



My peace I give unto you!

We live in a world marked by unrest, tensions, and fears. According to the Global Peace Index 2023, the state of world peace has deteriorated. Regions such as the Middle East, parts of Africa, and Eastern Europe are plagued by ongoing conflicts; the war in Ukraine demonstrates how fragile peace can be. At the same time, economic inequalities, resource scarcity, and ideological struggles intensify global tensions. Even in highly developed countries, we witness social unrest, psychological stress, and a growing sense of powerlessness.

Despite technological advances, diplomatic efforts, and international agreements, peace repeatedly slips from our global community's grasp. This uncertainty also affects the individual who, amidst global crises, pandemics, and economic upheavals, longs for inner calm and constancy. Especially in the European context, where relative peace has prevailed for decades, we now see how quickly our certainties can be shaken. Humanity yearns for lasting security and for an inner stability that does not depend on political or economic factors. But where can we find a peace that endures, irrespective of circumstance?

The Peace of Jesus Christ

The Gospel of John (John 14:27–31) offers us a striking perspective on the peace Jesus Christ promises His followers. Jesus contrasts His peace with what people usually understand by peace: *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives."* Humanity often associates peace with the absence of war, conflict, or strife. In a political or social context, peace means stability, security, and the proper functioning of societal norms. Yet the peace given by Jesus goes far beyond this. In His discourse, He refers to shalom, the Hebrew term signifying wholeness, well-being, security, and salvation.

The shalom of Jesus is rooted in His reconciling work on the Cross, where He paid the price for our peace with God (Romans 5:1). This peace is worked in our hearts by the Holy Spirit as an inner state of being. Reconciliation with God is not tied to personal achievements; it comes directly from His hand through faith in His Son. Jesus, the Son of God, leaves this peace to us permanently; He gives it, much like an inalienable inheritance. Neither political upheavals, financial turmoil, nor threats to our health can rob us of it. Therefore, in view of the events at the

Cross, Jesus adds this directive: *“Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid”* (John 14:27b). This is the peace that surpasses all understanding and is able to guard our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7).

Jesus as the Prince of Peace in the Old and New Testaments

Already in the Old Testament, we read in Isaiah 9:5–6 of the coming Messiah, heralded as the *“Prince of Peace”*: *“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder, and He shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and uphold it with justice and righteousness from this time forth and for evermore. The zeal of the Lord of Hosts will do this.”*

This prophetic word points to a king who will establish justice, placing His people and land in a state of shalom. Jesus fulfils this prophecy. While earthly rulers attempt to create peace through ceasefires and political treaties, Jesus brings a supernatural, eternal peace that no one can take away. In the Letter to the Hebrews (Hebrews 7), Christ is compared with Melchizedek, the “King of Salem” (Salem meaning peace), a priestly ruler of peace. Thus, we see a clear continuity between the Old and New Testaments: the Old Testament prepares us for the One who grants true, divine peace, and the New Testament proclaims its fulfilment in Jesus Christ. He is the true perfecter of peace, restoring the divine order between God and humanity.

Who Receives Jesus' Peace, How and Where?

Those who receive Jesus' peace are those who open themselves to Him, who believe in Him, and who heed His words. It is received within the heart, where human control ceases. The place of reception is not any particular geographical location, but the inner space of the believer. When we open ourselves to Christ by accepting His redeeming work on the Cross and entrusting our lives to His guidance, His peace takes root where fear and restlessness would otherwise prevail. The early Christian community experienced this peace even though they often faced persecution, political instability, and internal conflicts. Jesus' peace can be received anywhere in the world—be it in Swiss cities, in the conflict-ridden Middle East, in war

zones such as Ukraine, or in the bustling metropolises of Asia.

How Long Does This Peace Last?

The peace of Jesus is not confined to certain time frames or favourable conditions. Rather, it is bound to Christ Himself, who lives eternally. As long as we remain connected to Jesus, His peace endures within us. Even under the most challenging circumstances—whether in war zones, family crises, personal depression, or times of great social upheaval—this peace can provide inner stability. It is entirely independent of external developments. While worldly peace often rests on shaky foundations and can be undermined by political, economic, or military decisions, Jesus' peace is deeply anchored in our relationship with God, who is unchanging and faithful. In the same discourse Jesus warns His disciples: *“...for the prince of this world is coming...”* (John 14:30), referring to the imminent events that would instil fear and suffering in them. Yet the shalom that Jesus imparts helps the disciples to persevere through adversity.

Likewise, we do not know what the coming year 2025 will bring—further or even greater wars, pandemics, or other upheavals. But we can look ahead with confidence, trusting that Jesus' peace in our hearts will carry us through all hardships.

What Does This Peace Achieve Within Us?

Whoever possesses this peace experiences an inner calm that does not depend on success or failure. Such peace enables one to face life's challenges with courage and composure. It grants serenity even when the future is uncertain (2 Timothy 1:7). A person filled with Jesus' peace is more inclined to approach others, ease conflicts, and foster reconciliation (Matthew 5:9; Romans 12:18). In this way, their environment is also affected: a person rooted in divine tranquillity radiates trust, confidence, and compassion. Family members, friends, and colleagues can sense this peace in them. In times of unrest, even a single individual resting in God's peace can become an anchor for many and a blessing to those around them (Psalm 112).

And If Inner Peace Is Lacking?

Modern psychological research shows that people who live under persistent stress, fear, or inner turmoil have a higher risk of mental disorders, burnout, depression, and psychosomatic illnesses.

