

## Peace (For Walking Into Battle)

Ephesians 6:10-15

#37 in our series from Paul's letter to the Ephesians #6 on warfare

November 10, 2013

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### Prayer

Father, We pray that you would lead us to a place where our trust is without borders. Lord, that sounds like a pretty terrifying ride, and yet so incredibly liberating; for we all live in fear of one border, and I think that's our own death. And we experience it every day, and yet, Lord God, would you lead us to that place where we would realize our trust in you is stronger than death because it's not really ours, it's yours that you have given to us...that you have implanted within us? It's eternal life. And we pray that you would do that even this morning as we preach. It's in Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

If you haven't been around for a while, you need to know that we've been preaching through the book of Ephesians, and it's building. For the past couple of months we've been preaching about spiritual warfare, and for the last few weeks we've been talking about the armor of God: First truth, then righteousness, and now...peace.

### Message

Peace seems like a strange piece of armor (I'm not even sure I like peace).

Clip from Miss Congeniality

Contestant #1: I would have to say, world peace.

Contestant #2: Definitely...world peace.

Contestant #3: That's easy, world peace.

Contestant #4: *World peace.*

Beauty pageant host (Stan): What is the one most important thing our society needs?

Gracie Hart: *That would be harsher punishment for parole violators Stan.* [There is an uneasy silence...crickets chirping and a dog barking.....] *AND world peace.* [The crowd begins to cheer enthusiastically.]

That's Sandra Bullock in *Miss Congeniality* where she plays a cop who's gone undercover at a beauty pageant. All the beauty pageant contestants say they want, "world peace," while they compete with one another for the crown. So desire for world peace is a lie they tell themselves and each other, as each one tries to beat their neighbor. Peace is an act called "congeniality." But detective Gracie Hart says, "Stricter punishment for parole violators." She's a representative of the rulers and authorities. She believes that real peace must be forced with law.

Rulers and authorities create order by taking life and calling it "peace." Rulers and authorities create the illusion of peace by taking away freedom. That's why folks with the biggest guns call themselves "peacekeepers," but others call them "life takers," murderers, and oppressors.

That peace is the kind of peace your mom was looking for on a Saturday morning when she'd yell, "Could we just get some peace-and-quiet around here? Would you kids just stop being so...ALIVE?" It's what Sigmund Freud called "civilization and its discontent." It looks like peace, but it's controlled resentment.

Well, beauty queen or cop, it seems that peace is a false hope or controlled resentment. But Paul is not saying, "Hope for peace," or "Work for peace," and certainly not: "Look to the rulers and authorities to keep peace."

As Paul wrote Ephesians, he was chained to a wall in a prison cell for having offended every rule and authority with the proclamation of peace. See? Paul isn't saying, "Fight for peace;" he's saying, "Fight *with* peace." Ephesians 6:14 "*Having your feet shod with the equipment of the good news of peace—(Strap peace to your feet and walk into war.)*"

Once upon a time a powerful and foolish king complained that this rough earth hurt his feet, and so he ordered that all the land be carpeted in cowhide. The court jester laughed and said, "Why not just take two small pieces of cowhide and strap them to your feet?" The king did, and that's how shoes were invented.

Paul writes, "Stand therefore having put on the shoes of the gospel of peace."

Well, don't expect the earth to get smoother; don't expect your circumstances to get easier because you're dressed in the armor of God. Soldiers get dressed in armor, to walk into war. According to 2 Corinthians 11:23 Paul labored, was imprisoned repeatedly, suffered countless beatings; five times he was flogged like Christ; three times he was beaten with rods; once he was stoned (with rocks...not grass); three times he was shipwrecked, and he spent a night and a day adrift at sea.

Now, in Ephesians, he writes, "Keep peace on your feet." In Philippians, he wrote: "Have no anxiety about anything," and "my imprisonment has really served to advance the gospel." Gospel means good news—the Gospel of Peace.

Paul exercised real peace in the midst of absolute chaos. And I think we have a name for that kind of peace; we call it courage. And when I think of it that way, peace becomes rather attractive; it's honest peace that doesn't suck the life out of things...but breathes life into everything...creating adventure. It's basically the only reason I went to movies as a kid...I wanted courage...I thought it was beautiful.

