

INTERIOR PEACE

John 14:27

"Peace I leave you; my peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you."

What is this Peace of which the Lord speaks?

- It is not a peace found in this world.
- Jesus tells His apostles that the world does not *know* Him.
- This is due to what the bible calls *carnality*.
(See Rom 8:6,7; 1 Cor 3: 1-4.) The world operates with broken and selfish goals.
- It is not absence of conflict. This mistaken view has led to the rejection of Christ as the Messiah by famous rabbi of the middle ages Moses Maimonides.
- It is not identified with feelings. (Ignatius' discernment of spirits.)
- **Positively:** It is the presence of Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit in the soul.
(This is the subject of next week's lesson.)

Why we should want it?

- We desire integration and harmony between our inner convictions and outer world.
- We desire harmony with our emotions and the outer world.
- Most of all, if we contemplate deeply enough, as St. Augustine did, on the restlessness of our hearts, we will find that they are restless until they rest in God alone.

How we lose it?

- Sins of which we have not repented.
 - In this same chapter of John's gospel, Jesus makes clear that He wants His followers to keep the commandments; that this is how they will prove that they love Him.
 - The opposite of this is to prefer the selfish, short-sighted desire, over God's perfect will. Blessed John Paul II put it this way:

"the loss of the sense of sin is thus a consequence of the denial of God; not only in the form of atheism, but also in the form of secularism. If sin is the breaking off of one's filial relationship to God in order to situate one's life outside of obedience to Him, then to sin is not merely to deny God. To sin is also to live as if He did not exist, to eliminate Him from one's daily life." (John Paul II's Apostolic Exhortation, *Reconciliatio et Poenitentia*, # 18.)
- Owned by our passions.

- Thoughts uncontrolled that lead to worry, anxiety, fear, discouragement, etc.
 - Our imagination is the devil's playground. Why? Because it is not real, and he hates reality, as that is the Lord's. Thus, he retreats to the unreal: the world of imagination, to suggest and inflate all kinds of difficulties, even those that may have a loose connection to reality, in order to exaggerate them according to our pride.
 - We are easily deceived between reality and our perception of it.
 - Failing to discipline our curiosity also leads us astray.
 - In short, how often are our concerns and worries just a figment of imagination? But because we don't live sufficiently recollected lives, we fail to notice how often times our imagined worries fail to materialize.

- False priorities
 - We make ourselves busy with things that do not necessarily please God.
 - These may be things not bad in and of themselves, but if we do not stop to ponder whether or not we do them to please God or please ourselves, then we will most certainly get preoccupied with false priorities. i.e. sports, making money, keeping up with the Jones's, having the perfect body, etc.

- Assuming that I am the Lord, instead of Jesus.
 - Control freak: all desires for control apart from Jesus is freakish.
 - Men particularly are problem solvers. Yet, how often do we keep ourselves awake believing, out of a false sense of pride, that it is up to us to fix or solve someone else's problem.