

The Waiting Room

Peace in the Waiting Room

December 7, 2025

John 14:26-27

Introduction

I don't know if you have any travel plans this holiday, but I know there is one place you probably don't want to be, even if you have to be. No, I'm not talking about your in-laws. I'm talking about the (SLIDE) Atlanta International Airport. My mom frequently said that if you're going to heaven or hell, you gotta go through Atlanta. Some might say that the Atlanta airport is, at best, purgatory. It's very hard to be at peace there – delays, crowds, noise, lines, frustration. The whole terminal feels chaotic. Not even the upscale airport lounges can offer enough peace, in my opinion.

But the chaos in airports interests me in part because of how stark a contrast it is to the people who are responsible for their existence. I am speaking about PILOTS. Pilots are the coolest, calmest, composed, and prepared people in this world. They are seemingly always at peace. And even if they're not at peace internally, you'd never know it externally.

Same chaotic circumstances. Same intense environment. More life-altering responsibility. And yet utter peace in the heart and mind of a pilot. (SLIDE - TITLE SLIDE)

Segue

In this way, pilots remind me of Jesus, particularly as it relates to our text this week. John 14 takes place on the night before Jesus dies. The disciples are like a team trying to navigate the Atlanta airport for the first time and in the holiday season. They are confused, anxious, and worried, and even afraid. Their feelings are understandable. Jesus has told them He's leaving, that betrayal and denial are in their near future, and that the future will be hard. Their lives were chaotic and nerve-wracking.

It is into this anxiety-inducing moment that Jesus promises to give them His peace.

(SLIDE) Jesus says in John 14:27, *"Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful."*

Notice the order: "I give you peace... it's unlike anything the world can offer... and it stands in direct opposition to fear."

Let's examine this passage together, but I want to do it backwards. Let's start with fearful and troubled hearts, examine some of the ways the world tries to mitigate them through its so-called peace, and then talk about Jesus' peace.

Body

Fearful and Troubled Hearts

Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful.

The words here, and their combination, imply that the disciples were ***distressed and daunted***. They were burning up and, therefore, in danger of burning out. And as I said earlier, we can understand why they felt the way they did. Jesus has told them He's leaving, that betrayal and denial are in their near future, and that the future would be hard. Fear dominated their lives.

Fear, rooted in our fall in the garden so very long ago, shows up seemingly everywhere. We live in a world where our hearts are constantly being pulled toward fear. I sat down to really think about this in my life, and I've made a list of things that I could remember ... things that led to fear and anxiety in my life over the last maybe 35 years.

- My first competitive tennis tournament
- Learning to drive
- My parents' divorce
- Moving to college
- Not having a significant other as a young adult
- Not finding a job
- Terrorist attacks
- Losing a job
- Having a baby
- Starting a doctoral degree
- Financial problems
- Marital strife
- Losing a parent to an incurable disease
- Parenting strife

Categorically, you might think of your fears this way: fear of sickness, fear of aging, fear of death, fear of the unknown, fear of making the wrong choice, fear of being rejected, fear of being exposed as not enough. And yet here is Jesus saying, "Don't let your heart be troubled or fearful." For some reason, we are not allowed to allow it. "Do not let." On what basis? I'll answer that last.

The Counterfeits of Peace

But there are some ways that we try that don't work. The world has its ways of trying to bring peace that don't really bring peace. This is what Jesus is referencing when he says, (SLIDE) *"I do not give to you as the world gives."*

Now, there are lots of ways that the world tries to give peace. It's the Christmas season, so you can probably guess at least one of the two I'm going to mention.

Escapism

The first that comes to my mind is (SLIDE) **escapism**. Escapism can be summed up with the sentence, *"Don't worry; be happy."*

*Ain't got no cash, ain't got no style
Ain't got no gal to make you smile
Don't worry; Be happy
Bobby McFerrin*

Escapism is peace-by-distraction. Peace-by-ignoring. Peace-by-refusing-to-think-too-hard. And it has many modern expressions.

- *Do you turn to endless shows, videos, or scrolling to avoid thinking about what's really going on in your heart?*
- *Do you stay busy all the time because silence or stillness feels emotionally unsafe?*
- *Do you reach for food or drink to dull worry, sadness, stress, or loneliness?*
- *Do you buy things to soothe anxiety or create a momentary spark of relief?*
- *Do you withdraw emotionally—telling yourself "I don't care" or "whatever"—as a way to avoid dealing with wounds, fears, or disappointments?*

All of these are modern-day expressions of escapism. It numbs without healing. It postpones but never solves. That's why Jesus says His peace is *not as the world gives*. Escapism is a counterfeit peace.

Hedonism

A second counterfeit peace we often fall for is (SLIDE) **hedonism**. This is the belief that the highest good in life is pleasure, and the greatest evil is discomfort or constraint. So whereas escapism tries to *numb* our fears, hedonism tries to *replace* fear with pleasure. It says: *"Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die."* **Dave Matthews**

Now, don't be too quick to solely associate hedonism with the life of someone who seemingly never stops to indulge. Ask yourself:

- *Do you constantly look for more stimulating entertainment because simple, quiet joy feels unsatisfying?*

- *Do you pursue sexual experiences—real or digital—for the thrill and rush?*
- *Do you reach for substances or experiences to chase a feeling of excitement or euphoria?*
- *Do you depend on achievement, recognition, or success to give you a sense of worth or emotional high?*

All of these are modern-day expressions of hedonism. They promise serenity through joy but deliver only a momentary high. They excite without satisfying, and they thrill without ever bringing rest. They are counterfeits.