Courage is peace on display in the midst of chaos. Courage is why James Bond is cool. (Five seconds is left on the detonator to a nuclear warhead that will annihilate civilization, and James Bond is cracking jokes and picking up chicks.) He hasn't stopped dancing due to fear. Courage is why James Bond is cool, Rocky Balboa is cool, Batman is cool; it's why every hero and heroine is cool. Yet, it's so hard to be cool when life feels so out of control.

I'm fifty-two; my wife just turned fifty-three, and life feels out of control. I'm no longer a beauty queen, the rulers and authorities don't like me the way they used to. It feels like I'm on a runaway train.

## Clip from Indiana Jones

[(Female Screams...) Indiana Jones, Willie, and ShortRound are traveling, out of control, on a runaway mine cart. It is dark, sparks are flying everywhere as the mine cart is jerked back and forth uncontrollably on the track. The Thuggees are close behind them, shooting at them. One of the Thuggees manages to jump onto their cart and is about to attack them. Willie reaches out and punches the Thuggee hard. He falls back and plummets off the side of the track. Things seem to calm down a bit, for a brief few seconds. Indiana Jones, Willie and ShortRound face forward once again and realize they are rapidly approaching the end of the track. (Loud screams...) Indiana quickly pushes Willie and ShortRound down into the cart, for safety. The runaway cart jumps the area of missing track and safely lands on the other side.]

Indiana Jones is on a runaway train, being chased by the authorities. His circumstances are totally out of control, but his heart is not out of control; he's cool.

Now, we know that he can be cool because...

He's speaking words that were written beforehand, that he might speak them.

He's doing deeds that were "prepared beforehand, that he might walk in them."

He's in a story written by an author and he has faith that the author is good.

And of course, there's one other thing: None of it is real; Harrison Ford is an actor.

But the apostle Paul was not an actor, and yet he did write Ephesians 2:10:

"We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared before hand, that we might walk in them."

Paul was not an actor, and Christ Jesus was not an actor. He is actually the Word of the Author, and Jesus is cool. He is the "*Prince of Peace*." He takes a nap in a little boat, floating on the abyss, in a raging storm: He naps on the skin of chaos. That's cool! He hangs on a cross, crucified by all of us "beauty queens," who want to take His crown, and the rulers and authorities threatened by His life.

He hangs on a cross, but He wouldn't stop dancing. He wouldn't stop singing; He wouldn't stop loving, so even though it hurts like hell, He cries: "*Father forgive...*" and "*Into your hands I commit my spirit.*" He *IS* beauty, and He is the Prince of "Cool."

Isaiah 9:6

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given;

And the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end.

Nothing can stop His government and peace. His kingdom does not end at the gates of Hell. In Ephesians 2:17 Paul wrote: "*He came and preached peace (proclaimed peace) to you who were far off (pagan Greeks) and peace to those who were near (religious Jews).*"

See not only was Jesus cool, he won't stop until all are cool. Not only does He have shoes on His feet, He's got shoes for everyone's feet. Maybe He'll carpet the earth; for Isaiah continues to prophesy, Isaiah 11:5-9 "*Righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins.*" "*The wolf shall lie down with the lamb.*" "*They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea*"-like carpet. Jesus is

the Prince of Peace, and yet to His disciples he said, *"I have not come to bring peace...but a sword."*

So what does that mean?

What does peace for walking into war mean?

What does the Prince of Peace carrying a sword mean?

What is peace?

Well, in scripture, peace is a lot more than just the cessation of war. In Hebrew, the word is *Shalom*, it means that everything is good, and it's not static...but dynamic—it's righteousness in relationships of truth. It's a city where everyone and every interaction is good.

Jesus is called "Prince of Shalom." In the Revelation, His bride is the New Jerusalem. Jerusalem came to mean "city of shalom." Throughout the Old Testament, folks are commanded to build Jerusalem—"city of shalom." But she acts like a harlot rather than a bride, and she crucifies Jesus the Prince of Shalom, and she is destroyed.

Old Jerusalem is destroyed, but in the Revelation, she comes down new, from God, as a bride adorned for her husband. It's like all of history reveals that men can't make shalom, but God makes men and women into shalom—His body and bride.

In Ephesians 1:17 Paul prays that the Ephesians would: *"...have the eyes of their hearts enlightened, that they would receive an apokalypseos, a revelation."* And it was to the Ephesians that John sent the Revelation thirty years later.

