

THE SUM OF PEACE

INTRODUCTION

A. John 14:27; 16:33

Jesus promises His disciples peace unlike anything the world could provide.

B. Ephesians 2:1-18

The peace available to us in Christ is an equation requiring certain subtractions and additions.

I. SUBTRACT OUR "TRESPASSES"

A. Ephesians 2:1

First, we must take away our trespasses.

B. Romans 5:15-17

Trespasses, also called "*offenses*," are what introduced death to all mankind.

C. Romans 4:23-25

Our trespasses are the very cause of Christ's death.

II. SUBTRACT OUR "SINS"

A. Ephesians 2:1

Next, we need to subtract our sins.

B. James 4:17

Sin is failing to do what ought to be done.

C. 1st John 3:4

Sin is breaking the law.

D. 1st John 5:17

Sin is unrighteousness.

III. SUBTRACT OUR "LUSTS OF THE FLESH"

A. Ephesians 2:3

Then, we need to remove our lusts.

B. 1st John 2:16

These lusts are perishing with this world.

C. Galatians 5:24; 1st Peter 4:1-2

Lusts are part of our past, not our present or future, when we are in Christ.

D. Galatians 5:16; Romans 13:14

Everything about lusts stands in contrast to being in the Spirit.

IV. ADD GOD'S "MERCY"

A. Ephesians 2:4

We need to add God's mercy, which basically means God not giving us what we deserve.

B. James 2:13

It is set in contrast to judgment because it is by mercy that we avoid judgment.

C. Hebrews 4:16

Ironically, we are invited to partake of mercy, which cannot be deserved, in a bold way! But that's just the thing about mercy – because we don't deserve it, we might as well be bold about getting it.

V. ADD GOD'S "LOVE"

A. Ephesians 2:4

Plus love!

B. Romans 8:35-39

The vastness of God's love is incalculable.

C. Romans 5:8; 1st John 3:16; 4:9-10

The love of God has never been more on display than when He allowed His Son to die for us while we were still sinning.

D. 1st John 4:8, 16

Since God is love, whatever God is, that's what love is. We don't get to say, "Well, I don't believe a loving God would cast a sinner into hell" or "A loving God would not condemn homosexuality" or "A loving God wouldn't mind abortion." If God does it, it is loving!

VI. ADD GOD'S "GRACE"

A. Ephesians 2:5, 7-8

Plus grace! Grace, which is related to mercy, basically means God giving what we cannot earn.

B. 2nd Corinthians 8:9

Jesus enriched us by His grace and through His own impoverishment.

C. 1st Corinthians 15:9-10; 1st Timothy 1:12-16

Grace turned wicked Saul into the apostle of our Lord.

D. Titus 2:11-13

Grace teaches. If it doesn't motivate change, it is not grace.

VII. ADD OUR "FAITH"

A. Ephesians 2:8

Now add faith.

B. 1st Peter 1:9; Romans 5:1-2

The purpose of faith, above and beyond all else, is salvation.

C. 2nd Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:1

The nature of faith is trusting in that which cannot be seen.

D. Romans 10:17

Faith must be learned.

E. Acts 6:7

Faith must be obeyed.

VIII. SUBTRACT OUR "WORKS" OF MERIT

A. Ephesians 2:9

Minus the works by which we might claim to deserve peace from God.

B. 2nd Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5

We could not possibly earn heaven.

C. Romans 11:6

Works by which we think we can boast actually negate grace altogether.

IX. ADD OUR "WORKS" IN CHRIST

A. Ephesians 2:10

Add in a different kind of work – the kind done in dutiful obedience to the Master.

B. James 2:14-26

Truly, this is what proves faith.

C. Hebrews 10:24-25

To encourage good works is the very reason we assemble.

D. 1st John 3:18

When we lack action, all we have is wasted, foolish talk.

X. ADD CHRIST'S "BLOOD"

A. Ephesians 2:13

Plus the blood of Jesus!

B. Hebrews 9:13-14, 22

Sins will never be remitted without bloodshed because sin causes death and can be redeemed in no other way.

C. 1st Peter 1:18-19

Nothing less than the blood of sinless Jesus could ever provide redemption.

XI. SUBTRACT MOSES' "LAW"

A. Ephesians 2:14-15

Minus the Old Testament.

B. Hebrews 7:19; 10:1

That law just wasn't good enough to accomplish what we need.

C. Galatians 3:19-25; Romans 10:4

The law served a temporary purpose, and met its end in Christ – both its fulfillment and its terminus.

XII. THE SUM IS "PEACE"

A. Ephesians 2:15-18

All this adding and subtracting equates to real peace.

B. Isaiah 26:3

Other types of peace are incomplete, but peace from God is perfect.

C. Romans 5:1

Peace in Christ comes after justification.