

## The peace which passes understanding

The peace of God “passes all understanding” (see Philippians 4:7). It is not arrived at through thinking. It is not dependent on external situations being the way we would like them to be. In times of ill health, bereavement or other outward challenges, we can still experience God’s peace. It is an inner knowing that we are safe; an experience of resting in the surety of God’s Love.

*“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you... Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”* (John 14:27) What are our feelings as we read these words? How deep is our trust in Christ?

Peace is a gift of God to us. Just as God is, without limits, so God’s peace is available at all times and in every circumstance – whenever we choose to accept it. To accept the gift, we must let go of whatever thoughts keep us from experiencing peace. If we entertain thoughts of judgment or hold on to any grievance, we can no longer feel the peace of God and the quiet joy which goes with it.

Some people continue to give power to things which happened days, weeks or years ago. They wear injustices like war medals. We may have been hurt in the past, but as long as we are unwilling to let go of old wounds, we are hurting ourselves now, in the present. We are blocking our experience of peace.

When I notice thoughts of an old injury festering in my mind, I say to myself gently, ‘Do I want to punish myself for this? Would I deny myself the peace which God has given me and intends for me to have?’

Would we hang on to our grievances, or know the peace of God? Would we have darkness or Light? The choice is ours to make, but we cannot have both.

**For further, similar, reflections, see Peter M Parr’s book, *“Reflections on God’s Love”*.**