In chapter five of the book of Revelation, John sees every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth (that's Hell), and in the sea; the sea was chaos and the abyss to the Hebrews. (It was the home of Leviathan, the seven-headed serpent of chaos.)

Revelation 5:13

Every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and in the sea and all that is in them...praising God and the slaughtered Lamb on the throne.

All praising...that's shalom...and John wonders how it happens. Then the Lamb starts opening seven seals. It seems that all Hell is breaking loose, but we watch as the Lamb and those with Him conquer. At the seventh bowl, and seventh thunder, and seventh trumpet of the seventh seal, when all the principalities and powers of this world have been conquered, John sees the New Jerusalem, descending from God, upon a new heaven and a new earth, as a voice comes from the throne saying, *"Behold—Look, I make...all things...new. I am the beginning and the End."* *"Of the increase of his government and his peace there will be no end;"* for He is the End.

Every Sabbath, every seventh day, is to be an anticipation of that, and a remembrance of that: Peace is the Beginning and the End; it's Eternal.

In Genesis 1, God creates all things in six days. On the seventh day He rests; for everything is "good;" "it is finished." Three times scripture says, *"Do not forget this fact brethren, with the Lord a day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as a day."* And now physicists tell us

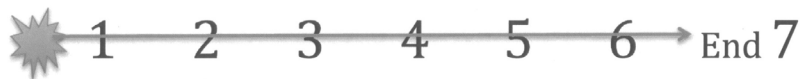
that time is relative, and relative to the perspective of creation, fourteen billion years is six days, and six days is fourteen billion years.

And scripture has always testified that man is still being created in God's image, and it is not finished until each of us is finished at the foot of a tree, on which God's Word in flesh cries, "*It is finished.*"

Paul calls Jesus: "*The firstborn of all creation;*" "*The firstborn from the dead.*" So no one is finished and fully created until they are finished in Christ, the Lamb on the throne, the Word of God that does not return void, the Prince of Shalom.

This world doesn't look like shalom, does it?

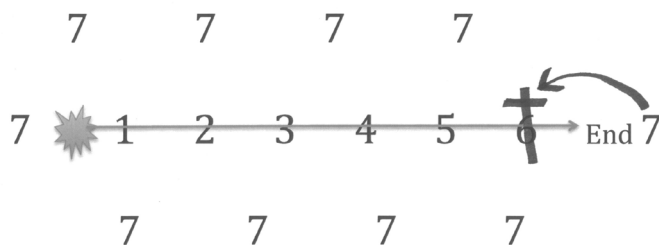
This is the sixth day of creation. So when and where is shalom?



Now, I should probably show you this diagram every time I preach. Because I think it's that important. With our modern view of space and time, it's what we have missed, but it's been there all along. It's the big bang to the end of time. It's the first chapter of the Bible and the history of all space and time. God made, will make, or is making the Cosmos in six days, depending on your perspective. The seventh day is a different kind of day. On that day, everything is good and God is eternal.

Zechariah 14: It's a unique day, a day on which there is no morning nor evening. The seventh day is Eternal Shalom.

So where's shalom?



Where's number seven? (I'm not talking about John Elway...but the Prince of Shalom) Where's Shalom? Well, Shalom is at the End of time and it's at the beginning of time. Jesus is the *Alpha* and *Omega*—Beginning and End.

And Shalom is all around us.

Like the "Kingdom of Heaven" really *is* at hand...

Like the music in a dance hall, just waiting for us to surrender and dance to.

Like the Logos of God that upholds all things.

And look, the Logos became *incarnos*– we “*wrapped Him in swaddling clothes and placed Him in a manger.*” On the sixth day of creation, the sixth day of the week, at the sixth hour, we nailed Him to a tree in a garden, and tried to steal His crown, and there He forgave His crown, and there we are made in His image. He is the Prince of Shalom, and He gives you shalom: “*My peace I give unto you, not as the world gives, do I give unto you.*”

You don't make peace. Peace makes you.

Jesus did say, “*Blessed are the peace doers,*” but you don't make Jerusalem: Jerusalem makes you. Paul wrote it in Galatians 4:26 “*The Jerusalem above is free, and she is our mother.*” I don't mean to freak you out, but I think you are the fruit of Christ's communion with His eternal bride...in perfect shalom.

