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Beverly E.C.C., Chicago, IL

### “TRUE PEACE”

☑ The world is a roiling, boiling mass of frustration, anxiety, hostility, fear, and violence. This global turmoil mirrors the personal tumult in millions of homes and billions of souls. Humankind is desperate for peace.

A fragile cease fire is not sufficient. Order imposed by an iron fist is not good enough. Souls made numb by frenzied activity, sensual pleasure or false belief will not do.

? What is true peace?

? How can we experience it, inside and out?

★ {Ro 5:8; II Co 5:19; Ro 8:7} This is peace: that **“Christ died for us,”** and God is **“reconciling the world to himself”** through his death. He gave us his Son **“while we were still sinners,”** that is, while we were his enemies, for **“The sinful mind is hostile God.”**

✍ {I Co 11:26} Consider the table. **“Whenever [we] eat this bread and drink this cup, [we] proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.”** Communion is peace with God.

★ {Php 4:5, 7; Heb 13:20; Eph 2:22} And this is peace: that the transcendent **“peace of God ... will guard [our] hearts and ... minds in Christ Jesus,”** for **“The Lord is near.”**

Not only is he **“near,”** we are **“a dwelling in which” “the God of peace” “lives by his Spirit”!**

✍ {Mt 26:26, 28; Jn 6:56} Consider the table. Jesus says, **“This is my body,” “my blood,” “whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them.”** Communion is peace within.

★ {Eph 2:14; Lk 6:31; Mt 22:39; 5:39, 44; 6:24} And this is peace: that Messiah **“has destroyed ... the dividing wall of”** human **“hostility.”** He empowers us to love others: doing to them as we **“would have them do to [us],”** turning **“the other cheek,”** forgiving those who **“sin against [us],”** and praying for our persecutors.

✍ {I Co 10:17; CBW} Consider the table. **“Because there is one [bread], we, who are many, are one.”** And this is only a foretaste! **“Many will come from east ... west ... north and south and sit at table in”** the kingdom come. Communion is peace with others.

Peace is not the absence of conflict or rigid law and order or numbness. It is serenity of spirit, harmony in relationships, concord between diverse groups.

{Php 4:7; Jn 1:14} We can manufacture a semblance of it, to a degree, for a while. But true peace that **“transcends all understanding”** is created by God. It

comes to us as a gift, wrapped up in Jesus, who “**became flesh and made his dwelling among us.**”

✈ {Ro 8:29} God’s peace is activated in, among, and through us as we are united with Christ and “**conformed to [his] image.**” This hinges on Holy Communion, not primarily as a formal ritual, but as the central truth of our lives *which is embodied in what we do here at this table.*

? What is true peace? It is the reality of God with us and God for us.

? How can we experience it, inside and out? Through communion with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

{O Come, O Come, Emmanuel}

**O come, Desire of nations,  
           bind all peoples in one heart and mind;  
 bid now our sad divisions cease,  
           and be thyself our King of peace.  
 Rejoice! Rejoice!  
           Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**