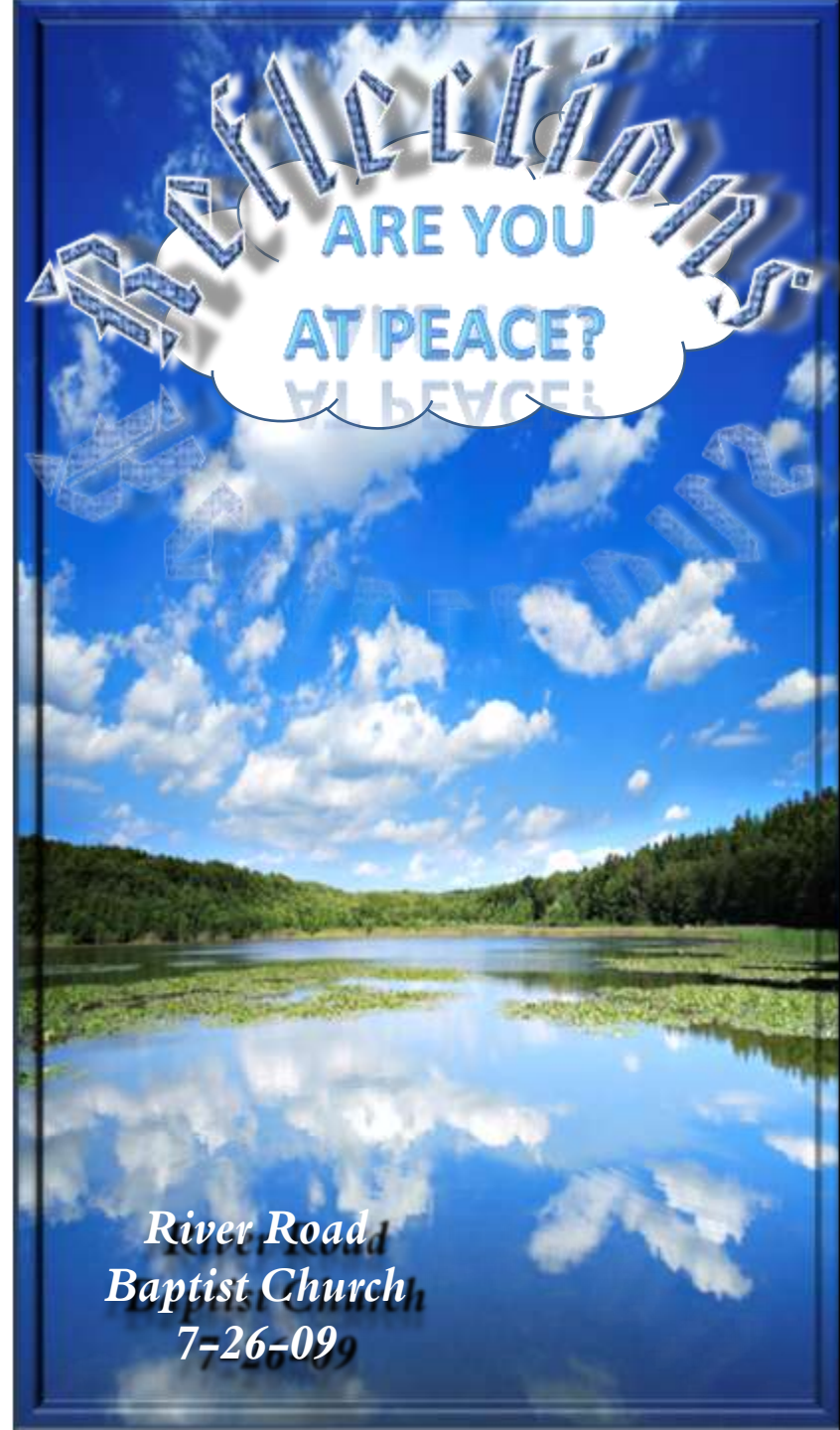


Sermon Notes



*River Road  
Baptist Church  
7-26-09*



# Reflections

The boat glides effortlessly over the lake. It is 5:00 a.m. and not a breath of wind troubles the water so the surface of the lake is glassy smooth. The wildlife have begun to move about to feed, drink and conduct their life activities. To the fisherman, this is a picture of peace, quiet and tranquility. When I am that fisherman, it reminds me of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm when it speaks of being led beside the still waters and having the soul restored. Sadly, however, that picture of peace and tranquility does not fit in the life picture of many today. Pressures in their jobs, in the political arena, economic losses and relationship issues have created a national climate that is anything but peaceful.

The Bible, in stark contrast to the world situation, carries the wonderful gospel of peace in Jesus Christ. ...*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup> gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law. (Galatians 5:22-23 NKJ)* The Holy Spirit's indwelling presence for those who come to Jesus is God's gift to the believer. His ministry in our lives is the power of God enabling us to be witnesses of Jesus to a lost and dying world. He ministers to our spirit by affirming our relationship with Jesus. *The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, <sup>17</sup> and if children, then heirs-- heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together. (Rom 8:16-17 NKJ)* To know that we are His children brings us a peace that the Bible describes as one that surpasses understanding, circumstance, and condition. *Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; <sup>7</sup> and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (Phi 4:6-7 NKJ)*

By laying all our cares on Christ, we are guaranteed that we can enjoy a peace that guards our hearts and minds against the wiles of the enemy. When we walk in the peace of a Spirit-filled life God gives us a new perspective on life and the troubles of this world that impact us daily. While giving in to a sense of upset and frustration can happen to all of us, Jesus would have us remember that He is the Prince of Peace and that He is

greater than His enemy. *You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world. (1John 4:4 NKJ)* The Scripture is filled, especially the New Testament, with the peace of God being given to His children. In Luke 2 we see that, even at His birth as one of His creation, it was said that He would bring peace to men. *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: <sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!" (Luk 2:13-14 NKJ)* To His disciples, as He prepared them for His eventual departure, He declared to them the gift of His peace. *"Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. (John 14:27 NKJ)* Herein lies the qualifier to enjoying His peace. *We must be in Him to receive His gift of the Holy Spirit who establishes His peace in our hearts and minds.*

The world sees peace as a lack of conflict, quiet and tranquil surroundings, or a special sense of well-being, but Jesus helps us understand that in Him and in Him alone can we find true peace for our soul and spirit. It is His peace that transcends our understanding and gives us that joy that is not diminished by circumstances. It is His peace through the Holy Spirit that tells us that we belong to Him and that His promises are true and for us even when life's circumstances would try to convince us that we are not at peace and that we are undeserving of His gifts and blessings. His Spirit reminds us daily that we are the children of God in Jesus and that He has given us His peace.

The fruits of the Spirit given in Gal. 5, begin with love, joy, and peace. God's love expressed in Jesus has secured salvation for us filling us with joy and resulting in His peace in our hearts and minds. As a result, we can, as James admonishes us, count it all joy even when we encounter trials and tests since they are the proof of our being the children of God. These times of challenges, trials and tests allow us to see God's hand of mercy and grace expressed in our lives and they enable us to see His power at work on our behalf. Seeing God at work in our lives allows our faith in Him to mature and strengthen us for the endurance we need to be complete in His provision for our life.

Jesus spoke peace to the storm and the wind and sea obeyed Him. He promised His disciples that they could have His peace in their lives and they obeyed Him by being His witnesses. Can we do any less? Peace to you! **Pastor Doug**