already promised to do.

Second, the Holy Ghost will come and abide with us. The Lord says that as we continue to be faithful, the Holy Ghost will dwell in us. That is the promise in the sacramental prayer that the Spirit will be our companion and that we will feel, in our hearts and minds, His comfort.

Third, the Savior promises that as we keep our covenants, we can feel the love of the Father and the Son for each other and for us. We can feel Their closeness in our mortal lives, just as we will when we are blessed to be with Them forever.

Fourth, keeping the Lord’s commandments requires more than obedience. We are to love God with all our heart, might, mind, and soul.³

Those who do not love Him do not keep His commandments. And so they will not have the gift of peace in this life and in the world to come.

Fifth, it is clear that the Lord loved us enough to pay the price of our sins so that we can—through our faith in Him and our repentance, through the effects of His Atonement—have the gift of the peace that “passeth all understanding,”⁴ in this life and with Him eternally.

Some of you, perhaps many, are not feeling the peace the Lord promised. You may have prayed for personal peace and spiritual comfort. Yet you may feel that the heavens are silent to your pleading for peace.

There is an enemy of your soul who does not want you and those you love to find peace. He cannot enjoy it. He works to prevent you from even wanting to find the peace the Savior and our Heavenly Father desire you to have.

Satan's efforts to sow hatred and contention all around us seem to be increasing. We see evidence of it happening among nations and cities, in neighborhoods, in electronic media, and all across the world.

Yet there is reason for optimism: it is that the Light of Christ is placed in every newborn child. With that universal gift comes a sense of what is right, a desire to love and be loved. There is an inborn sense of justice and truth in every child of God as he or she comes into mortality.

Our optimism for personal peace for those children lies in the people who care for them. If those who rear them and serve them have worked to receive the gift of peace from the Savior, they will, by personal example and effort, encourage the faith of the child to qualify for the supernal gift of peace.

That is what the scripture promises: "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."⁵ It will require the one charged with the child's care and nurturing to be worthy of the gift of peace.

Sadly, we all have felt the pain when children raised by inspired parents—sometimes one parent alone—choose, after a lifetime of faith and peace, to take the path of sorrow.

Even when that sadness occurs, my optimism rests in another gift from the Lord. It is this: that He raises up many peacemakers among His trusted disciples. They have felt the peace and the love of God. They have the Holy Ghost in their hearts, and the Lord can guide them to reach out to the wandering sheep.

I have seen it over my lifetime and across the world. You have seen it as well. At times, when you are being led to the rescue, it may seem accidental.

Once, I simply asked someone I met on a trip, "Would you tell me a little about your family?" The conversation led me to ask to see a picture of her adult daughter, who she said was struggling. I was struck with the goodness in the face of that girl in the picture. I felt impressed to ask if I could have her email address. The daughter was at that moment

lost and wondering if God had any message for her. He did. It was this: “The Lord loves you. He always has. The Lord wants you to come back. Your promised blessings are still in place.”

Members across the Church have felt the Lord’s gift of personal peace. He is encouraging everyone to help others have opportunities to come unto Him and qualify for that same peace themselves. They, in turn, will choose to seek inspiration to know how they can pass that gift along to others.

The rising generation will become the nurturers of the generation to follow. The multiplier effect will produce a miracle. It will spread and grow over time, and the Lord’s kingdom on earth will be prepared and ready to greet Him with shouts of hosanna. There will be peace on earth.

I bear my sure witness the Savior lives and that He leads this Church. I have felt His love in my life and His love and concern for all of Heavenly Father’s children. The Savior’s invitation to come to Him is an offer of peace.

President Russell M. Nelson is the living prophet of God in all the earth. He has said, “I give you my assurance that regardless of the world’s condition and your personal circumstances, you can face the future with optimism and joy.”⁶

I express my love to you. Your great faith and love are reaching people and allowing the Lord to change hearts and so gain a desire to offer others the gift of peace that passes all understanding.

I pray that you may find peace, help many others to find it, and pass it along. There will be a wonderful thousand years of peace when the Lord comes again. I so testify in joy and in the name of Jesus Christ, amen.

Notes

1. John 14:27.
2. John 14:15–27.
3. See Deuteronomy 6:5; Matthew 22:37; Moroni 10:32.
4. Philippians 4:7.
5. Proverbs 22:6.
6. Russell M. Nelson, “Look Forward to the Future with Faith,” *New Era*, June 2018, 5.