

This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!
2 Corinthians 5:17 (NLT)

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BEAUTY NOT BROKENNESS

During World War II, Eva Kor aged 10, was sent to Auschwitz death camp with her twin sister, Miriam. On arrival, they were immediately taken to the Nazi's laboratory. Over time, both girls underwent numerous injections as part of a greater experiment carried out on twins by Dr Mengele.

Eva survived, grew up, got married and had children. The experience of Auschwitz never left her. She carried it with her throughout life. However, after 50 years of bitterness, she finally came to forgive the perpetrators, especially Mengele.

The act of forgiveness can be a difficult process and can take time. Jesus commanded that we do it repeatedly. Why? Because it opens the gateway to receive God's healing, restoration and completeness. It clears a way to experience a deep sense of peace.

'I felt such freedom,' Eva said. 'I was no longer a tragic prisoner. I was free of Auschwitz and I was free of Mengele. Forgiveness is the seed of peace.'¹

Kintsukuroi is a process of repairing pottery using a gold lacquer. It is understood that the pot is then even more beautiful for having been broken. This is a great visual illustration for how forgiveness can be gold in a broken life. Like Eva, it makes us at peace with the many pieces.



PRAYER

Father God. I am inspired by Eva's act of forgiveness. Show me whom, what and where I need to forgive, so I may have peace in my own life. Strengthen me where I am weak and soften me where I have grown hard. Make me whole once again. Amen

ACTION

To be an agent of reconciliation. Look up Eva's story online. Following her example, who or what is the one person or thing you need to forgive today to receive peace? How can you do this? Who can help you?

1. miamiherald.com/news/local/article142764569.html

God's peace will watch over your hearts and your minds. He will do this because you belong to Christ Jesus. God's peace can never be completely understood
Philippians 4:6-7 (NIRV)

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HOLD ON TO HOPE

Paul's letter to the Philippians was written to the church in Macedonia. In it he urges them not to worry about anything but to ask God for what they need with a thankful heart and God's peace will keep them safe. Having recently visited the Middle East where in many places there is conflict and oppression this is a hard message. However, the importance of holding on to hope became really clear to me in conversations with those that are caught up in such challenging situations. We

must therefore take Paul's urging seriously by putting our complete trust in God's peace to surround and keep us safe in all we do and say.

PRAYER

Dear Lord we commit ourselves anew to live in peace and harmony with one another in response to your commandment to love one another. Help us we pray to find ways of living out this commitment day by day wherever we are and whatever we are doing. Amen

I leave my peace with you. I give my peace to you. I do not give it to you as the world does. Do not let your hearts be troubled. And do not be afraid.
John 14:27 (NIRV)

Rev Beth Rookwood is a pioneer minister working amongst young adults in Morpeth, Northumberland.

WHAT DOES PEACE FEEL LIKE?

What makes you feel afraid?' I asked a group of sixth-formers. Some answered 'Exams!' 'All the decisions I have to make about my future!' 'The ways I know I need to change what I look like'. We then read the Bible verse. We pondered what Jesus meant by 'his peace' and how that might be received as a gift. One person said 'Maybe peace is like being given a hug by someone you really trust; like a long hug where you stay hugged long enough for your shoulders

to relax.' This image captured something of Jesus' gift of peace to the world. What images come to your mind as you reflect on Christ's gift of peace to you? How might you carry that image with you today?

PRAYER

Lord Jesus, thank you that your presence brings us peace. Help us to let you come close to us. Amen

I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.
John 16:33 (ESV)

Larissa Morava is the Editor for Bible Society's magazine *Word in Action*.

PEACE IN SYRIA

A colleague, who runs Bible Society in Syria, shared this message and verse with us. 'Our part of Aleppo had been under a merciless siege for almost three years. We were used to shells and barrel-bombs, and the endless screaming of people who had been injured or lost loved ones. But one afternoon when I was standing on the balcony of our home, there was an incredible bang. The whole building shook violently and I was shaking along with it as I sobbed convulsively. Then I suddenly felt still, as Jesus was speaking to me in his consoling and encouraging way with this verse. At that

moment I knew that God is good and that he doesn't leave us alone. Jesus is there to give us peace in a world of struggle and war and he has overcome the whole world!

PRAYER

Loving Heavenly Father, in our fractured world please bring your peace. We lift up our brothers and sisters around the world who live and work in war torn countries, that they will shine as beacons of your peace to everyone around them. Protect and surround them with your love, we pray.

The LORD gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace.
Psalm 29:11 (NIV)

Adam May works with Sports Chaplaincy UK as their Communications and Church Relations Officer.

HIS BLESSING OF PEACE

If God be our God, he will give us peace in trouble. When there is a storm without, he will make peace within. The world can create trouble in peace, but God can create peace in trouble'.
Tom Watson

PRAYER

Father God, we thank you for your many gifts, including that of peace. We pray that we would know that blessing upon our lives in all that we do. We remember it is a gift, and we pray to receive it. Amen

He who was seated on the throne said, 'I am making everything new!'
Revelation 21:5 (NIV)

Archbishop Winston Halapua serves the Anglican Church in Aotearoa, New Zealand and Polynesia.

RECONCILIATION WITH CREATION

People in my country treat what nature has given them as a gift. They know when fish will be plentiful, so they fish at that time. They know when fruit will ripen, so they pick it in season. For thousands of years we have lived like this – reconciled with the environment, stewards of creation. But things are changing. Hurricanes come later and disrupt the fruit season. The seas are rising and the currents moving, so the fish behave differently. Many of our islands are now completely submerged. The balance of our

way of life is shifting. This is not your problem or mine. This is our problem, that we will work on together. Through God we can transform what is disfigured into what is beautiful. In Jesus' resurrection we catch a glimpse of the new creation. God is reconciling this world to himself so that all will be made new.

PRAYER

We pray that God would show us how to live in balance with creation and how to begin transforming what is broken or disfigured.

Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go.
Joshua 1:9 (NIV)

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BE STRONG

Within a year of becoming a military spouse my husband was sent to Iraq. With much better communication than they would have enjoyed 100 years ago, we were able to email, phone and even Skype. But one day in 2003, all contact stopped for two weeks. Life seemed to stand still. My Mother-in-law would call. We'd switch on the news and sit in silence, watching the black skies flash with green, alone but together! We prayed and waited. We took peace from Joshua 1:9 and had hope as we

knew God was with us and with 'Our Boy'. How must it have been for the families that went for months, sometimes years without hearing anything from their loved one?

PRAYER

Father, thank you for the families that love and support those that serve their countries. Give them peace, perseverance and patience as they stay at home, while their loved ones go to far off places, and hope for their safe return. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen