

**St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth**  
**Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020**  
**Series: Believe, "Becoming Like Jesus"**  
**Chapter 23, "Peace"**

**Introductory Song: "The Resurrection Hymn/ What A Morning"**

(Click on the link below to listen to the hymn on YouTube sung by Kristyn Getty, Margaret Becker, Joanne Hogg.)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LgE\\_E7yaz4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-LgE_E7yaz4)

**Call to Worship**

Let us worship God,  
 for whom our souls thirst and our bodies long.

**Listen, listen to me,  
 and your soul will delight in the richest of fare.**

We have come to hear the Word God has sent.

**God's Word will not return empty  
 but will accomplish through us his holy purpose.**

Let us worship God in spirit and in truth.

**Then we will go out with joy and be led forth in peace;  
 the mountains and the hills will sing;  
 the trees of the field will clap their hands.**

**Prayer of Invocation**

Journey with us, O holy God,  
 as we continue our way to the cross.  
 Sharpen our focus, that our attention  
 may center more on you than ourselves.  
 Lead us through the shadows of darkness and prepare our hearts,  
 that we might be a people of prayer,  
 ready to perceive and respond to your Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ.  
 In his name we pray. **Amen.**

**Hymn: "To God Be The Glory"**

(Click on the link below to listen to this hymn performed by the Fountainview Academy.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5WmQmL77WkE>

**Lyrics**

To God be the glory, great things He hath done,  
 So loved He the world that He gave us His Son,  
 Who yielded His life an atonement for sin,  
 And opened the life gate that all may go in.

*Refrain:*

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the earth hear His voice!  
 Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice!  
 Oh, come to the Father, through Jesus the Son,  
 And give Him the glory, great things He hath done.

Oh, perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,  
 To every believer the promise of God;  
 The vilest offender who truly believes,  
 That moment from Jesus a pardon receives.

Great things He hath taught us, great things He hath done,  
 And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;  
 But purer, and higher, and greater will be  
 Our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.

### **Call to Confession (Psalm 51:17)**

**The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;  
 a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.**

### **Prayer of Confession**

O God, our great shepherd,  
 you tenderly gather us as lambs,  
 carrying us with your all-embracing love.  
 Yet, like sheep, we wander from you:  
 following our own ways, ignoring your voice,  
 distrusting your provisions.  
 Forgive our stubborn rebellion, our hardened hearts, our lack of trust.  
 Refresh us once again by your quiet waters of mercy  
 and restore our souls by your redeeming love.  
 Guide our paths, that we might follow you more closely.  
 Through Jesus Christ, our good shepherd, we pray. **Amen.**

### **Assurance of Pardon (based on Psalm 91:14-15)**

Those who love me, I will deliver, says the Lord;  
 I will protect those who know my name.  
 When they call to me, I will answer them;  
 I will be with them in trouble,  
 I will rescue them and honor them  
 and show them my salvation.  
 Receive the good news of the gospel:  
 In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

### **The Lord's Prayer**

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
 Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
 Give us this day our daily bread.  
 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.  
 For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,  
 Forever and ever. Amen**

Old Testament Reading                      Psalm 23

- 1 The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.
- 2 He makes me lie down in green pastures.  
He leads me beside still waters.
- 3 He restores my soul.  
He leads me in paths of righteousness  
for his name's sake.
- 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I will fear no evil, for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.
- 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;  
you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.
- 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life,  
and I shall dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Ministry of Music                      “Leaning On The Everlasting Arms”

(Click on the link below to hear the Ministry of Music.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmhBUxUDPTA>

Scripture Reading:                      Mark 4:35-41  
Jesus Calms a Storm

**35** On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, “Let us go across to the other side.” **36** And leaving the crowd, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. And other boats were with him. **37** And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. **38** But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” **39** And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. **40** He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” **41** And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

Hymn:                      “How Deep The Father’s Love”

(Click on the link below to hear this hymn with the words.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SKDujmtyAVk>

## “Don’t Worry – Jesus Is Sleeping!”

### Believe Chapter 23, “Peace”

Mark 4:35-41

How do you like that sermon title? I can’t take any credit for it, because while I didn’t “lift” it from the title of someone else’s sermon, I did come across it in my reading. I think it says perfectly where real peace is to found. It is to be found with Jesus, whether he is awake or asleep. I know that the

## Key Question



name of the virtue we are studying today is peace, but our real concern is in dealing with worry and anxiety. Our Key Question on page 369 of Believe: **Where do I find the strength to battle anxiety and fear?** Our Key idea is this: **I am free from anxiety because I have found peace with God, peace with others and peace with myself.**

