**God Is Government - Tony Evans Teaching - God's Names(8)**

Turmoil. It is a word that adequately describes our day. Everywhere you look, there is conflict.

There's conflict in our world with war and terrorism, crime. There's conflict in our churches. Sometimes it's racial, other times it's class.

Sometimes it's personality. And sometimes it's just the turmoil of being overwhelmed. Because so many people with so many different needs, it stretches the structures, the finances, the human resources, to capacity.

And tempers get shorter and turmoil. Our homes are full of turmoil. The divorce rate reveals that.

Many couples, instead of being married by the justice of the peace, were wed by the secretary of war. Because it's just a battleground. Arguments, fights, misunderstandings, profanity at one another.

Not to even speak of the physical violence of abuse or emotional violence of neglect that encompasses so many of our homes. Child abuse. Turmoil.

Then I guess there's the worst turmoil of all, the turmoil of the heart. It's where you can't live with you. It's where your own pain or conflicts are eating you up and you have the turmoil of the soul.

You're at war within. Whether it's within the heart or the home or the church or the broader society. Turmoil rules today.

Some perhaps would not use the word turmoil, they just say drama. There's just so much drama. If a poll were taken of us today and if we were all telling the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, we would have to admit large segments of our lives are full of drama and turmoil.

Chaos. We don't want it. We don't desire it.

But we're not quite sure how to get rid of it. And we just long for a little bit of peace. Just a little bit of peace.

Today's name for God is Jehovah Shalom. The translation is the Lord is peace. That's the translation.

The Lord is peace. So many places we could go to discuss this, but the name is given to us in Judges chapter 6 verse 24. I had you read the passage so that you understand the context before we arrive at the conclusion.

This is the book of Judges. Knowing the book will help you to understand the passage. The previous book, Joshua, Joshua has led the people into the promised land.

They're now in Canaan land, having been delivered from Egypt land. So they had been delivered. They were in the land of promise.

But in the land of promise, they were experiencing chaos. They had been delivered, Egypt. They had arrived at their destiny, Canaan.

But in the place they were delivered to, they were experiencing chaos. So evidently, you can be delivered, you can arrive at the place God wants you, and still have drama, chaos. The book of Judges is secular.

It runs in cycles. Here's the cycle. Over and over again, it's the same cycle.

The people rebel against God, sin. That leads to punishment or discipline, which drives them to repentance. Then God responds with deliverance.

That is the cycle of the book of Judges. Sin, punishment, repentance, deliverance. Sin, punishment, repentance, deliverance.

After they got delivered, they would go back to sin, which led to more punishment, which led to the need for repentance, which brought about deliverance. You read the book of Judges, and that's the cycle you'll see. In this particular scenario, in Judges chapter 6, we have such a cycle.

We read in verse 1 of Judges chapter 6, The sons of Israel, Deborah was evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord gave them into the hands of Midian seven years. They had rebelled against God, and the consequence of their rebellion was enslavement to that which they were supposed to hold in slavery. You see, God told them, I'm going to send you to the promised land, and you will have victory over your enemies.

But the enemies were having victory over them. The things they were supposed to be beating were beating them. The things that they were supposed to be winning over, they were losing too.

Why were they losing? Because they had rebelled against God. They did evil in the sight of the Lord. So God let the enemy win instead of letting them win in the promised land.

So you can be in the promised land, and at the same time out of the will of God. You can be in the place where you're supposed to be, but functioning out of the will of God, so that you're losing where you ought to be winning. You're defeated where you ought to have victory.

That was their situation. The Midianites, the enemies of God and God's people, were allowed by God to hold God's people hostage for seven years. Seven years they had to deal with defeat and non-victory.

This was so bad that the people had to run for protection, verse two says, into the dens, that is into the caves, in order to hide from the Midianites who would descend upon them, verse four and five, and destroy their property. They came like locusts, verse five says. In other words, there were so many of them they couldn't count, and they're coming away Israel had never seen before on camelback.

They came on camelback in hordes and overran Israel, overran their crops. It's a bad thing to have planted your year's worth of crop and have the enemy take it. That's your well-being, that's your food, that's your sauce.

