



Pause With Purpose

...to refresh

...to grow

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Peace

It was Patrick Henry who said, "Men cry 'Peace, peace', but there is no peace." Though he lived over two centuries ago, his impassioned cry might well be heard today. Throughout the world, mankind yearns for peace, even while recognizing the need at times for conflict to achieve it. We seek peace between nations, between races, on our streets, within our homes, and especially within our own hearts and minds.

Yet, so often, the peace we desire eludes us. We struggle and fret, worry and wonder, react and retreat. We lose sleep, lose weight, lose patience, lose confidence, lose focus, lose hope, and sometimes even lose our way. While it's easy to blame circumstances or other people for our lack of personal peace, to do so is to give control of our peace to others and to take on an unflattering "victim" mentality. So let's take a few minutes to better understand "peace" and our role in determining to what extent we will experience it.

For many of us, peace quickly connotes the idea of freedom from disturbance and war. Yet, in its root meaning, it also conveys the sense of "completeness." As in the Jewish

concept of "shalom", this completeness includes a state of tranquility, order, harmony, and security. Everything is as it should be, with nothing missing. Everything is as it was designed to be. Under such conditions, peace flourishes. Conversely, when something is missing, or exaggerated, or replaced by a pseudo-substitute, our heart feels the imbalance, and peace eludes us.

Consider what happens when we foul just one spark plug in an eight cylinder engine. Just one misfiring plug produces an engine that may run, but lacks power and effectiveness, even though every other part of the engine is functioning flawlessly. Or consider the cookie dough that is mixed using too much shortening, resulting in cookies that lose their shape, lay flat, and fall apart, even though every other ingredient is in proper order.

In the same way, there is a proper recipe for peace. So let's consider three personal questions that may help each of us discover the flaws in our own personal peace formula.

1. What am I missing? Do I lack:
 - an awareness of others and their unique needs?
 - a valuing of others and a

willingness to serve them?

- a conviction of personal value and significance?
- the strength of a humble spirit?
- confidence in the future and in my ability to handle life?

2. What do I have to let go of to make room for peace? Have I stocked my inner storeroom with complaining, bitterness, anger, resentment, judgement, criticism, jealousy, or the constant need to "win"? Do I cling to the very poison that repels the peace that I so desire?

3. What am I doing (or not doing) that contributes to my lack of felt peace? In what ways are my stubbornness, pride, and fear getting in my way? Do I:

- refuse to ignore or forgive offenses toward me?
- insist that others do things my way?
- disrespect others by spreading hurtful gossip?
- try to control people, events, and circumstances so I can feel comfortable?
- ignore promises I make, blame others for my failures, and shun accountability?

Such flaws contaminate our peace formula. There is, however, a better way. Let's consider this as we continue on the next page.



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CONTACT INFORMATION

Your thoughts and comments are warmly welcomed. I would also be happy to share with you more about life coaching and how it can assist you to be your best, personally and relationally, at home and at work.

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Spirituality and Peace

Personal peace is no accident. It's also not the result of either brilliant decisions or intuitive insight. Like happiness, it is elusive when directly pursued, but, as its root meaning implies, it occurs when the elements of our life function as they were designed to.

But what is the proper design?

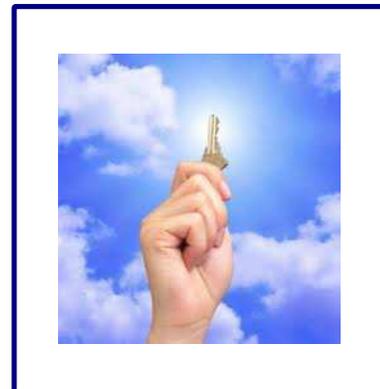
To answer this, we must consult the designer, our Creator God. True peace is not possible when we live outside of His will and ways. So it's good for us to remember:

1. To know God's will, we must know the heart of God, as revealed to us in the Bible. To live in God's will, we must take on the character and values (heart) of God. Since some of us may view this as a heavy burden of rules and laws, it is helpful to remember that while "man looks at the outward appearance, the Lord God looks at the heart" (I Samuel 16:7).

2. Peace grows from trusting God and His will, even when we don't fully understand it. Humility allows us to trust and follow our God and His design, rather than compete with it.

3. As trust grows, gratitude flows. Trusting God's intense love and plans for us, we are free to exchange worry and doubt for confident thankfulness.

So let's know the heart of God, share the heart of God, and gratefully enjoy the peace that His Spirit offers us.



"This is a sane, wholesome, practical, and working faith : That it is a man's business to do the will of God; second, that God himself takes on the care of that man; and third, that therefore that man ought never to be afraid of anything."

- George MacDonald

"You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in you."

- Isaiah 26:3