The story I have chosen, out of all the other Biblical stories that I could have chosen, is the one of Jesus calming the storm on the Sea of Galilee. It is a well known story and there is probably no better known painting of it than this one by Rembrandt. You have to admit that it does look pretty rough. How many of us would like to have been out in that wooden boat in that kind of weather? Various different translations refer to it as being anything from a storm to a violent squall. Well, let's go with a storm. Sir Francis Beaufort, best known for developing the Beaufort Scale which relates wind speed to observed conditions on land and sea, described a storm in these words. **“Storm: Trees uprooted; considerable structural damage. | Very high waves with long overhanging crests; the resulting foam in great patches is blown in dense white streaks; the surface of the sea takes on a white appearance; the tumbling of the sea becomes heavy.”** My, wouldn't it be an adventure to be out in weather like that.



Now, let's zoom in a little closer to see what is really going on in the boat in Rembrandt's painting. You will notice that the real sailor's are struggling with the ropes and the rigging, trying to keep the craft afloat. The non-sailors are huddled in a little group closer to the stern than the bow of the boat. Can anyone pick me out of this painting? I'm the guy in the red shirt hanging over the side of the boat. Believe me, I am hanging on for dear life while I get rid of breakfast, lunch and supper! You may think I'm kidding, but I'm not. I have been out sailing with a friend on Lake Ontario and that was exactly my posture! Despite a lifetime spent on the water, I have a very weak stomach. I have never developed sea legs.

Of course, you can also make out Jesus in the boat as well. Mark tells us in chapter 4 (Believe page 383): **38 Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke him and said to him, “Teacher, don't you care if we drown?”** These men are not worried. There is not a

hint of worry that you hear in their voices. That is raw fear! So our focus this morning is as much on worry, fear, anxiety and terror as it is on peace.

At the end of 2014, Chapman University released a study on American's greatest fears. They surveyed 1,500 people from across the US looking at fears that related to everything from crimes to natural disasters to pandemics. Here are the top 5 of what it referred to as "personal fears". (For the full article see <http://abc7.com/society/americans-biggest-fear-walking-alone-at-night/361278/>.)

1. Walking alone at night.
2. Becoming the victim of identity theft.
3. Safety on the internet.
4. Being the victim of a mass or random shooting.
5. Public speaking.



In Canada, our top personal fears might be a little different. I doubt that being the victim of a mass or random shooting would make the top five, although it might. But I expect that the other four would be close to the top. And notice that public speaking is right up there. You probably laughed when I said a number of weeks ago that people would rather die than speak in public, but it is true! The other thing that you might have noticed is that being caught in a storm like the disciples didn't even make the list. Today, we have another reason to worry. COVID-19 and the impact it will have on us in every area of our lives. This is an unprecedented fear that few of us would have imagined even a month ago. It was something that was happening in China, Italy or on a cruise ship in the Pacific.

While we are looking at lists and surveys, here is one more. It is also American and is from a poll on what people worry about taken from Industry Week Magazine. The top 10 things people worry about.

1. Own health and fitness – 73%
2. Lack of time for family or leisure pursuits – 49%
3. Their children's problems – 43%
4. Job related stress – 43%
5. Personal Investments – 39%
6. Estate Planning – 37%
7. Relationship with children – 34%
8. Aging – 30%
9. Income level – 22%
10. Their marriages – 21%

Now, here are a couple of sayings about worry. The first one is tongue in cheek.

- One person said: "I have so many troubles that if anything happens to me today, it will be two weeks before I can get around to worrying about it."
- "Worrying about the past is like trying to put toothpaste into the tube."

This next one is the most profound of the three.

- "Worry is a thin stream of fear that trickles through the mind, which if encouraged, will cut a channel so wide that all other thoughts will be drained."



Let's take a look of our Key Verses for this week. They are tremendously important. They are found in Philippians 4 – the same chapter that I referred to last week.

**6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

( 7 things the most-highlighted Kindle passages tell us about ... )



Max Lucado makes a statement that I concur with 100%. “It is not the will of God that you lead an unsettled, troubled, fear – filled life with regrets of yesterday and fear for tomorrow. That is just not God’s definition of normal. He would like to take you to a new normal.” Isaiah 9 says this: **6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.** (Believe page 370) Who is Isaiah referring to here? Jesus Christ. Isaiah refers to him as Prince of Peace. What an incredible title to be given to anyone. Prince of Peace. Not Warlord of

warlords; not Supreme Dictator or Supreme Commander; but Prince of Peace. Jesus is the sovereign Lord over Peace.

What kind of peace is being referred to here? Is it world peace? I don't think so. I've quoted Bob Dylan before and I am going to quote him again from his 1979 song “Until He Returns”.

