

August 11, 2024

## **FOLLOW PEACE WITH ALL MEN**

*Peace is a path opened to us by Jesus Christ.* Without Christ's work we would continue to be at war with our Creator and also with His creation. But as Christians, we rejoice in the peace of God freely given to us and desire to be at peace with all men. As Christians, we follow the path of peace and extend to the people around us invitations to walk in peace. We follow that path even when it turns us to people we might not expect or even like.

Because God is not a God of confusion but of peace (1 Corinthians 14:33; Philippians 4:9), His children are to pursue peace with all men. This is no easy task. The Apostle Paul recognizes the difficulties of this when he instructs the Romans saying, "If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all" (12:18). You likely know, in your own experience, that your anger or fear has sometimes made it difficult or impossible for someone acting as a peacemaker to make peace with you. People can sometimes be hard to be around.

Despite our regularly combative attitudes, God graciously reminds us of the importance and blessedness of peace by calling us to pursue peace. Paul writes, "So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual up building" (Romans 14:19). The Apostle Peter writes that whoever desires to love life and see good days should "seek peace and pursue it" (1 Peter 3:11).

So then, let us follow the path of peace. It will include for us, among other things, selfless sacrifice, forgiveness, and compassion. No doubt this seems like a difficult path, but we are walking on a path of peace with our Lord Jesus Christ who causes His peace to rule in our hearts (Colossians 3:5). We are walking on the path of peace *with Jesus* who has promised to be with us all the way (2 John 3). Now may the God of peace who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, equip you with everything good that you may do his will, working in us that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen (Hebrews 13:20-21).

Pr. Dennis Norby  
AFLC Board of Publications and Parish Education  
Valley City, North Dakota

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