

Bay City Wesleyan Church
December 22, 2019

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Sunday Morning 12-22-2019

Jesus gives the greatest Christmas gifts of all time.

He gives faith to defeat fear.

Hope to drive out despair.

Love to expel apathy.

Peace to overwhelm worry.

Joy to replace powerlessness.

<http://bible.com/events/6766070>

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Our First Series of 2020

<https://imageproxy-cdn.youversionapi.com/320x320/https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/mushroom-event-images-prod/5722009-1576356534837.jpg>

Our First Series of 2020: The Spirit's Prayer Guide for Ordinary People

It seems like most people pray even if they aren't particularly religious. But we all struggle to pray. Ordinary people like you and I need all the help we can find. Let's smash our prayer struggles this year with a few simple practices.

In November 1873, Horatio Spafford sent his wife and four daughters on the French ship Ville du Havre from their home in Chicago to a vacation in France, planning to set out a few days later himself. Somewhere in the Atlantic, the Ville du Havre collided with a British ship coming the other way, and sank in just 12 minutes. Of his family, only Spafford's wife survived. Spafford took the next boat over, and as he passed the spot where the ship went down, began to write, "When peace like a river attendeth my way, When sorrows like sea billows roll," and continued until he had the text, "It is well with my soul." His good friend, Philip Bliss, composed the tune for his words, naming it after the ship, VILLE DU HAVRE. In this hymn, Spafford has given all of us words of comfort and assurance in times of physical and spiritual crisis, paraphrasing those familiar words of Julian of Norwich: "And all shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well."

Ephesians 2:11-22 NLT

<small>11</small> Don't forget that you Gentiles used to be outsiders. You were called "uncircumcised heathens" by the Jews, who were proud of their circumcision, even though it affected only their bodies and not their hearts. <small>12</small> In those days you were living apart from Christ. You were excluded from citizenship among the people of Israel, and you did not know the covenant promises God had made to them. You lived in this world without God and without hope. <small><font

color="#999999">13</small> But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ. <small>14</small> For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us. <small>15</small> He did this by ending the system of law with its commandments and regulations. He made peace between Jews and Gentiles by creating in himself one new people from the two groups. <small>16</small> Together as one body, Christ reconciled both groups to God by means of his death on the cross, and our hostility toward each other was put to death. <small>17</small> He brought this Good News of peace to you Gentiles who were far away from him, and peace to the Jews who were near. <small>18</small> Now all of us can come to the Father through the same Holy Spirit because of what Christ has done for us. <small>19</small> So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. <small>20</small> Together, we are his house, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. <small>21</small> We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. <small>22</small> Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit.

<https://bible.com/bible/116/eph.2.11-22.NLT>

Luke 2:1-14 NLT

<small>1</small> At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire. <small>2</small> (This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.) <small>3</small> All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census. <small>4</small> And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. <small>5</small> He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child. <small>6</small> And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born. <small>7</small> She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them. <small>8</small> That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep. <small>9</small> Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified, <small>10</small> but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. <small>11</small> The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—

has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! 12</small> And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger." 13</small> Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying, 14</small> "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

<https://bible.com/bible/116/luk.2.1-14.NLT>

Philippians 4:6-7 NLT

6</small> Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. 7</small> Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.

<https://bible.com/bible/116/php.4.6-7.NLT>

John 14:26-27 NLT

26</small> But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative—that is, the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you.

27</small> "I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid.

<https://bible.com/bible/116/jhn.14.26-27.NLT>

Jeremiah 8:11-15 NLT

11</small> They offer superficial treatments for my people's mortal wound. They give assurances of peace when there is no peace. 12</small> Are they ashamed of these disgusting actions? Not at all—they don't even know how to blush! Therefore, they will lie among the slaughtered. They will be brought down when I punish them, says the Lord. 13</small> I will surely consume them. There will be no more harvests of figs and grapes. Their fruit trees will all die. Whatever I gave them will soon be gone. I, the Lord, have spoken!

14</small> "Then the people will say, 'Why should we wait here to die? Come, let's go to the fortified towns and die there. For the Lord our God has decreed our destruction and has given us a cup of poison to drink because we sinned against the Lord. 15</small> We hoped for peace, but no peace came. We hoped for a time of healing, but found only terror.'

<https://bible.com/bible/116/jer.8.11-15.NLT>

2 Thessalonians 3:16 NLT

16</small> Now may the Lord of peace himself give you his peace at all times and in every situation. The Lord be with you all.

<https://bible.com/bible/116/2th.3.16.NLT>

Sermon in a Sentence:

Only through Jesus can we experience the PEACE that overcomes all fear,
chaos, and disharmony.