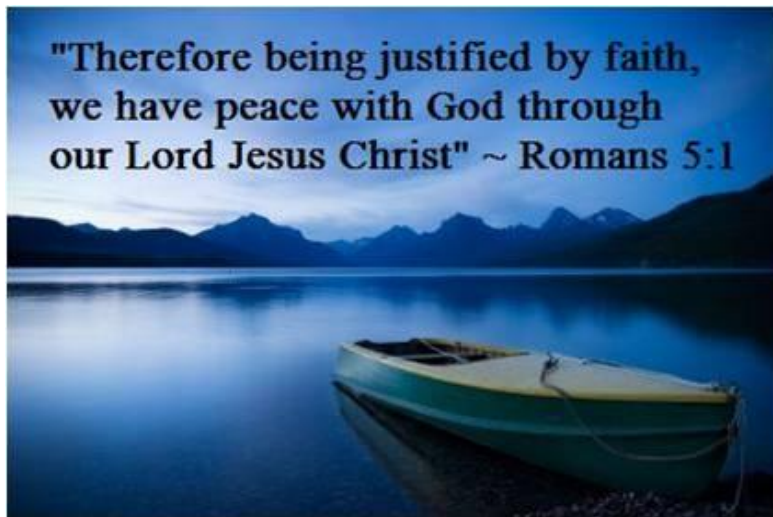
Truth is an arrow and the gate is narrow that it passes through  
 He unleashed His power at an unknown hour that no one knew  
 How long can I listen to the lies of prejudice?  
 How long can I stay drunk on fear out in the wilderness?  
 Can I cast it aside, all this loyalty and this pride?  
**Will I ever learn that there'll be no peace,  
 That the wars won't cease  
 Until he returns?**



There will be no world peace until Christ comes again and there is a New Heaven and New Earth. Instead, Jesus offers us personal peace or heart peace. **27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.** (John 14) Jesus does not promise to give us his version of peace, but the very peace which he experienced and that kept him serene when he faced his enemies. He offers us the same peace which allowed him to be concerned for his mother

as he hung on the cross and forgave his enemies. The peace that dominated the life of Jesus is the peace that God gives us.

The starting point for discovering peace is finding peace with God. We will never know peace with other people or peace with ourselves if we are not at peace with God. My experience is that most people do not have peace with God. They may be angry with God; they may think that God has better things to do than focus on their insignificant problems; they may think that God is angry with them, or that God will never be able to forgive them for something that they have done. They may figure that somehow they have gotten on God's "no fly" list and are banished from his presence. The result is that they do not enjoy a relationship with God. They do not talk to God. They don't



have a living relationship with God because they are not at peace with him. I guess most people have never read Romans 5 (Believe page 365): **1** **Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, **2** through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand.** If you have been justified through faith in Jesus Christ – that is, if you have been made right with God through faith in his Son Jesus, then you have peace with God. It is as simple as that, because through Jesus we gain access by faith into a place of grace

where we are able to stand. Our problem is that apart from Christ we are at odds with God – we are enemies of God. And we can never experience peace with God as long as we are at odds with God. Any person that has put their faith in Jesus is made right with God. They are in a right relationship with God. Or as Paul puts it here, they are at peace with God. They no longer struggle with God or run from God. When we no longer run from or struggle with God, we can develop a relationship with God. We can develop a relationship with the living God of all creation.

Has there ever been anyone in your life that you didn't get along with very well? Someone that you might even have been afraid of? It wasn't that you knew this person very well. You just found them kind of intimidating. And then one day, as a result of some unusual circumstances, you found yourself having to either work with this person, or in close quarters. It was not something you would have chosen; it just happened. And as you spent time with this person, you found out that they were not at all like you had thought they were. And your feelings for them changed. You developed a relationship and that made all the difference.

I remember an elder in one of my churches who did not particularly care for me – and neither did his wife. He resigned from Session because of his dislike. One day when I was hospital to visit someone, I discovered that Len was in as well and went to see him. He was rather distant. Told me that they had discovered cancer on one of his kidneys and had removed it. The doctors told him they got it all, but they didn't. After he went home, I began to visit him. Neither he nor his wife

seemed too keen at first, but I just continued to go week after week. Soon his wife would look forward to my visits and when I came she would leave to go out for a while just to have a little break. Len and I would sit and talk, then we would read a passage of Scripture and share a word of prayer. Over a number of months, I built a relationship with Len. When he died, his wife gave me a \$50 bill that was all folded up. She told me that when they got married, Len had put it in his wallet to be used only in an emergency. It had been there ever since. She wanted me to have it. I accepted it, but I could not spend it. If I remember correctly, I gave it to a charity. What made the difference? I developed a relationship with Len and his wife. And as a result, the tension and distrust melted away.