Now, I sure don't comprehend everything I just said. I'm just trying to say what scripture has said all along, and I'm trying to convince you that Paul actually meant this stuff he wrote in his letter to the Ephesians. Ephesians 1:7-12 Remember, we read this about a year ago:

In Christ God has lavished his grace upon us...verse 9:

...making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, (There's empty time and full time) to unite all things in him (anakephalaio) “to bring together under one wounded head”), things in heaven and things on earth. In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

That we might sing the song of Revelation chapter five and teach others to sing it.  
That we might join the dance and be used by Him to teach others to dance.  
That we might share in the life of Christ and rejoice in His victory,  
Which is the story of His victory over chaos and the ancient dragon,  
Which is the story of our own creation, by grace, through faith,  
That we might eternally enjoy Shalom & live forever to the praise of God's glory in Christ.

Now, let's read Ephesians 6:10-15

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil (evil is chaos and the absence of Shalom) in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day,

(I think that's today: the sixth day, the 666-day. Our bodies exist in the sixth day. And you know, new life in us—eternal life in us, is the presence of the seventh day in us) and having done all, to stand firm. Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by [literally: the preparedness of] the gospel of peace—the equipment of the gospel of peace—the good news of Shalom.

When my kids were little, I was always amazed at how good news of Shalom changed the meaning of every experience and filled their time with life. Time, and time again, they'd experience some trauma and come running to me saying, "Kiss it. Kiss it." I'd smile, kiss the wound and say, "You're OK," and they'd run away playing and dancing once again. The kiss told them, "I still love you," and "I'm still in control—everything is OK!"

The death and resurrection of Jesus is like the kiss of our Father upon this fallen world, telling us, "I still love you, and I'm still in control. Yes, it hurts. Yes, you're dying. Yes, you're losing all control, but look...I'm still in control and everything is OK. Have courage."

Remember how I said that life feels like a runaway train? That's because it *is* a runaway train, and you are losing all control. Life is a runaway train, and a roller coaster is also a runaway train. On a roller coaster, you have no control, and yet your heart can be in control, if you have faith that someone is in control...that doesn't hate you.

I love to watch people on roller coasters because they're all experiencing the same thing but having very different experiences: Some are laughing, perhaps screaming with some fear (yet all the fear is being filled with joy); they've got their hands in the air, and their eyes are wide open in delight. While on the very same ride other people, experiencing the exact same trauma, are not laughing. Their jaws are clamped shut; their faces are filled with pain; their hands are NOT lifted in the air; their knuckles are white and wrapped around the safety bar in a death grip; their eyes are shut; they're locked down in fear, desperately trying to maintain control.

The first group is in Heaven, and the second group is in Hell. Sometimes, on the ride, you'll see someone go from Hell to Heaven and they'll just bust out laughing uncontrollably. It's when they begin to believe that, even though they're not in control, someone is in control that doesn't hate them. It's when they begin to have peace in what *feels* like chaos.

An old friend, Mike Yaconelli, died a few years ago. A few years before his death, he wrote the following:

I believe roller coaster are an accurate model of the Christian life...Sunday school, baptism, church membership...and you think, "Hey, no problem. I can follow Jesus anywhere," and then...ZOOOOOM...you crash into the twists and turns of life, jerking left, then right, up...then down...and fifty, sixty years go by and ...WHAM!...you're dead. If I were to have a heart attack right at this moment, I hope I would have just enough air in my lungs, just enough strength in me to utter one last sentence as I fell to the floor: "What a ride!"

Maybe eternity is all about screaming, "What a ride!"...about worshiping the Creator of the roller coaster and screaming, "What a ride!" But you don't have to wait until the end of the ride to scream, "What a ride!"

In my family, riding the roller coaster used to be something like a right of passage. Mom stayed in Kiddy Land and, one by one, the kids would come to me and say, "Dad can we ride the big ride?" They'd be terrified, but I'd give them my word and my presence. It would always start in fear and trepidation, and then end in absolute delight.

I remember when I first took Elizabeth on the Sidewinder at Elitch's, about 1998. I looked over, snot was shooting out of her nose and she started screaming, "I'm dead! I'm dead!" And then I watched as she came to life, and she told everybody, "That was awesome!"

She wrote a poem for called "Dads." Here are three lines:

Dads that are always there for you  
Dads that will be there to go on the big rides  
Dads if they were not here, the world would be blank...

