

# PURSUING PEACE



IN A CHAOTIC WORLD  
PSALM 34

## Fully Engaged in Pursuing Peace

Psalm 34:12-14

- When we think about peace in our lives, we need to look at the whole picture.
- We are going to look at the whole person today.
- You have probably seen in scripture references to the body, soul, and spirit. We know that they are all important. That is what makes us who we are. It's our very existence. You go to the hospital or a doctor for issues with your physical body. You go to church or a pastor for issues with your soul or spirit. ***The church is a hospital for souls.***
  - o It is easier to find treatment and healing with our bodies. We can usually see the physical ailments that are hurting our bodies. Not so much with the soul and spirit.

- 1 Thessalonians 5:23

- Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

- If we are to be fully engaged in pursuing peace in our lives, that more than likely means we must address issues of the soul and spirit. Soul in Greek is psyche. Where we get the term psychology.
- What's the difference between the two?
- VIDEO on soul and spirit.
- You are a soul. You have a spirit. And you have a body while here on earth. In order to pursue peace, we have to address all three.

Main Point: Pursuing peace is more than wishing for peace. It is actively working toward peace.

#### I. Engaged with our mind and heart

- a. Many times in scripture mind and heart are used interchangeably. It is referring to your innermost being.
- b. 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength.'
- c. Deuteronomy 6:5
- d. 'Jesus said to him, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' "
- e. Matthew 22:37

- f. VERSE 12 – If you want to live a long and fulfilled life in the fear of the Lord – you have to be engaged with your whole being in serving Him.
  - g. You will never find fulfillment straddling the fence between serving self and serving God.
    - i. In fact, that is a miserable place to be. Unless you are engaged fully with your heart and mind in the things of God – it will not result in a long and fulfilled life.
  - h. If something is important to you – you set your mind to it.
  - i. **12 Steps Celebrate Recovery.**
  - j. **1. We admitted we were powerless over our addictions and compulsive behaviors, that our lives had become unmanageable.**
  - k. I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature.  
For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. Romans 7:18  
NIV
  - l. **2. We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.**
  - m. For it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose.  
Philippians 2:13 NIV
  - n. **3. We made a decision to turn our lives and our wills over to the care of God.**
  - o. Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God - this is your spiritual act of worship.  
Romans 12:1 NIV
- 4. We made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.**

- p. Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the Lord.  
Lamentations 3:40 NIV
- q. **5. We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**
- r. Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. James 5:16a NIV
- s. **6. We were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.**
- t. Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up. James 4:10 NIV
- u. **7. We humbly asked Him to remove all our shortcomings.**
- v. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9 NIV
- w. **8. We made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.**
- x. Do to others as you would have them do to you. Luke 6:31 NIV
- y. **9. We made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**
- z. Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. Matthew 5:23-24 NIV
- aa. **10. We continue to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.**

bb. So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall! 1 Corinthians 10:12

cc. **11. We sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us, and power to carry that out.**

dd. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly. Colossians 3:16a NIV

ee. **12. Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we try to carry this message to others and practice these principles in all our affairs.**

ff. Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore them gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Galatians 6:1 NIV

## II. Engaged with our words

a. VERSE 13

b. The heart and our words are connected.

c. Luke 6:45

d. Out of the heart the mouth speaks.

e. That's hard for us to learn. Some act as if words have no meaning. Someone lied when they said, "Sticks and stones will break my bones, but words will never hurt me."

f. The Bible is full of passages warning us about the destructive nature of the tongue.

g. Ephesians 4:29

h. Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

i. "“It takes two years to learn to speak and sixty to learn to keep quiet.” - Ernest Hemingway

j. Mastering our tongues is one of the greatest challenges in life, but how important it is for spiritually growth and spiritual health.

k. How much of peace in our lives is determined by our words or the words of others?

### III. Engaged with our deeds

a. VERSE 14

b. Of course, our words are useless unless we put these things into action. It comes down to denying the flesh and obeying the ways of God.

c. The way of the flesh is destruction. The way of the Spirit is peace.

What draws out our obedience?

Not our holiness but HIS!

We'll obey not because of what we are, but because of what He is (viz., Lord, Father, Friend).

The springs of obedience are not in our nature but in His Name.

Obedience becomes natural, not forced and pained and artificial.

Obedience is a byproduct of [a] healthy Christian life (like faith).

Both come from [the] WORD: [the] Word of promise elicits faith; [the] Word of command elicits obedience.

[We] mediate on [the] Word and HIM who speaks. Simon Peter looked HIM up and down.

[There is] no short cut. [There will be] challenge to obedience possibly and temptation to disobedience [will] persist.

But IF [we have a] vision of God—let all powers of hell rise within us, all lusts of [the] flesh rise within us, we'll say, “Nevertheless, at thy will.”<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> John Stott, *The Preacher's Notebook: The Collected Quotes, Illustrations, and Prayers of John Stott*, ed. Mark Meynell (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2018).

John Stott