Chronic states of agitation can weaken the immune system, raise blood pressure, and lead to sleep disturbances. Those without inner peace are more frequently caught in destructive behavioural patterns, seek distraction in addictive substances, or become entangled in dysfunctional relationships. This lack of rest and security often leads to a vicious cycle in which dissatisfaction, anger, and resignation reinforce each other.

How Do I Obtain Jesus' Peace?

The first step is to get to know Jesus Christ personally. This happens through hearing His word (for example, by reading the Gospels), through prayer, and through a conscious decision to place one's life under His lordship. Whoever acknowledges their own inner disorientation and reliance on God's saving grace prepares themselves to receive this peace. By sincere repentance and turning to God, one confesses their lost condition before Him and recognises Jesus Christ as the only God-given way to the Father (John 14:6).

In prayer, we can say to Jesus: "Lord, I need Your peace. I give You my worries, fears, wounds, and my old life. Come into my heart and grant me new life and Your peace." Over time, through the working of the Holy Spirit, fellowship with other believers, and through continually hearing and putting God's word into practice (Romans 10:17), Jesus' peace will steadily grow. It is like a precious seed germinating in the believer's heart and gradually blooming to its fullest. Meditative reading of Scripture and reflection on God's promises can be particularly helpful. In essence, it is a process in which the Holy Spirit works on the human heart, transforming it.

Conclusion

In the face of today's global unrest, societal tensions, and personal life crises, it becomes evident that true inner peace cannot depend on external circumstances. Political treaties may fail, economic securities may dissolve, and even stable democracies can be shaken by crises. Yet the message of John 14:27–31 calls us, as believing Christians, to place our trust in Jesus Christ, whom we recognise as the Prince of Peace and the perfecter of true peace. This peace is not static; it must be received, nurtured, and passed on. It is a gift that deepens the more closely we are united with Christ.

Key Points:

- We have recognised that Jesus gives a peace fundamentally different from human conceptions of peace.
- We have learnt that the promises of the Old Testament find fulfilment in the New, as Jesus, the Prince of Peace, brings salvation and new life without limits.
- We have seen that this peace is rooted in the heart and endures regardless of external circumstances.
- We have understood that a lack of inner peace impairs both mental and physical health, while Jesus' peace has a healing effect.
- We know that this peace is received through faith in Christ, works throughout life, and spreads positively into our relationships.

As we approach the Christmas season, recalling God's incarnation in Christ, it is particularly important to refocus on divine peace. Let us rekindle God's presence in our hearts, thereby blessing those around us. The message of Jesus' peace is a promise that has become reality in the lives of believing Christians, carrying them through the centuries. This peace of Jesus can calm our hearts even today—in the midst of a world so often ensnared in unrest.

So, let us be inspired by divine peace at this time. We may seize it anew and live within it by holding fast to Jesus' word, accepting His legacy of peace, and becoming His ambassadors of peace in a troubled world. With calmness and trust, we stride into the future, knowing that Jesus' peace sustains, guides, comforts, and transforms us—today and for all time.

Reini Schümperli

Prayer meetings

Regional dates for 2025

Saturday from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m. / conferences from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

AARAU	BERN	SEEWIS
25. Jan/ 1. Mrz/ 27. Sep	3. Mai / 6. Sep	22. Mrz
Heilsarmee Aarau Asylstrasse 34 5001 Aarau	Heilsarmee Korps Bern Laupenstrasse 5 3007 Bern	Prayer group Seewis Saljanasstrasse 3 7212 Seewis Dorf
Contact: Marife Schümperli Tel. 077 435 30 33	Contact: Marife Schümperli Tel. 077 435 30 33	Contact: Helen Fäh Tel. 081 325 10 94

The Church of Jesus Christ

We pray for an awakening of the Church of Jesus Christ in the coming year, leading to an intense pursuit of the divine will. We ask for a clear vision and a new direction to reach the lost and the hopeless and to proclaim to them the living message of Jesus Christ. Jesus Himself sends us to be light in the darkness (Mt 5:14–16) and, with divine power, to be witnesses of His gospel (Acts 1:8).

We beseech the Lord to equip us with renewed fervour, burning hearts, and profound dedication, so that we no longer rely on our own resources, but instead follow God's guidance. May God open our hearts, revitalise our churches, and place us in service to our neighbour, so that His name is glorified and His kingdom visibly grows among us.

World Economic Forum 2025

In January 2025, the World Economic Forum (WEF) will take place once again. We pray that all human plans are subject to the sovereign will of God. We ask that women and men, like Esther in Medo-Persia (Est 2), Joseph in Egypt (Gen 41), and Daniel in the court of King Nebuchadnezzar (Dan 2), be positioned and filled with divine insight and foresight. May they occupy key positions in economic and political spheres, guided by the Spirit of God. May He grant them the necessary discern-

ment to make just, sustainable, and compassionate decisions.

"Yours is the wisdom and the power; You change times and seasons; You depose kings and raise others up" (Dan 2:20–21). May all human endeavour be subordinate to the divine plan.

Israel

After 20 January 2025, Israel's political direction will once again be tested. New agreements could strengthen Israel's territorial claims, but hostile groups will attempt to employ terrorism, unrest, and kidnappings. We pray that God grants His people strength and wisdom to face these threats, liberate captives, and conduct stable and just negotiations. May the Lord hold His protective hand over Israel, so that no harm defeats it (Ps 121:4).

We ask that international support does not wane but instead serves the rightful claims for land and peace, as once granted to the people of Israel when God gave them the land (Josh 1:3). May God guide the hearts of leaders to implement military and diplomatic measures for the benefit of His covenant people, so that their enemies retreat. *"For the Lord your God is the one who fights for you"* (Ex 14:14).



Jesus, du befreisch

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