

THINGS WHICH MAKE FOR PEACE

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Maintaining peace in the body of Christ is important to the effectiveness of a ministry. God's word is full of exhortations to seek peace because it is such an important aspect of the Christian life. When peace is disrupted in one part of the body, it affects the whole body.

Col 3:15 "Let the peace of God rule in your hearts."

Rom 14:19 "Follow after the things which make for peace."

Psa 34:14 "Seek peace, and pursue it." Peace does not 'come' easy. You need to follow it and pursue it.

- The devil is working against us to steal our peace. He loves to initiate trouble, strife, division, and discontentment in the church.
 - Keep this in mind the next time you sense an argument starting between you and another member. It's time to pray and push back.

SEVEN THINGS THAT MAKE FOR PEACE

1. A PACIFIC SPIRIT (Pacific: calm, pacified, passive).

- a. **Romans 12:18** "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men."
 - i. Instead of looking for reasons to find fault and disagreement with the brethren, seek ways to be at peace with them.
 - ii. Following the world, the flesh, the devil, and your sin nature comes naturally. You'll need to strive to walk in the spirit and desire peace.
- b. **1 Peter 3:10** "For he that will love life, and see good days...let him seek peace, and ensue (follow) it."
 - i. You can't enjoy life if you're not trying to get along with people.
 1. Seek ways to be a help and a blessing to others. Avoid causing them grief.

2. A SENSE OF PROPORTION

- a. **1 Timothy 6:3-5** "If any man teach otherwise...doting (fond) about questions and strifes of words...from such withdraw thyself."
 - i. We must distinguish between important doctrines and not-so-important opinions or ideas. Don't let someone's opinions cause envy, strife, arguments, or evil thoughts.
 1. Don't divide Christians over things that don't matter.

3. PATIENCE

- a. **Proverbs 25:8** "Go not forth hastily to strive..."
 - i. Premature actions or reactions can get you into trouble (see Ben-hadad in 1 Ki 20:11).
 - ii. Be patient with brothers and sisters in Christ, remembering that they are still growing and may not have learned what you know to be true. God was patient with you.
- b. **Proverbs 16:32** "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty..."
 - i. Keep calm, pray about it, sleep on it, give the Holy Spirit time to work it out.
 - ii. When God helps you to overcome a sin, make sure you exercise patience with other Christians. Give them the same time to see the light that God gave you. Be patient and let God do His work. "With what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged."

4. GRACIOUS SPEECH.

- a. **Proverbs 15:1** “A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger.”
 - i. The way you say things makes a difference. Your words can make someone angry or prevent them from getting angry. Choose kind words and a soft tone of voice.
- b. **There is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise *is* health.”**

 - i. Avoid language that aims to hurt someone’s feelings. If you can’t say something nice, say nothing.

5. SUBMISSION TO GODLY RULE.

- a. **1 Thessalonians 5:12-13** “know them which labour among you... *And* be at peace among yourselves.”
 - i. When you speak against the pastor, you are helping the Devil destroy the work of your church. The work will suffer when you verbally disrespect the leadership.

6. A FORGIVING SPIRIT

- a. **Philippians 4:2, 7** “...be of the same mind in the Lord...And the peace of God...shall keep your hearts and minds...”
 - i. Quarrels and disagreements will happen. The important thing is to not let it lead to bitterness. God wants us to be forgiving:
 1. **Ephesians 4:32, 2**
 2. **Colossians 3:13**
 - ii. Christ forgave your sins and forgot them. We need to forgive, forget, and move on.

7. CHARITY

- a. **Colossians 3:14** “And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness.”
 - i. Reconciliation cannot take place between two people as long as both insist they are the one who is right.
 1. It takes charity to look past another person’s imperfections for the sake of peace.
 2. Charity is the “**bond of perfectness.**” It is the glue that holds us together. All our differences are subordinate to the love that we have for one another.
 - ii. How can you fall in love with the person that you struggle to like? —Pray for that person every day.