

Matters of the Heart: Let Peace Be Your Umpire
Pastor Bryan Hudson, D.Min. ~ September 13, 2026
Message Outline

Key Text: Colossians 3:15

“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful.”

I. Matters of the Heart: The Root of What Happens in Life

A. What happens in the heart manifests in life.

What is right or wrong in our lives is connected to the condition of the heart.

The heart is the root from which our words, attitudes, decisions, and actions flow.

Our prayer should be: “Lord, let Your peace be my umpire.”

B. Seasons of change and challenge narrow our focus.

Change and challenge force us to identify what is essential.

Peripheral matters begin to fade in importance.

We learn to put first things first.

Few things are more important than:

The condition of the heart.

Understanding how the peace of God operates.

II. The Biblical Context: Colossians 3:1–17

A. Set your mind on things above.

We have been raised with Christ.

The old life is supposed to be dead.

Our new life is hidden with Christ in God.

B. Put off the behaviors of the old life.

Paul identifies:

Anger, Wrath, Malice, Blasphemy, Filthy language, Lying, Immoral desires and practices

C. Put on the character of the new life.

Believers are to put on:

Tender mercies, Kindness, Humility, Meekness, Longsuffering, Patience with one another, Forgiveness, Above all, love

D. Then comes the governing principle: peace.

“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts...”

Peace operates within the larger context of Christian character and spiritual transformation.

The Word of Christ should dwell richly within us.

Everything we do in word or deed should be done in the name of Jesus with thanksgiving.

III. Symptoms Point to Deeper Matters

A. Illustration: An unusual sound in a car.

The solution is not merely to silence the sound.

You must discover where the sound is coming from.

B. Illustration: Pain in the body.

The objective is not only to stop the pain.

Pain can indicate something that needs attention.

C. Anxiety can also function as an indicator.

Anxiety should not simply be denied.

Ask: Why am I anxious? What is producing this feeling? What requires attention?

God's Spirit and His Word can help identify what needs to be addressed.

Key Principle:

The symptom is not necessarily the problem; the symptom may be an indication of the problem.

IV. Faith Does Not Deny Reality

A. Biblical faith is not denial.

Faith does not call things that are as though they are not.

Faith calls things that are not as though they were.

There is an important difference.

B. Denial can become foolishness or presumption.

Examples:

Ignoring a strange noise in your automobile.

Ignoring pain that should be medically addressed.

Pretending fear or anxiety is not present.

C. Rather than denying what you feel, discover what lies beneath it.

Instead of simply saying:

"I'm not afraid."

"I'm not anxious."

"That doesn't bother me."

Ask God to reveal what needs to be addressed.

D. Some things can only be properly addressed at the heart level.

V. Go Beneath the Physical Level to the Heart Level

A. Physical circumstances are real, but the root may lie beneath what we see.

B. Spirituality does not mean ignoring reality.

Walking in the Spirit provides a foundation for properly addressing physical and natural realities.

C. Not every problem is the devil.

The enemy is real.

Spiritual warfare is real.

But believers should not automatically attribute every problem to the devil.

Sometimes the problem involves ourselves, our decisions, circumstances, or other people.

VI. The Seen World Comes From the Unseen Realm

Hebrews 11:3

"By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible."

A. What is visible came from what could not be seen.

B. God Himself is Spirit.

C. This gives us a principle for understanding matters of the heart.

You cannot physically see the heart in the spiritual sense.

You cannot see thoughts.

But you can see their effects through:

Words, Actions, Attitudes, Decisions

D. When life stops making sense, natural reasoning alone is insufficient.

Go to: Scripture, The Holy Spirit, The heart level

Prayer:

"Father, help my heart."

VII. The Samaritan Woman: Jesus Takes Us to Another Level

John 4

A. Jesus begins with natural water.

Jesus tells the woman, "Give Me a drink."

B. She responds at the natural level.

She sees: A well, Water, No bucket, No rope, A Jewish man speaking to a Samaritan woman

C. Jesus introduces "living water."

He tells her that if she understood who was speaking to her, she would ask Him for living water.

D. She initially continues thinking naturally.

Her response is essentially:

You have no bucket.

The well is deep.

Where will you get this water?

E. Jesus is moving her to another level.

In the same way, we can become preoccupied with:

Circumstances, Feelings, Other people, Immediate problems

while Jesus is trying to address something deeper.

VIII. Religion Is Not a Substitute for Spiritual Understanding

A. The woman eventually recognizes that Jesus is a prophet.

B. She turns the conversation toward religion.

She asks about:

The mountain where Samaritans worship.

Jerusalem as the Jewish place of worship.

C. Jesus moves her beyond religious arguments.

"God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in spirit and truth."

D. The issue is not merely religious practice—it is spiritual reality.

E. We sometimes cannot recognize what God is doing until the Holy Spirit unfolds it to us.

F. Experience alone is insufficient.

Experience is a teacher.

Experience is not the best teacher.

God and His Word must be our highest teacher.

Confession:

"My experiences are not my best teacher. Lord, You are my best teacher."