There are three things that I would like to emphasize as we close off. The **first** is that you **don't need to worry if Jesus is in your boat**. The disciples were not alone in the boat. And whose idea was it that they get into the boat in the first place? Mark 4:[35](#) **Jesus said to his disciples, "Let us go over to the other side."** In Matthew's account we are told: [23](#) **Then he got into the boat and his disciples followed him.** (Matthew 8) So the disciples were where they were because Jesus led the way. The truth is that it doesn't matter what comes our way when Jesus is in our boat.



The **second** thing I want to emphasize is that **storms are normal**. Storms are not an unusual experience – especially for fishermen. Storms were common on the Sea of Galilee, yet this storm had them scared skinny. When you think about it from a Christian perspective, for the disciples this was the best place for them to be right at that time. It was the best place to be, not because they were in a terrible storm and not because their lives were at stake, but because of who was in the boat with them. It was the Apostle John, who was in that boat, that said: **Greater is he that is in you than he who is in the world.** (1 John

4:4) Christ is in us through the power of the Holy Spirit. So whatever situation we are in is the best place to be because Jesus is in our boat. Just realize that the presence of Jesus does not exempt us from storms.

Finally, we need to realize that **Jesus has all authority**. [39](#) **He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, "Quiet! Be still!"** Then the wind died down and it was completely calm. [40](#) **He said to his disciples, "Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"** The problem is not with Jesus, it is with us. Jesus has the authority to deal with our storm, but we fail to ask him. Jesus tells us that all authority has been given to him, and he delegates that authority to his followers, but we fail to make use of it. Jesus still says to us: **"Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?"** Do we not remember that he has all authority and do we not realize that Jesus always brings peace?



This story teaches that you are not to worry. Jesus is in your boat! Storms are a normal part of everyday living. A storm is an OK place to be if Jesus is in the boat with you. Jesus has all authority and you are to exercise faith. Jesus empowers you to deal with your storm by faith. And if Jesus can sleep during your storm then certainly you can have peace! COVID-19 may well turn out to be the biggest storm that we have ever faced. We are faced with disruption to all our lives on a scale that we have never experienced before. We may not all survive this crisis. Regardless of the depth of the crisis, the call of Jesus to you today is: **28** **“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.** (Matthew 11) Remember our Key Verses: **6** **Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.** **7** **And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.**

#### **Hymn #410:**

#### **“O Day Of Peace That Dimly Shines”**

(Click on the link below to hear this hymn sung by a congregation in Lincoln, Nebraska. Words included.)

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w3gc\\_YTLB0s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w3gc_YTLB0s)

#### **Offering**

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3) We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer. This note from our treasurer.

**E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only.**

[standrewspertthoffering@gmail.com](mailto:standrewspertthoffering@gmail.com)

**Please include your Offering Envelope # in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (eg Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.**

#### **Offertory Prayer**

Mighty God and Father, you overwhelm us with your great mercy.  
At the time of our greatest need you surprised us with your wondrous love.  
Jesus offered his life for us to remove our dreadful curse.  
As you draw us into this renewing relationship of love,  
may we respond with gratitude  
as we offer the substance of our souls to continue the ministry of Christ.  
For his name and glory we pray and present our gifts. **Amen!**

**Prayers for the People by the People – please continue to pray for members of our congregation and others that you personally know of.**

- **Stuart McKim & Louise Burke**
- **Ann Savage**
- **Dave Crawley & Paul Thompson**

- **University and College Students** (Holly, Caitlin, Colleen, Jonathan, Liam, Caleb and Issac) & **Angus Funston**
- **Shut-ins and Nursing Homes** (Elva Fair, Audrey Ferrier, Germaine Vanderklok, June O'Hara, Gwen Travis, Lyn Harrington, Bing Jeun, Jo Mott, Ruth McTavish)
- **St. Andrew's**
- **Rick & Colleen Richardson**
- **Richard Hendry**
- **Joanna Savage**

**Closing Hymn #449: "Lord, Listen To Your Children Praying"**

(Click on the link below to hear this hymn.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N8iJ9CIS03o>

Lord, listen to your children praying,  
 Lord, send your Spirit in this place;  
 Lord, listen to your children praying.  
 Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

***Repeat***

**Benediction**

Go now, to serve Christ and follow him.  
 Let your old life fall like a grain of wheat into the earth  
 so that you may bear much fruit  
 as you allow God to reshape your heart  
 and live in obedience to the law written within you.

And may God centre you in truth and steady your spirit.  
 May Christ renew your joy and strengthen your will.  
 And may the Spirit teach you God's hidden wisdom  
 ..... and fill you with songs of rejoicing.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.