

INTRODUCTION.

WE ARE CONTINUING OUR EXAMINATION ~ OF COL. ~ 3: ~ 12-17.

▶▶ Today, ~ we'll take up ~ the next two examples ~ of what we are to embrace and practice ~ as new creations in Christ.

▷▷ Stated differently, ~ the next two ~ illustrations ~ of what godliness looks like.

▶▶ And these are found in [verse 15](#).

▷▷ In [verse 15a](#), ~ Paul writes, ~ [And let the peace of Christ ~ rule ~ in your hearts](#).

▷▷ And in [verse 15c](#), ~ he says, ~ [And be thankful](#).

▶▶ Again keep in mind, ~ while we are ~ to embrace and practice godliness ~ in private ~ and ~ in relation to unbelievers and believers alike, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ in this paragraph ~ Paul ~ is primarily talking about ~ our relationships ~ with other believers ~ in our local church.

OK, ~ LET'S UNPACK THESE NEXT TWO EXAMPLES ~ OF THE TYPE OF THINGS ~ ¶¶

▶▶ that are to replace ~ ungodliness ~ in every area ~ of our lives.

FIRST, ~ VERSE 15a.

[And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.](#) ¶¶ 1/14

### THREE ~ PRELIMINARY TECHNICAL OBSERVATIONS.

▶▶ Unavoidable ⇔⇔ Grasp ⇔⇔ Help you follow along.

▶▶ First of all, ~ Older translations ~~ "peace of God."

▷▷ "peace of Christ" ~ better translation.

↳↳ Think you'll see why.

▶▶ 2<sup>nd</sup>, ~ phrase: ~~ "peace of Christ."

▷▷ Lit. trans.

▷▷ Sub. gen . . . .

↳↳ The peace ~ brought by Christ, ~ or ~ the peace ~ that comes ~ from Christ.

▷▷ Read verse.

↳↳ And let the peace ~ brought by Christ ~ rule in your hearts.

▷▷ As we go through the message, ~ I'll explain what this peace is.

▶▶ 3<sup>rd</sup>, ~ need to talk about "let."

▷▷ Familiar to some. ↴↴ 2/14

▷▷ The form of the Greek verb.

▷▷ This is easily confused in English ~ with a permissive idea.

↳↳ Someone might think ~ that ~ this is a suggestion ~ or ~ something optional.

→→ For instance, ~ they might think it means, ~ "If you feel like it, ~ let the peace that comes from Christ ~ rule in your hearts."

▷▷ The Greek is stronger.

↳↳ It indicates ~ that ~ this is ~ not something optional.

→→ It's not a suggestion ~ or a recommendation.

↳↳ Command.

▷▷ Trans.: ~ ~ *And the peace ~ brought by Christ ~ must ~ rule in your hearts.*

▶▶ Ok, ~ those are our three initial comments.

▷▷ And this sentence ~ or paraphrase, ~ will stand ~ as our starting point, ~ upon which ~ we'll build.

OK, ~ THE PEACE ~ BROUGHT BY CHRIST ~ MUST ~ RULE IN YOUR HEARTS.

▶▶ But ~ what is this peace?

▷▷ Paul does not define . . . . ⇔⇔ So, ~ thinking caps on. ↓↓ 3/14

▶▶ In Phil. ~ 4: ~ 6b-7 . . . . \*

\*▷▷ Simply put, ~ when we continually, ~ seriously, ~ specifically, ~ and with a thankful attitude, ~ pray ~ about every situation in which we find ourselves, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ the promised result ~ is that the Lord will give us ~ an inner peace ~ an internal calmness, ~ right in the midst ~ of the situation. ⇔⇔ **Subjective.**

▶▶ But I don't think ~ this is what Paul has ~ primarily ~ in mind ~ in Col. ~ 3: ~ 15a.

▶▶ As we'll see, ~ here he is talking about ~ an objective peace.

▷▷ Specifically, ~ the peace we have with God ~ through Christ.

↳↳ Through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, ~ there is a relationship of concord ~ between believers and God.

→→ Jesus ~ brought us peace ~ with God

▷▷ And I believe that ~ this ~ is the peace ~ that Paul has in mind here. ⇔⇔ **Objective.**

**MY SUPPOSITION ~ IS BASED ON ~ THE IMMEDIATE AND WIDER CONTEXTS OF COL.**

▶▶ Keep in mind ~ that in the immediate context of this paragraph, ~ Paul is dealing ~ with our relationships with each other ~ in our local church.

▷▷ So peace here ~ has to do ~ with our relationships ~ with our fellow believers.

▷▷ Most likely then, ~ pointing us ~ toward having peaceful relationships with each other.