They had done all this hard work for the enemy to come in and steal it. And you may know what it is for your enemy to come in and take what ought to be yours. They had done evil in the sight of God, God then removed his protective hand, and the Midianites took control.

Verse six, so Israel was brought very low because of Midian. You ever been brought low? Let's follow this. Why did Midian bring them low? Because the Lord let Midian bring them low.

Why is the devil messing with me? Because the Lord let the devil mess with me. Why are things getting worse for me? Because the Lord allowed things to get worse for me. Because the Midianites only were having victory because the Lord allowed it.

But the Lord only allowed it because they had departed from the Lord. So there was the consequence of their actions. It says they were brought very low.

In other words, they hit rock bottom. You ever been so low you had to reach up to touch bottom? I mean it was that deep, that much despair. But the end of verse six says, and the sons of Israel cried to the Lord.

Because we have the tendency not to cry to the Lord till we hit rock bottom. Oftentimes until we hit rock bottom, we want to do it ourselves, take care of it ourselves, do the best we can. And God just gets worse and worse and worse and worse until we get more desperate and more desperate and more desperate and more desperate and more desperate.

They cried. See, you know when you serious when you cry out. When you serious, your prayers aren't cute anymore.

You aren't saying the same thing you've been saying for the last seven years. You're you're just repeating spiritual serendipity. You aren't merely going through the motions.

You are desperate because you are at the bottom. You can't see top. You can't even see bottom because it's gotten that bad.

When they cried out, there was a divine response. Verse seven, it came about. Verse eight rather, the Lord sent a prophet to the sons of Israel and said, Thus said the Lord, the God of Israel, it was I who brought you from Egypt.

It was I who brought you out of the house of slavery. It was I who delivered you from the hands of the Egyptians and from the hands of all your oppressors who dispossessed them before you and gave you their land. It was I who said to you, I am the Lord your God.

You shall not fear the gods of the Amorites in whose land you live, but you have not obeyed me. I saved you. I delivered you.

I released you. I sustained you. And now you have gone to other sources.

Idolatry. You've not obeyed me because you have adopted the culture's gods. The New Testament word for that is worldliness.

When we adopt the God of the culture, remember a God is not just something, a tree, a stump, a cow. A God is anything that is your source. You can have many resources, vehicles that God uses, but your God is the ultimate thing you look to for your provision.

They had stopped looking to the God and made the God one of the gods. The true God had just been added to the collection of gods. They did not give up their religion.

God, the true God, was still in play. It's just that they added the gods of the culture to the true God, creating a plethora of deities to whom they appealed. They did what so many of us do, switch gods.

We have the true God on Sunday, but Monday we got another name. Whether it's money or fame or power or whatever it is that is the source of our sustenance by which we sustain ourselves because we look to it. We're banking on that to be our provision.

God said it was I who did all that. I did it by myself. Why did you think I was good enough to get you out of Egypt, but I'm not good enough to sustain you in Canaan? Or let me put it in everyday language.

Why is he good enough to get us to heaven but not good enough to handle us on earth? Is he weaker in history than he is in eternity? You're on your way to heaven not because God got your help. You're on your way to heaven because it was I. He says the reason why you're in this calamity of turmoil and chaos and drama is because you have looked to other gods. You have adopted the culture.

You have become culturized Christians. You want to be like the Amorites, like the Hittites, so good. You want to be like them.

I'll give you all of them you can handle, but they're going to rip you off when they get you. Well, that's our scenario. The prophet comes and he speaks.

We don't know who this prophet is. This is an unnamed prophet, but the prophet speaks and tells them the problem. The problem was spiritual.

It wasn't social. It wasn't political. It wasn't financial.

None of that was the problem. You could have had committee meetings all day long. You could have had counseling all day long.

You could have gone through all the systematic things to try to make it better, and it wouldn't have solved the problem of the fact that the reason that this human problem exists, the Midians, was because there was a spiritual issue that had not yet been addressed. There was departure from God. That goes back to what I was talking about, the mystery of lawlessness, that there is the spiritual thing that holds you hostage no matter what physical things you do if it doesn't address the spiritual cause for the thing you're dealing with.

