

We can allow bad news situations that we hear and read about everyday to cause us to lose the proper focus. Instead of having our minds set on God and trusting Him for His peace and presence, we allow our minds to get sidetracked by negative news and circumstances we see and hear.

If we feel our peace is slipping away or that we have become focused on the negative aspects of life ask yourself these questions:

#1 Have you stopped thanking and praising God?

People who have laid down their peace often have stopped praying with thanksgiving and praise. Followers of Jesus need a vibrant prayer life. We must avoid talking with God only about what we think we need and consistently live with a thankful heart-giving thanks always in all circumstances for all things. There is a direct correlation between the degree people pray with faith, praise and thanksgiving and their confidence in prayer, their assurance that God hears and answers their cries to Him.

#2 Are we limiting God by the way we think?

Imagine a circumstance that we consider to be really bad. It's hard, difficult, agonizing, horrific, sorrowful, perturbing, and painful. The question is asked, "is there anything too hard for God?" If our answer is anything but no, then the god we serve is too small. The God of the Bible is a great and limitless God who has all things within His understanding and under His control.

#3 Are you dwelling on the negatives?

Many people who have laid down their peace later admit that they had been dwelling on the negative aspects of life. Rather they should have harnessed their minds to dwell on and appreciate the positive, good things of life. The temptation to dwell on the negative aspects of life is great. The more we think along these lines, the more depressed, and distressed and oppressed we are likely to feel.

#4 Are we forgetting Jesus example?

Jesus was a realist. He never called those who followed Him to live in denial or to live with their heads in the sand. To the contrary Jesus confronted problems. He knew He and His disciples were living in a troublesome time. He called on them to face trouble head on. Jesus reminded them that their heavenly Father looked after the sparrows and clothed the lilies of the field and that He would no doubt do the same thing for them. The assurance of Jesus is that because God is with us, we do not have to give in, sink beneath or become defeated by troubles.

St. Matthew A.M.E. Church
Bible Study
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Why We Lose Our Peace
I John 4:4

Often peace is more readily seen and felt in the midst of trial and trouble. Yet there are many who when negative circumstances arise lose their peace. At the time we need peace the most is when we lose peace. The question then is how do we keep God's abiding peace? The only way to experience an abiding and lasting peace that transcends circumstances is by faith. By faith we ask and trust God to be present in our lives. There are however, certain issues that can rob us of our peace. Some of them are:

1. Sudden Fear

Some people are accustomed to responding to every little dip and rise of life with fear and small doses of panic that they can't even imagine that there's another way to respond. They are upset by change of all types that it never even dawns on them that they can live with greater emotional stability. Say no to fear and instead practice a life of trust. Start everyday with the affirmation, "I trust you Jesus and count on your peace and presence today."

2. The Enemy

We can be attacked by our enemy, the devil, who may use various means to cause us to doubt and lose our faith in God. He does this by trying to fill us with questions, for example, "if God is with you, then why has this happened?" When this happens we have to stand up to the enemy and tell him that he will not have our peace, we refuse to live in fear and worry. I will trust in God." In the Scriptures we are urged to resist the devil, and when we do, he must flee from us. (James 4:7)

3. Sin

It is very important for us to repent of any sin that may become an obstacle to our receiving and enjoying the peace of God. Sin creates obstacles. We can pray repeatedly for God's peace and believe in our heart for God's peace. But if we repeatedly harbor sin in our lives and willfully chooses to continue to rebel against God, we will not experience true peace. The convicting power of the Holy Spirit will continue to compel us to face up to what you know is a sin before God. Peace and rebellion cannot coexist.

4. Giving Up Peace

Often in times of crisis we lay down our peace. When we become troubled, anxious or frustrated we blame other people for "stealing our peace." The truth is that nobody steals our peace, we lay down our peace.

5. Losing Focus