↳↳ Objective. ¶¶ 4/14

▷▷ And the model for this, ~ that Paul is presenting here, ~ is then ~ objective as well.

↳↳ I.e., ~ the peace we have with God.

▷▷ IOW, ~ part of the point Paul is making, ~ I would suggest, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ is that ~ our relationships with each other ~ is to mirror ~ our peaceful relationship with God.

▶▶ 2<sup>nd</sup>, ~ in the wider context, ~ Paul already introduced this objective peace. ⇔⇔ 1: ~ 20.

▷▷ Objective peace is in view, ~ specifically ~ the peace believers have with God.

▷▷ Believers in Jesus Christ ~ are no longer ~ at war with God.

↳↳ We are no longer ~ alienated and hostile in mind toward him. ⇔⇔ Not enemies.

→→ Through Jesus' sacrifice ~ believers and God ~ are now at peace.

▷▷ In Rom. ~ 5: ~ 1, ~ Paul says, ~ Therefore, ~ since we have been justified by faith, ~ we have peace with God ~ through ~ our Lord Jesus Christ.

↳↳ I.e., ~ we have peace with God ~ because, ~ and only because, ~ of what Jesus Christ our Lord ~ has done for us.

▷▷ And I would argue that ~ since Paul did not indicate ~ a different peace, ~ i.e., ~ subjective peace, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ the wider context ~ guides and restricts ~ our interpretation of ~ 3: ~ 15a.

→→ Objective peace we have with God is ~ primarily ~ in view ~ in 3:15a. ¶¶ 5/14

▶▶ And ~ if we widen our scope to Isaiah, ~ he says something very interesting, ~ that factors into my thinking here.

▷▷ Is. ~ 53: ~ 5a (NIV), ⇨⇨ But he was pierced ~ for our transgressions, ~~ he was crushed ~ for our iniquities; ~~ the punishment that brought us peace [i.e., ~ peace with God] ~ was ~ on him.

↪↪ Remember, ~ in Col. ~ 3: ~ 15a, ~ it's the peace ~ that Jesus brought.

▶▶ Now coming back to Col. ~ 3: ~ 15a, ~ we can build on our starting point.

▷▷ Paul saying, ~ the peace we have with God ~ through Christ ~ must rule in your hearts.

NOW, ~ BEFORE MOVING ON, ~ WE NEED TO SOUND ~ TWO CAUTIONARY NOTES.

▶▶ 1<sup>st</sup>, ~ this peace we have with God ~ can easily be taken for granted ~ by those who come to know personally ~ the forgiving grace of God.

▷▷ We can quickly grow accustomed ~ to our privileged status.

▷▷ That ~ this type of thing can happen, ~ we see in Moses' warning to the Israelites ~ on the eve of possessing the land. ⇨⇨ Deut. ~ 6: ~~ 10-12 . . . .

▷▷ This peace we have with God ~ can easily ~ be taken for granted.

▶▶ 2<sup>nd</sup> cautionary note. ⇨⇨ The danger of thinking ~ we earned or deserved ~ this peace.

▷▷ Deut. ~ 8: ~~ 17-18a.

↪↪ The peace we have with God ~ was achieved by Jesus ~~ and given to us ~ by the grace of God. ↴↴ 6/14

▶▶ Because of these two dangers. ~ ¶¶

▷▷ we must ~ constantly remind ourselves ~ of God's anger and judgment ~ upon all ~ that is unholy.

▷▷ We must never forget ~ that we, ~ were once ~ like all unbelievers.

↳↳ I.e., ~ separated from Christ, ~ without hope, ~ lacking a relationship with God, ~ and subject to his wrath.

▷▷ And we must always ~ remember Paul's wonderful words in Eph. ~ 2: ~ 4-6 . . . .

▷▷ A healthy memory of these things, ~ will lead us ~ to treasure this peace we have with God ~ for the precious gift ~ that it is.

↳↳ Then we won't ~ take our peace with God for granted ~ or think we earned or deserved it.

NOW LET'S RETURN ~ TO ~ 3: ~ 15a.

▶▶ Paul says, ~ the peace we have with God ~ through Christ ~ must ~ rule in your hearts.

▶▶ And again, ~ this is in relation to other believers in our local fellowship.

▶▶ The sense of "rule" here is ~ "to be the factor ~ determining an outcome."

▶▶ Basically, ~ if I understand it correctly ~ Paul is saying here that, ~ specifically, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ the peaceful relationship believers have with God ~ is to be ~ the determinative factor ~ in our decision-making ~ in dealing with our fellow believers. ¶¶ 7/14

▷▷E.g., ~ the peace achieved by Jesus' sacrifice ~ should be the decisive factor ~ ~ 77

↳↳in determining ~ what course should be followed ~ in difficult decisions for our church ~ 77

→→and ~ how the tensions of community relations ~ may be resolved.