You skip that spiritual and all the planning and all the processes you go through will not change it because if God lets the Midianites loose, only God can hold them back. But the people did cry out because they were so low. Only the divine helped.

Let me explain to me and you. God will allow you to get so low that God is your only option left. Why will he let you get so low so that you know he's your only option left? Because he wants to be your only option.

See, he doesn't want you to be able to say we and put him beside another God. So they cried out to the Lord because it was because of their departure from the Lord that they were in this mess. The angel of the Lord comes in verse 11 and sits down under the oak.

There's a young man there named Gideon, verse 11 says, who was beating out wheat in the wine press in order to save it from the Midians. So here we are. We're now introduced to a man named Gideon.

Gideon is taking care of the wheat, separating the the chaff from the wheat, but he's doing it in the wine press. That's where they take care of wine. Why are you taking care of wheat? You don't do wheat in the wine press.

You do that outside. That's an outside task. But he tells you why he's doing it.

He's doing it hiding in the wine press so that the Midianites can't get it. In other words, he's trying to survive. He's trying to make it.

He's doing the best he can given the situation he's in. The angel of the Lord comes to him and the angel of the Lord says to him, the Lord is with you, O valiant warrior. Let me pause right there.

That's an interesting statement to Gideon. The Lord is with you, O valiant warrior. Now the reason why that's interesting is Gideon hasn't beaten nobody doing nothing.

And you're going to see his response in a minute. Gideon's not a valiant warrior. He's a man hiding like everybody else.

He's scared like everybody else. He's not a valiant warrior. He's hiding in the wine press doing his work.

But that's good news. It's good news to say you are what God declares you to be, not what your situation is. You are what God declares you to be, even if you're not being it right now.

Right now he's not a valiant warrior, but God tells him what God is going to make him become. O valiant warrior, because that's what I'm getting ready to turn you into because I'm with you. That changes who you are.

Well, Gideon says to him, and he asked the question you're asking if you are in drama right now. Gideon said to him in verse 13, O my Lord, if the Lord is with us, then why is all this happening to us? And where are all the miracles which our father told us about saying, did not the Lord bring us out of Egypt? But now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hands of Midian. Isn't that your question? If God is for me, where is he? If God says he's going to be my God, I can't find him.

He says I can't find God in all this drama. If God is with us and he can do all this Bible stuff, that's what he said, the miracles. He can do all this stuff, the 10 plagues, the Red Sea.

He can do all this stuff. Then how come I'm here right here, right now in this mess? There is a general sense in which God is with us because we're his children. If you're a Christian, you're a child of God.

So there is a general sense in which he is with you. But when you in a mess, you don't need a general sense. You need a specific sense of him being with you in the specific drama you're going through.

And he says we're going through this. See, when you in a mess, it's not enough to hear he's a meat wheel in the middle of a wheel. That's nice when you not in drama.

When you're in drama, it's not enough to hear he's the rose of Sharon. That's true. When you're going through your drama, your pain, your hurt, your struggle, your desperation, I know it's nice he can fix it.

Right now, I need him to fix it for me. Gideon wants to know where is he in relationship to the Midianites, what we're going through, not where is he generally. See, when you're going through this, a general church service is not what you're looking for.

You're looking for something that will speak to your drama, to your turmoil. He says, where is he? I can't find him. He really answers his own question.

I'm not sure whether he knew it or not, but he answers it at the end of verse 13. He says, but now the Lord has abandoned us and given us into the hands of Midian. He says, if the Lord is with us, why has he abandoned us? Okay, so here it is.

God is with us in the general sense because we're his children. God is only with us in the specific sense when we are with him. In the general sense, he's with you.

You're child of God, son of God, daughter of God. Yes, but in the specific sense, that is in my drama, he is with you when you are with him. If you are not with him, you will not experiencing him being with you, me or us.

The experience of God being with you in the drama of life has to do with how many gods have you collected? How many sources have you adopted? How much rebellion are you operating in? The Lord looked at him and said in verse 14, go in your strength, that is with the ability that I've given you, and deliver Israel from the hand of Midian. Have I not sent you? God's normal way of answering our need is through a person. Now, sometimes God bypasses that miraculously, but that's not the normal way.