Did you know that you have a Dad? And He controls the ride beginning to end. He built it, and He's with you; He's strapped in right next to you, and He loves you with everything He has...and is. If you don't know that, maybe the eyes of your heart are clamped shut in fear. If you don't know that, even Heaven might feel like Hell. But...if you do know that...even Hell might feel like Heaven because you've got peace strapped to your feet wherever you go.

Well, the roller coaster was like a right of passage. It created faith in me, in my daughter. It created faith, and communion, and courage. Maybe our Father is creating courage. And that peace on our feet changes every step we take.

Seventeen years ago, when we took the kids to Disney World. Jonathan was intrigued by...but a bit terrified of Space Mountain.

He approached the mountain with great caution. We rode and then we rode non-stop every day for like four days, and each time, I think he enjoyed it more, as we ran from end to beginning, and he shouted, "Let's do it again; do it again!"

This is the first time on the ride you call your life. I don't believe in reincarnation, but I do believe in the "fullness of time," and that faithlessness and fear are like empty time. And I suspect that eternity is not timeless...so much as timeFULL, and it's at least all your time maybe a whole bunch of other times...full of peace. So on the seventh, you will thank God for your life, perhaps even fully live your life. But maybe you can fully walk in each moment right now with the shoes of the preparedness (same word)...as Ephesians 2:10 when Paul said, "*Deeds prepared for you to walk in,*" maybe now you can walk in each moment full of life, fully living life, with the shoes of preparedness of the gospel of peace.

Whatever the case, scripture seems pretty clear to me that we're all going to arrive at the seventh day, when everything is good and all is shalom. But shalom in your heart here and now changes the meaning of every moment, hear and now, on the ride. It changes the way you travel, and maybe even *if* you travel; for peace is The Way and The Life. But Paul also seems to be saying something amazing: "It's also a weapon."

Do you remember when the Prince of Peace stood before Pilate, representing the power of Rome, and Pilate said, "*Do you not know that I have the authority to release you or crucify*



you?” And Jesus, Prince of Peace, having been stripped, beaten and flogged, ready to die, looked Pilate in the face and said, “*You would have absolutely no power over me except that which is granted you from above.*” In other words: “My Father is in absolute control of this ride.” And that peace cut into Pilate’s heart like a sword. And that peace would soon drop a Roman Centurion to his knees saying, “*Surely this was the son of God.*”

Every knee will bow; scripture says that three times: “*Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess,*” and that’s how it happens. You see, Jesus didn’t just have peace, He proclaimed peace and that proclamation is a sword: “Stand therefore with your feet shod with the equipment of the Good News of Peace.” Jesus doesn’t just want you to *have* peace; He wants you to go to battle with the proclamation of peace, releasing people from the dominion of chaos and fear into His Kingdom of shalom.

It’s a proclamation. Not a bargain, not a deal; it’s a proclamation. In other words, peace is an objective, eternal reality that has become a subjective, temporal reality in your heart. So, to preach the Gospel of Peace, on a roller coaster, is to do this:

[Image of monks on a roller lifting their hands and having fun]

It’s to lift your hands, surrender control and scream, “What a ride!” The proclamation of peace is the good news that God is your Father, He loves you, and He is in control of the ride. As long as a person rejects God’s Word, shuts down in fear and shame, that person remains in Hell. But that doesn’t mean that God doesn’t love them and that God is no longer in control of the ride, and that God is not with them...speaking His Word. In fact, you may be sitting next to them, and God is calling you to speak gospel, the proclamation of peace. But you can’t proclaim peace unless you believe there is peace to proclaim.

For too long, religious people have been saying, “God controls the ride, but He only loves some of us. Have peace and enjoy the ride,” or: “God loves all of us, but He doesn’t control the ride. Have peace and enjoy the ride.” Can you imagine if I took all four of my kids on the roller coaster and said, “I’m in total control of this ride, but I only love some of you, so for two of you this ride will end in life and for two of you it will end in death so that the first two will be forever grateful for my mercy,” or, what if I said, “I love each of you, but I’m not in control of this ride; however, if you have faith that I am in control of this ride, then I will be in control of this ride...so have peace or die?”

Well, God is *Love*, and I don’t think God decides to be “Not God.” God is Love, and God is in control. Like Paul said, He “*accomplishes all things according to the counsel of His will.*” God is Love, and God is in control. So you can turn to your neighbor and say, “God loves you, and God controls this ride. ‘*He consigned all to disobedience that he may have mercy on all.*’ He forgives you for your faithlessness—He is not mad at you; He loves you; Have peace, and enjoy the ride.”