▶▶And more generally, ~ I would suggest, ~ Paul is saying ~ that ~ 77

▷▷the peaceful relationship we have with God ~ is to be reflected ~ in our relationship with other believers.

↳↳IOW, ~ our peace with God ~ is to be ~ a primary influence ~ in our relationships ~ with other believers.

PERHAPS, ~ WE CAN SUM IT UP THIS WAY.

▶▶This peace we have with God ~ through Christ ~ is to govern ~ our relationships ~ with our brothers and sisters in Christ. ⇒⇒ Example of what we are to embrace & practice.

ROM. ~ 14: ~ 19 ~ GIVES US THE LOGICAL CONCLUSION TO ALL OF THIS.

▶▶So then ~ let us pursue ~ what makes ~ for peace ~ and for mutual upbuilding.

▶▶The Greek verb for ~ "pursue" ~ indicates more ~ than a slight interest.

▷▷The verb means ~ "to run swiftly ~ in order to catch some person or thing, ~ to run after, ~ to pursue."

▷▷Metaphorically, ~ the way Paul uses it here in Romans, ~ it means ~ "to seek after eagerly, ~ earnestly endeavor to acquire." 77 8/14



▶▶It is the responsibility ~ of those at peace with God ~ to make every effort ~ ¶¶

▷▷to do what ~ promotes, ~ strengthens, ~ and maintains peace, ~ with other believers.

↳↳Paul says in Rom. ~ 12: ~ 18, ~ If possible, ~ so far as it depends on you, ~ live peaceably with all.

▶▶We are to do all that we can ~ to live in peace with our fellow believers.

NOW, ~ IT IS ~ EXTREMELY IMPORTANT ~ TO UNDERSTAND ~ THAT PAUL ~ IS NOT ~ calling us to peace at all costs.

▶▶E.g., ~ we are not to sacrifice doctrinal purity and biblical truth ~ in order ~ to have peace in our church.

▶▶Furthermore, ~ we are not to tolerate sin ~ in order ~ to have peace in the church.

▷▷In 1 Cor. 5, ~ Paul, ~ who insists ~ that we be at peace with our fellow believers, ~ ¶¶

↳↳was very harsh ~ with the Corinthian church ~ because ~ they were tolerating sin in their fellowship.

↳↳He tells them, ~ And you are arrogant! ~ Ought you not ~ rather to mourn? ~ Let him who has done this ~ be removed ~ from among you.

↳↳A few verses later, ~ he says, ~ ¶¶

→→you are to deliver this man to Satan ~ for the destruction of the flesh, ~ so that ~ his spirit may be saved ~ in the day of the Lord.

↳↳And he finishes up by saying, ~ Remove the evil person from among you. ¶¶ 9/14

## WE SHOULD MENTION SOMETHING ELSE ~ THAT PAUL IS NOT CALLING US TO HERE.

▶▶ The sense of Paul's instruction ~ is not ~ that believers should hold ~ exactly ~ the same opinions.

▷▷ Or talk the same ~ or dress the same, ~ or agree on every minor point of doctrine and interpretation of Scripture.

↪↪ But ~ that we should think and act ~ in ways ~ that promote ~ harmony and agreement.

→→ In essentials unity, ~ in non-essentials liberty, ~ in all things charity.

▶▶ I would like to say ~ that I think everyone here at NHCC ~ does an excellent job ~ in thinking and acting in ways ~ that promote harmony and agreement.

▷▷ And ~ that preserve and protect our unity, ~ as I've said before.

▷▷ But we must never ~ let our guard down. ⇨⇨ **We must always ~ be vigilant.**

↪↪ As Peter warns us in 1 Pet. 5:8, ~ "Be sober-minded; ~ be watchful. ~ Your adversary the devil ~ prowls around ~ like a roaring lion, ~ seeking ~ someone to devour."

IN VERSE 15b, ~ PAUL TELLS US ~ WHY ~ THE PEACE WE HAVE WITH GOD ~ THROUGH Christ ~ is to govern ~ our relationships ~ with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

## TO WHICH INDEED YOU WERE CALLED IN ONE BODY.

▶▶ Trans.: ~ For as members ~ of one body ~ you are called ~ to live in peace. ↴↴ 10/14

▶▶I.e., ~ as members of the body of Christ, ~ the church, ~ we are called by God ~ to live in peace with each other.

▶▶Paul says this in ~ Rom. ~ 12: ~ 16a as well. ⇨⇨ Live in harmony ~ with one another.

