***One Thing Remains/Lion and the Lamb***

***Series:*  Believe**

***Today:* Peace *Strands***

***Speaker: Joel Smith, Children’s Minister***

***8:50/11:27***

Good morning! For those who do not know me my name is Joel Smith, I am the Children’s Minister here at First Colony.

I am a dad. When you are a dad and have girls, specifically the little girls with hair that gets in their faces or cereal, you learn how to braid. I won’t say that I am great at it, do not invite me to your wedding to do the bride’s hair. However, I can put three strands together to make one braid.

Today we continue the Believe series, we are looking at the fruit of the Spirit…Peace. Peace is a huge topic! It’s mentioned over 400 times in the Bible, whereas love is significantly under 200. Typically, when you ask someone in the world toady what they are searching for… they often will include these three: peace, love and happiness. Today’s message will not be a comprehensive study on peace, but rather three strands coming together for one braid.

Strand #1. **The Eye on the Storm.**

Often people ask me how I am adjusting to Texas, it does get hot, but Texas is a pretty cool. One adjustment I don’t think I will ever make is, hurricanes. Harvey initially was just a storm you watched on TV, until the situation became up close and personal, quickly transitioning to dire. Early in Jesus’ ministry after calling the disciples and teaching through many parables, He informed the disciples, they were sailing to the other side of the lake, at night. Open with me in your Bibles to Mark, chapter 4. One item to keep in mind is Mark’s purpose in writing this book we see in the very first verse, Jesus is none other, then God in this strand we see His humanity and deity together.

Read with me starting at verse 35, *That day* ***when evening came****,* ***He said*** *to His disciples, “****Let us go over to the other side.****” 36Leaving the crowd behind, they took Him along,* ***just as He was****, in the boat. There were also other boats with Him. 37A furious squall came up, and the waves broke over the boat, so that it was nearly swamped. 38Jesus was in the stern, sleeping on a cushion. The disciples woke Him and said to Him, “Teacher,* ***don’t you care*** *if we drown?”*

Humor me for a moment let put our hands on this lesson, take out your bulletin, we are going to make a squall. Noise one, “**the pancake clap**”, you can start soft and gently build. Noise two, “**shake the paper**”, okay now the storm is getting worse. Noise three, “**the yank**” firmly grab both ends of the paper, and repeatedly pull vigorously. Careful, this one can tear if you’re, too dramatic. Now I’m going to walk across the stage when I’m in front of you mimic what I do. Ready to freeze when Jesus speaks.

*39He got up, rebuked the wind and said to the waves, “Peace! Be still!” Then the wind died down and it was completely calm.*

*40He said to His disciples, “Why are you so afraid? Do you still have no faith?”*

*41They were terrified and asked each other, “Who is this? Even the wind and the waves obey Him!”*

As we look at this story considering peace, I see two quick takeaways. Number one hold on. What are you holding on to? Jesus is the anchor in this story that the disciples went to in desperate need. Are you holding tight to Him and His promises?Hebrews 10:23 *Let us* ***hold*** *unwaveringly to the hope we profess, for* ***He who promised is faithful****.*

**Hold on, to the Promises.**

Number two, let go of “your” control. This scenario reminds me of the Carrie Underwood song, *Jesus Take the Wheel*… Everything’s out-of-control so here it’s Yours. Psalm 46:10-11 Let *go of your concerns! Then you will know that* ***I am God. I rule the nations. I rule the earth****. The LORD of Armies is with us. The God of Jacob is our stronghold. God is in control.*

**Bottom line…Let go, of Pride.** And lay our will at His feet.

I would like to pause briefly to pray with you. If you would, take hold of your bulletin and think about **Holding on** or **Letting go**. Is there something you need to be holding tightly to…a promise and truth you know? If so grip your bulletin tightly and tell God. Or, is there something you need to let go release to God…if this is your concern, lay your bulletin on your open face palms and talk to God in prayer.

