

Hebrews

Hebrews 7:1-10 – Righteousness, Peace, Giving – Part II

March 22, 2009

I. Introduction

A. **Hebrews 7:1-10 . . .** (*Reading vs. 1-2*) For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of the Most High God, who met Abraham as he was returning from the slaughter of the kings and blessed him, [2] to whom also Abraham apportioned a tenth part of all the spoils, was first of all, by the translation of his name, **king of righteousness**, and then also king of Salem, which is **king of peace**. [3] Without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but (*that is, Melchizedek*) made like the Son of God, he remains a priest perpetually. [4] Now observe how great this man was to whom **Abraham, the patriarch, gave a tenth of the choicest spoils**. [5] And those indeed of the sons of Levi who receive the priest's office have commandment in the Law to collect a tenth from the people, that is, from their brethren, although these are descended from Abraham. [6] But the one whose genealogy is not traced from them collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed the one who had the promises. [7] But without any dispute the lesser is blessed by the greater. [8] In this case mortal men receive tithes, but in that case one receives them, of whom it is witnessed that he lives on. [9] And, so to speak, through Abraham even Levi, who received tithes, paid tithes, [10] for he was still in the loins of his father when Melchizedek met him.

B. Prayer

II. Practical Application – Righteousness, Peace, Giving. Last week we talked about Jesus being our **King of Righteousness**. This week I want to look at Jesus as the **King of Peace** and at the topic of giving. We will start with looking at Jesus, our **King of Peace**.

A. When speaking of the **King of Peace**, our tendency is to see this title as referring to what Jesus has done for us in relation to our positional status before God. There is no doubt that Jesus – by his death and resurrection, and in becoming our righteousness – has established peace between God and us.

1. Now you may recall I said something very similar to this last Sunday when talking about Jesus as our **King of Righteousness**.

2. So once again, the problem of limiting our understanding of Jesus as the **King of Peace** to our positional standing before God is that he made peace with God on our behalf as our Savior, not our King.
- B. This means that Jesus, as the **King of Peace**, is the ruler over all who are living at peace – at peace with God and with their fellow man on the practical and interpersonal level of life.
1. In speaking of being at peace with God on the practical and interpersonal level, I am speaking of the peace we have with God, day-to-day, based on the way we live – which takes in the way we think of Him, the way we love Him, the way we interact with Him, the way we speak of Him, and – of course – the way we treat the people around us.
 2. In speaking of being at peace with our fellow man, I am speaking of the peace we are able to have based on doing our part – in any relationship – to make peace possible. It may not be possible to have peace with all or even most of the people in our life. But if it isn't possible, the cause ought to be them and not us. As God says in **Romans 12:18** . . . “If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.”
- C. Now having made this point, I want to make one more point before looking at how this truth applies to us. The title **King of Peace** follows the title **King of Righteousness**. Why? Because there can be no peace apart from righteousness. Without righteousness, we cannot have peace with God – and this is just as true on the imputed or positional level of our relationship with God as it is on the practical and interpersonal level. And without righteousness, there can be no peace between us and others.
- D. Unfortunately, the “no peace without righteousness” truth is not the commonly held view in our world.
1. Many think that the absence of open conflict is the presence of peace. Others think that being nice to each other most of the time is proof there is peace. And then there are those who think there is peace as long as you do what they say.
 2. **Not so!** We can have the appearance of peace in a relationship without having true peace. Consider carefully what I am saying:
 - a. The appearance of peace is possible when both parties in a relationship exercise sufficient tolerance to overlook conflicting

values, competing expectations, relationship damaging habits, hurtful communication, and any other un-endearing behaviors. But does this mean there is peace? NO! Only the appearance of peace.

- b. The truth is, we can manufacture an appearance of peace with anyone – regardless of their values, beliefs, and behavior – as long as both sides are willing to give each other enough non-judgmental acceptance to make it appear peace exists.
 - c. Yet this appearance of peace is nothing more than a fragile harmony that can go out of tune at the first sign of discontent or frustration or anger on either sides part.
 - d. And sadly, too many of us think of, speak of, and treat the appearance of peace as if it were true peace.
3. To make my point a bit clearer, let me point out three areas where peace is commonly proclaimed – when in fact, in too many cases – only an illusion of peace exists. These three areas are Christian business relationships, Christian marriage, and the Church.
- a. Now don't get me wrong here – I am not saying nothing good comes from well-meaning Christians who try their best to maintain a semblance of peace in the Church, their marriage, and their business relationships through the use of tolerance, mercy, grace, a refusal to grow resentful or bitter over what is offensive, and the refusal to retaliate when the hurt begins to feel as if it is too much. There is much good that comes from these efforts – but the good that comes is not true peace.
 - b. Why do I say this? Because we have only to hang around these folks long enough to see how often – even if only for moments at a time – the underlying conflict boils to the surface and exposes their so-called peace for what it is.
 - c. And why do underlying conflicts keep boiling to the surface? Because unrighteousness, by its very nature, sows seeds of discord and strife. Where there is the known and obvious practice of unrighteousness in one or more areas by one more of those involved in a relationship, there is at the very least underlying turmoil which can lead to tension and even open fighting should the right circumstances come along.
4. My point here is that there is no true peace in any household or in any workplace or in the Church of Jesus Christ without the kind of commitment to righteousness that puts an end to any known

practice of sin. It is only in an atmosphere of righteousness that true peace is possible. So let me ask you this question: Do you contribute to the peace between you and those you are in relationship with, or do you force those you are in relationship with into a fragile harmony by the continued practice of some unrighteous thinking, speaking or behaving?

E. No peace without righteousness between God and us.

1. I want to turn our attention now to our peace with God – and again let me clearly say that I am talking about that daily, practical, interpersonal peace and not the positional peace we have with God.
2. Let me start by asking this question: Can we have daily, practical, interpersonal peace with God while knowingly, willingly, and repeatedly doing something that we know is wrong – even if our repeated rebellion only shows up about once a week or so?
3. But let me press this point just a bit more – using Bible words and phrases. Can we have daily, practical, interpersonal peace with God while returning again and again to the same lawless thought, word or deed; while continuing to make ourselves God's enemy with that sin that so easily besets us; while committing adultery on Him time and again with the same sin; and while repeatedly walking according to our flesh instead of by the Holy Spirit? I think we all know the answer.
4. Which brings me back to my question, but asked a bit differently – Can we cling to the practice of even one known sin and have true peace with God? Can we defy God by knowingly and repeatedly committing the same sin and still be at peace with Him?
5. So what is my point? **Peace**, on the practical and interpersonal level with God and with each other – whether in the home, the work place, and in the church – **requires righteousness**. Jesus is the King of all who pursue peace this way.

III. Conclusion

- A. Jesus is the King of Righteousness and the King of Peace. He will be our King in these two areas if we live according to His will.