But if we preach “God saves,” yet we preach Him conditionally and in fear, aren’t we really preaching: “I save” or “You save” or “The institutional church saves” or “Your choice saves” or “Anxiety saves” or “We save from God, who may not love us, and may not be in control of this ride?” How backwards is that? We save ourselves from God? Who would want us to believe that?

Well...Paul *is* talking about spiritual warfare.

Listen to what Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:13- 17

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down, in his flesh, the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.

What a phrase: "Killing the hostility." Verse 14: "He himself is our peace..."

Maybe He didn't come to bring peace...

Because He himself *is* our peace, and His presence is a sword.

He himself is utterly hostile to hostility.

He himself violates violence.

He himself is the death of death, (which is life).

He himself is the Word of God spoken into chaos, creating all things.

He himself crushes the seven heads of the ancient chaos monster, Laviathan.

He himself defeats the devil and the principalities and powers.

He is PEACE, and this is how He goes to war:

Clip from The Passion of Christ

Jesus: Father, into your hands...I commend...my spirit.

[Jesus drops His head, exhales...He hangs on the cross, now dead. The scene then changes to a cold barren landscape. From a distance, we see guards slowly walking around the area near the cross. Then, what appears to be a tear drops from heaven onto the earth, penetrating the earth and reaching into Hell...Satan, surrounded by a barren landscape, screams out in pain, anguish, and fury.]

### **Communion**

At the beginning of that day, which in the way the Hebrews reckon days, the way scripture reckons days, was our Thursday night. But at the beginning of Friday, the sixth day, The Prince of Shalom He took bread and broke it saying, "This is my body, which is for you; take and eat. In the same manner, He took the cup saying this is the new covenant in my blood;" (scripture says the life is in the blood) take and drink. He gives us His body and blood, and then He dies...and rises from the dead.

Once, we took all four of my kids to the Magic Kingdom, in California. They all had this one favorite ride. It was like a roller coaster, but it was more than just a roller coaster. It was Indiana Jones's roller coaster.

Like the story of his life...so his story would become your story as you journeyed through life. It was called the *Indiana Jones Adventure Ride*. I think that Paul believes that we, right now,

are Christ's body in this world and as we travel through time He is actually filling us with His life, His faith, His peace, His righteousness...Himself.

You see, Paul believed that He was on *The Jesus Christ Adventure Ride*:

That in His flesh...he experienced the suffering of Christ, and the life of Christ—His death and resurrection, that on this ride...God was creating faith in Himself, and a communion with Himself, that at the end of the ride...Paul would know God, even as He was known by God...and even here and now, Christ was the fullness of all his time, the meaning of every moment. Christ Jesus was his peace, as together they crushed the head of the ancient dragon and liberated the children of Adam from bondage to death and hell: "WHAT A RIDE!"

So what am I saying?

What does this communion mean?

You are not on a runaway train.

Stop trying to seize control of a runaway train; that's sin, and it creates hell.

You are not on a runaway train.

You are on a roller coaster, strapped in, next to the Prince of Peace.

You are on *The Jesus Christ Adventure Ride*...

So have peace; enjoy the ride!

## **Benediction**

I know what some of you are thinking: "That's cool...but really? Because that's kind of hard to believe." It is hard to believe because we are not in Kiddy Land anymore. This is the big ride. On this ride, you are going to witness a bunch of things. It may include cancer. It may include insanity. It may include plunges into the most terrifying places: The Valley of the Shadow of Death. You may climb to the highest heights. You may experience being jerked to the right, then to the left, and back to the middle. These are the things you'll experience on this ride, but you will witness your own creation, in the image of God. You will witness the Lamb that was slain redeeming all things for His own glory and His purpose. You will witness the creation of Shalom...and...BAM...at the end of the ride...well...it's only the Beginning, and you'll scream: "What a ride!" You see, by faith you can scream: "What a ride," *right now*, so have peace; enjoy the ride.

*Disclaimer: The following document is a draft and has not been edited by the author. Therefore, there may be discrepancies. Some discrepancies may be minor; some may have to do with theology. When in doubt, please refer to the audio version of the sermon on this website and don't be shy about informing us of errors.*