Now let's put these two together (escapism and hedonism). Let's be clear that Christians are not ascetics. We don't believe the best life is one without fun or rest or recreation or pleasure. There is nothing wrong with joy, fun, laughter, or pleasure in and of themselves. God created them. But when we turn to these things to make them our peace rather than experience them as gifts of the One who is our Peace, they stop being gifts that serve their true purpose and become gods. That's when they take the form of counterfeits in our lives.

- *"Not real Ice Cream" from that time Holly and I visited a family with near unlimited financial resources and showed up with our plastic baggies Mayfield ice cream. The host was not about to let anyone eat that. They had to have the real deal, and he broke out the Haagen Daz for us. Counterfeits were not allowed.*

Conclusion/Application

So, fear is the opposite of peace, and escapism and hedonism (among many, many others) are counterfeits to peace.

Peace Secured by the Cross

Over and against these counterfeits, Jesus offers real peace in v. 27. *(SLIDE) – Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you.*

What's really interesting here is that the language is somewhat legal. It's the kind of Greek phrasing that you might use in a will that someone reads and executes after you die. We all know how wills work. You only receive what's been left to you in a will when that person dies. I don't think that language is by accident here. I think Jesus is intentionally communicating to his disciples that by his death, he is willing them his peace. He is not creating some kind of peace for them to have, but *willing* them his own peace through his death.

Here's what real peace is. *(SLIDE) – True peace isn't merely a feeling—it is rooted in an objective reality.* Jesus went to the cross, and there opened the door for His disciples to enter and have peace with the Father. *(SLIDE) – Through his death, Jesus satisfied God's justice, purchased your forgiveness, and provided your righteousness. Having that is having peace.*

You know, it's interesting ... if you were to keep reading the Gospel of John, you'd see these instances where Jesus appeared to his disciples after his death and resurrection. And in each one of them, Jesus greeted them with the phrase, "Peace be with you." He does in verses 19, 21, and 26. ALSO fascinating is that in each of those occurrences, Jesus shows them his hands and his side. The peace that He greeted them with he could truly impart to them because of his death and resurrection.

Folks, do you understand that Jesus died, paid every debt, removed every barrier, and secured your adoption? True peace begins and ends with the objective reality of the cross. By grace through faith in the finished work of Jesus, you HAVE JESUS' PEACE.

Peace Experienced in the Spirit

But objective realities don't always equate to our experiences or feelings, do they? I mean, the objective reality is that I am married, but Holly does not wake up every morning feeling like the most blessed wife that has ever graced this planet, I assure you. Feelings and experiences do not always fall in line with objective realities.

So even though we may objectively have Jesus' peace because of his death and resurrection, how are we to experience it?

The answer lies in the verse before, [John 14:26 \(SLIDE\)](#).

But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and remind you of everything I have told you.

Jesus says the Holy Spirit will "teach you" and "remind you" of everything He has said. The Spirit reveals peace by bringing the words of Jesus back to our minds at the exact moment we need them. When fear rises, it's the Spirit who whispers Christ's promises: "I am with you... I will not leave you as orphans... I am the resurrection and the life." The Spirit turns doctrines into comfort, promises into courage, and Scripture into strength. The very peace Jesus secured at the cross becomes accessible in daily life because the Spirit continually shines light on the promises we forget, the gospel we drift from, and the truth we can't apply on our own.

But the ministry of the Spirit goes deeper still. He also cultivates peace inside the heart, producing what Paul calls "the fruit of the Spirit," which includes peace itself. He quiets the accusing conscience by applying the finished work of Jesus. He strengthens weak faith when fear feels overwhelming. He anchors us in the Father's love when our confidence is shaken. He brings the presence of Christ near so that we do not just know about peace—we actually feel it, rest in it, and walk in it. This is why Jesus can say, "Don't let your heart be troubled." Not because we have the power to calm our own hearts, but because the Spirit is at work within us, transforming us into people who can stand in storms with a supernatural calm that does not come from us, but from Him.

(SLIDE) So you see, Jesus secures peace by His work, the Spirit reveals peace through His Word, and the Spirit cultivates peace within our hearts.

Invitation (Title Slide)

If you're here this morning and your heart is troubled or fearful, Jesus is not asking you to fix it yourself. He's not telling you to "try harder," "calm down," or "pull it together." He is inviting you to receive the peace He secured for you at the cross and offers to you right now through His Spirit.

Every counterfeit peace will let you down, but Jesus will not. He died and rose so that nothing—absolutely nothing—could stand between you and God ever again. And if you will turn to Him, trust Him, surrender to Him, the peace you have been chasing your entire life will finally have a name—and that name is Jesus.

So come to Him. Lay down your fear. Lay down your striving. Lay down every imitation of peace. Come to the One who loves you, who gave Himself for you, and who stands ready at this very moment to give you His peace.