### NEXT EXAMPLE ~ OF WHAT GODLINESS LOOKS LIKE ~ IS IN VERSE 15c.

#### AND BE THANKFUL.

▶▶Six times in this letter, ~ Paul calls on believers ~ to be ~ a thankful people.

▶▶We've already looked at two of them.

▷▷In ~ 1: ~ 12, ~ Paul called us to ~ joyfully give thanks to the Father.

↳↳As noted, ~ this is a heartfelt, ~ genuine thankfulness ~ that grows ~ out of the experience of salvation.

▷▷And recall ~ in ~ 2: ~ 7, ~ abounding in thanksgiving ~ is one of the safeguards ~ that will protect us from false teaching.

↳↳As we noted, ~ the implication is that ~ believers ~ who lack a deep sense of thankfulness to God ~ are especially vulnerable ~ to false teaching.

→→However, ~ when we abound in thanksgiving to our heavenly Father ~ it's less likely ~ that we will abandon sound doctrine.

▶▶We see it here in 3:15.

And we'll see it in ~ 3: ~ 16-17. ⇨⇨ And 4:2. ↯↯ 11/14

## THE REPETITION ~ OF THE CALL TO BE THANKFUL PEOPLE ~ HIGHLIGHTS ~ THE importance ~ ↴↴

▶▶ of being grateful to God ~ and ~ of expressing that thanks ~ in word and deed.

### WHY REPETITION?

▶▶ Could it be ~ that by nature ~ we hard-wired to be ~ ungrateful people?

▶▶ Speaking of the unsaved ~ in the opening chapter of Romans, ~ Paul asserts, ~ *For although they knew God, ~ they did not ~ honor him as God ~ or ~ give thanks to him.*

▶▶ It is a sign of the last days. ⇨⇨ 2 Tim. ~ 3: ~ 2.

▷▷ For people will be ~ lovers of self, ~ lovers of money, ~ proud, ~ arrogant, ~ abusive, ~ disobedient to their parents, ~ ungrateful, ~ unholy.

▶▶ Israel's repeated ingratitude to the Lord.

### BACK TO VERSE 15c.

▶▶ Paul commands us, ~ to be thankful. ⇨⇨ *What godliness looks like.* ⇨⇨ *Emb. & Pract.*

▶▶ The tense of the Greek verb ~ shows this ~ to be a continual thing.

▷▷ It could be translated as ~ *And always be thankful.*

↪↪ Believers ~ are to have a continual ~ attitude ~ of gratitude ~ toward the Lord.

### AND WE HAVE MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR. ↴↴ 12/14

▶▶ For access to God in prayer.

▶▶ For God's love, ~ mercy, ~ grace, ~ and goodness toward us.

▶▶ For ~ who Jesus is ~ and what he has done for us.

▶▶ For every one ~ of God's infallible promises.

▶▶ Yes, ~ we have all of this ~ and much, ~ much, ~ more ~ to be thankful for.

▶▶ When we, ~ believers, ~ continually consider all that God has done for us, ~ what he has rescued us from, ~ ¶¶

▷▷ what he has promised for this and the life to come, ~ how could we not ~ joyfully and continually ~ give our heavenly Father thanks?

AND ALWAYS BE THANKFUL, ~ PAUL SAYS.

▶▶ But wait, ~ we are to be thankful ~ even in the hard times?

▶▶ Yes.

▶▶ In Eph. ~ 5: ~ 20, ~ Paul writes that ~ we are to ~ ¶¶

▷▷ give "thanks ~ always ~ and for everything ~ to God the Father ~ in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

▶▶ No matter how bad it gets for us, ~ we always have something to be thankful for ....

AND HERE'S SOMETHING TO PONDER ~ AS WE CLOSE THIS MORNING. ¶¶ 13/14

▶▶ A lack of gratitude toward Jesus ~ shows ~ that we lack a good understanding of the gospel.

▶▶ My . . . , ~~~ how can we not ~ be thankful to Jesus, ~~ for his awesome mercy, ~ love, ~ and grace ~ shown to us in the gospel?

▶▶ How can we not ~ be 100% grateful to Jesus ~ for taking our place on the cross?

▶▶ How can we not ~ be thankful to the Lord ~ for purchasing us from the slave market of sin?

▶▶ How can we not ~ be grateful ~ to the One who conquered sin, ~ death, ~ and all the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places, ~ 77

▷▷ and who now holds the keys ~ of Death and Hades?

▶▶ How can we not ~ be thankful to our heavenly Father ~ 77

▷▷ for rescuing us ~ from the domain of darkness ~~ and transferring us ~ to the kingdom of his beloved Son?

▶▶ And ~ how can we not ~ be thankful ~ to the One ~ who ~ always lives ~ to make intercession for us?

LET'S PRAY . . . . 14/14