You go all the way through the book of Judges and he always raises up a judge. He raises up a person who would be the means he would use to bring about the answer to the request that people were crying out for. He says, I'm sending you and I want you to turn this thing around.

Now, remember he was called valid warrior. Well, let's find out what he thinks about himself. Verse 15, Gideon says to the angel of the Lord, oh Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? My family is the least in Manasseh and I am the youngest in my father's house.

We not all that. I come from a little country town. I'm the baby boy.

I don't have no value warrior up in me. I'm not all that. I can't do what you asked me to do.

I can't do that. I'm insignificant. I don't have a diploma, a degree.

I don't have a high paying job. I wasn't born with a silver spoon in my mouth. I don't have all that.

I'm not all that. Maybe Gideon, that's why he chose you because you not all that and you know it. He calls an ordinary man to an extraordinary task.

And he was going to use the same man who had the questions. Yeah, he was questioning God, but he was also humble before God. Well, Gideon hears this and he said, look, I got to be sure.

I got to be sure because I'm gonna go out here and get myself killed. I have to be sure. Verse 17.

If I now have found favor in your sight, show me a sign that it is you who is speaking to me. I need to be sure I'm not dreaming. I need to be sure this is for real.

I need to be sure this is not a mirage. I need to be certain that this is you. So he goes and gets some meat.

He gets some unleavened bread. He gets some broth. He makes himself a stew.

He puts the stew down in front of the angel of the Lord. Verse 21. And the angel of the Lord put out the end of the staff that was in his hand and touch the meat and the unleavened bread and fire sprang up from the rock and consume the meat and unleavened bread.

Then the angel of the Lord vanished from his sight. Wow. He brings the meat, the unleavened bread, the broth, puts it down there.

No fire. The angel of the Lord touches the rock that is sitting on and not only does it light up, it's cooked to nothingness. And the angel disappears and Gideon decides, yep, this is real.

He asked God, here it is, to verify his presence. That's what he asked. Verify that this is you talking because sometimes you're not sure.

Is this God? Is this me? Is this real? Is this Memorax? I am not sure. So I need certainty here because this is too serious. When Gideon, verse 22, saw that he was the angel of the Lord, he said, alas, O Lord God, for now I have seen the angel of the Lord faith to faith.

Because the angel of the Lord is the same as O Lord God. It was God being manifested in a visible form. The Lord said to him, here it is, peace be to you.

Do not fear, you shall not die. Why did the angel tell him that? Because you couldn't live and see God. He says, don't worry, you're not going to die.

Then Gideon built an altar there to the Lord and named it, here it is, Jehovah Shalom. The Lord is peace. So that raises the question, doesn't it? What is peace? Let me tell you what peace is not.

Peace is not a truce. Peace is not simply ceasefire. Because a lot of people who ceasefire still live in a cold war.

You may not be fighting and fussing with your mate all day, you're just not talking to each other. And you think a cold war equals peace. That's just truce.

It's just ceasefire. If you go over to Israel, every other person is going to say when they run into you, shalom. You see, Israel lives in a war zone.

Everybody around Israel wants to see Israel destroyed. They wake up to war every day. And yet when you meet an Israeli on the streets in Israel, you will hear them say shalom.

Shalom is bigger than calm. When we think of peace, we think of calm. Shalom is a bigger word than that.

The word shalom means whole, complete, or well-being. It is to have things ordered, or to say it as we say, no more drama. Shalom means the thing that was tore up from the flow up has now been reharmonized and brought back into order.

So it doesn't mean I feel good. Let me explain. Peace is more than happiness because happiness depends on what happens.

I can govern your happiness and you can govern mine by the information we share. If I give you enough bad enough information, I can steal your peace. If I give you enough good of information, I can give you happiness because it depends on what happens, what information I'm receiving.

Not so with peace because peace is not tied to circumstance. That's why in Israel they talk about shalom in a war zone. Peace has to do with well-being regardless of circumstance.

You see, Jesus made it clear in this world you will have trouble, John 16, 33. In this world expect bad days, bad weeks, sometimes bad months, and God forbid bad years. It comes with being here, but he says be of good cheer.

Peace be unto you because I have overcome the world. What he's saying is don't define peace by the circumstance. Define peace by how together you are regardless of the circumstance.