***9:00/11:37***

Strand #2. **The Eye on the Steps.**

In the story above Jesus’ disciples went thinking they were in control to extreme terror, to being afraid in a peaceful situation. This next strand of peace deals with what steps should we follow to seek peace. This week’s Believe verse is Philippians 4:6-7, giving us some of the “steps” to peace.

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

**Step 1. Prayer**

*by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.*

Prayer is talking to God. Petition is requesting intervention, (Psalms 55:22) Cast your cares on the Lord and He is sustain you: He will never let the righteous fall. and thanksgiving is remembering God’s faithfulness…monuments (*Joshua 4*). I remember when we went from three kids to four, we had to have a car that could at least seat six people we prayed about it and prayed about it. We remembered God’s faithfulness from the past but would he still be faithful this time? In this miracle story truncated we went into the hospital without that prayer being answered… But when it was time to come out of the hospital we were driving a minivan. To quote a mentor, “God often doesn’t save your bacon until it’s crisp.”

**Step 2. Peace**

*And the peace of God which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds*

I know what you’re thinking how can the steps to peace include the step of peace? Well it’s because with of makers didn’t sound as cool nor with a P. Christmas a year ago, Ronnie preached on peace. He reminded us that it all starts by making **Peace with God**, but God it all the work. (*Romans 5:1 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.*

Once you make peace with God, He doesn’t leave you high and dry but rather gives you a purpose and hope to live by…and that’s the **Peace of God** (*John 14:7 “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.”)*

Finally, God’s peace doesn’t stand still it enables us to become Peacemakers (*Matthew 5:9* ***Blessed are the peacemakers*** *for they shall be called children of God*!) Peacemakers reconcile the world to God and that starts within your sphere of influence. This is where I get to give a children’s ministry commercial. We need volunteers willing to consistently invest the peace of Christ in the hearts of young people would you consider stepping up to this responsibility? Young people can be children and children’s ministry youth in youth ministry or even baby Christians through friends speak and mission opportunities.

**Step 3. the Person**

*in Christ Jesus.*

You might remember the t-shirt theology *“N-o Jesus, n-o peace, K-n-o-w Jesus, k-n-o-w peace.*” Basically, that is what peace boils down to, do you have a relationship with Jesus Christ? He is the Prince of peace.

A preacher from Fort Worth, Ron Dunn, told this story about a wealthy man from England who had quite an art collection. This man was a widower, who endured the premature death of his only son, killed in battle. After he passed away it was reported that his entire estate would be auctioned off, and the proceeds given to charity. One stipulation in the will, required that the first item auctioned must be the amateur portrait of his son. As a crowd gathered anxious for the lucrative opportunities ahead, they waited impatiently for someone to bid on this piece of no value. Eventually the old butler and family friend offered a bid, no one countered and the auctioneer informed said “sold!” Then the auctioneer informed the audience the auction was closed. People were shocked…what about all the art? The auctioneer told the audience that the owner stipulated, in his will, whoever got the son got the entire estate.

Whoever receives the Son gets access to the entire estate. The gospel in its simplest form is that God made everything, we as humans broke it, Jesus fixes it through His death and resurrection, and finally we must respond. John 10:9 9I am the door: by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and **find pasture.”**

***9:09/11:45***

Strand #3. **The Eye on the Sky.**

The final strand is a testimony from a man whose depression finally lifted when he began to look up. Psalms 121: “I lift up my eyes to the mountains-- where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth.” TD Jakes, “Worry and worship cannot coexist.”

January, I attended the children’s pastors conference and a well-known minister spoke. To the surprise of the audience, he told us that over the last year he had been depressed, unable to leave his house and it was a struggle to get out of bed. He knew all the truth that you and I know, but could not beat this depression even with medical assistance. Finally, what got him out of bed, and in front of people again, was **Praise**. He turned his eyes from his circumstances and looked up to God. He went on to tell us how incredible God is… reminding us that even creation sings to His glory. For part of his presentation we saw and heard both stars and whales praise God by making noise. I thought what better way to tie these strands of peace together then point all our attention to God in praise.

Cue Video to 4:10

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=helxFeG-0n0>

***9:15/11:52***