IX. Understanding the Heart: Spirit, Soul, and Body

1 Thessalonians 5:23

"May the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless..."

A. Human beings consist of spirit, soul, and body.

B. The heart is more than the human spirit alone.

The heart refers to the center of a person's inner life and involves:

Passions, Desires, Appetites, Intelligence, Will, Character

C. The heart can be understood as the spirit and soul together.

"My heart is my spirit and soul together."

D. We are:

A spirit. We have a soul. We live in a body.

X. Your Born-Again Spirit Is Your Stable Foundation

A. We are born again in our spirit.

Jesus taught:

"That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."

B. The human spirit is where the life and light of God reside.

C. Scripture shows the stability of the born-again spirit.

Romans 8:16

"The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God."

Our assurance is grounded in the witness of God's Spirit, not merely in changing thoughts and feelings.

1 Corinthians 6:17

"He who is joined to the Lord is one spirit with Him."

Our spirit is joined to the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:17

"If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation..."

The new birth has already occurred.

D. The soul continues to require transformation.

Romans 12 teaches transformation through the renewing of the mind.

Therefore:

The spirit has been made new.

The soul is being renewed.

The body remains part of our earthly existence.

XI. The Soul Part of the Heart Requires Work

Because we live in a world filled with pressures, influences, temptations, and confusion, the soul requires:

Transformation, Training, Renewal, Sanctification

The struggle often occurs within the soul:

Mind, Will, Emotions

We must therefore "go to work on our hearts," particularly the soul dimension of the heart.

XII. Let the Peace of God Rule

Colossians 3:15

A. The key word is "rule."

The Greek word carries the idea of:

Acting as an umpire, Deciding, Determining, Arbitrating

B. Peace is more than an emotion.

Peace is not merely something we feel; it is something we allow to govern us.

C. Peace can govern the soul.

God's peace can influence our:

Mind, Will, Emotions

D. The word "let" indicates cooperation.

God does not force His peace upon us.

God provides peace; we yield to its influence.

Yielding to peace means refusing to let competing emotions make the final decision.

Confession: "I will yield to the peace of God."

XIII. The Baseball Umpire Illustration

A. The umpire watches the play.

B. The umpire makes the call:

Ball or strike.

Inside or outside the strike zone.

Safe or out.

Whether a checked swing went around.

C. The umpire has authority to make the call.

This illustrates Colossians 3:15.

Spiritual Application: Let Peace Make the Call

Let the peace of God determine:

How you respond.

What you say.

What you do.

What decision you make.

Whether something should proceed or stop.

Peace becomes the authorized umpire of the heart.

XIV. Why We Need an Umpire

A. We cannot always accurately interpret our own condition.

Self-awareness is important, but pain, emotion, and confusion can create a fog.

B. Sometimes the mind attempting to solve the problem is involved in creating the problem.

C. Illustration: Alcoholism.

A person may continually drink while insisting:

"I don't have a problem."

Healing cannot begin until reality is acknowledged.

D. We sometimes need a perspective beyond our own reasoning.

We may need to go beyond:

Our reasoning

Our understanding

Our perceptions

and allow God to bring clarity through:

His Spirit

His Word

His peace

Trusted people

Key Principle:

You cannot always use the problem to solve the problem.

XV. Get Quiet and Let Peace Make the Call

Instead of immediately reacting:

- Become quiet.
- Do not act merely from emotion.
- Go to the heart level.
- Listen to God's Spirit.
- Consult God's Word.
- Allow trusted people to help when necessary.
- Let God's peace make the call.

Prayer:

"Lord, help me let Your peace make the call—not just what I feel."

XVI. Jesus Gives a Different Kind of Peace

John 14:27

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you."

A. Jesus has already made His peace available.

B. The world offers substitutes for peace.

Those substitutes may:

- Cost a great deal.
- Consume time.
- Create unhealthy dependencies.
- Attach us to people or things that cannot ultimately help us.

C. Jesus offers His own peace.

Key Declaration:

Jesus gives the peace that umpires.

XVII. Choose Peace Over Everything

The concluding decision of faith is:

"We choose peace over everything."

Our feelings may be real, but they do not have to determine our direction.

Peace provides the foundation from which we can properly address the real problems we face.

Closing Confession

I will allow the peace of God to rule my heart. Peace will be my umpire. Peace will decide what I will do and what I will not do.

When I am facing a challenge, I will not try to reason my way around it without the help of the Holy Spirit and Scripture. As a matter of the heart, I will go to the heart level to address things I do not fully understand.

God is Spirit, so I will worship and live through Him in spirit and in truth.

According to 1 Thessalonians 5:23, I will allow the God of peace to sanctify me completely so that my whole spirit, soul, and body will be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I will live according to the order of spirit, soul, and body—not the reverse order of body, soul, and spirit.

Peace will govern my heart and mind—not hurt, trauma, disappointment, failed expectations, envy, unforgiveness, bitterness, resentment, or entitlement.

Jesus gives the peace that umpires my life.

I agree with what He said in John 14:27:

"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you."

I choose the peace of Christ. I will let peace make the call.