See, it's one thing for the world to be falling apart. It's another thing for you to be falling apart with it. Sometimes you can't control the world falling apart, but you falling apart with it is the loss of peace.

It has to do with comprehensive well-being. Let me go a little further. Peace is your heritage.

What do I mean? You have a right to peace. It came with your salvation. Peace is part of the salvific package.

Peace comes with salvation. Isaiah 48, 18, it says it's supposed to be flowing in you like a river. Does that mean you're not going to have a bad situation or bad circumstances? Uh-uh, and I'm not promising that.

What I am promising you is that they won't have you. Like Peter, you walk on the water, you're not covered over by it. Remember when the disciples were on the water and there was a storm and they woke Jesus up in Mark 4, and Jesus said this.

He said, peace be still. I would have thought he would have said storm be still. But he didn't.

He said peace be still. So in order for him to tell peace to be still, that meant peace was moving. See, you can have, you can be in a storm and it be peace moving.

That's why Jesus could go to sleep in the storm. Because for him, peace was moving, not a storm. Peace is well-being in spite of circumstances.

Because me and God are on the same page. Isaiah 57 verses 20 to 21 says that sin interrupts peace. It says, there is no peace for the wicked and those who are in rebellion against God.

Just like the Midians were allowed to overrun Israel, God allows hell to overrun us when we are judged. When we are disconnected from him by sin. If you and I are unwilling to address the sin, don't look for the peace.

You can't have it. You can get distractions. You can create distractions to help you forget how bad things really are.

But peace is when you don't have to create artificial distraction. An unwillingness to address the sin is a refusal to receive the peace. To see God put it together in your heart, home, you know, church, society.

Our political leaders can have all the meetings they want. You can't say, God, get out of the public school, but let's have peace in the hallway. You, you can't, you can't do that.

You can't exclude God and then not have drama. You can't do that. God, we want to have our law, but we want to remove your law from the walls of our courtroom.

We don't want your standards. We'll make our own. All you're doing is inviting more cases.

You cannot exclude God and have peace. Because now you have adopted other gods, other sources, and therefore wholeness and well-being cannot be yours. You can only be distracted.

You cannot have shalom. Shalom is dependent upon God being the dynamic only source as the equation. Many resources, many vehicles, only one source.

That's why Jesus was called the Prince of Peace. When Jesus went around in his earthly life in the gospels, he would do something for somebody and then guess what he would say? Peace be unto you. Peace be unto you.

In other words, I didn't just heal your situation. I put your stuff together. When Jesus rose from the dead, guess what he told his disciples? His first words, Luke 24, 36, he said, peace be unto you.

So that raises the question, Jehovah shalom. The Lord is peace. Don't misquote that.

It doesn't say the money is peace. It doesn't say the position is peace, the power is peace, the job is peace, the relationship is peace. It doesn't say any of that.

It says Jehovah shalom. The Lord is peace. So that raises the question, how do I get it? Okay, I got it, but how do I get it? Because I need it.

You need it. We need it. I may not be able to change my circumstances right now, but how do I get the inner well-being to deal with it and be whole? How do I get the ability to handle my drama? Well, the same way Gideon did.

How did Gideon get it? Well, we just looked at it. You know how Gideon got it? One simple way, yet it's profound. He got peace when he knew the Lord was with him.

He has not yet fought the Midianites. He's not yet solved the problem of the Midianites. The Midianites are still an issue, but he builds an altar, has a worship service before his problem has been solved.

He didn't get peace because he's with the Midianites because he hasn't with the Midianites yet. They're still out there like hordes, but he builds an altar and praises God for peace. He praises God for peace, not because his situation has changed.

He's praising God for peace because God has showed up in his situation. It is the realization of the divine presence that gives him the peace. You can go whatever you want to go, spend whatever you want to spend, do whatever you want to do.

If God is not in the middle of it, you won't have peace. The best you'll get is deflection, not peace, not the sense of well-being and wholeness. In fact, it's going to get crazier than that because he's going to tell Gideon, Gideon, look, I know there's so many you can't number.

That's what the passage says. So many problems you can't deal with them because they're coming on camels. They're more than you can count, but I really only need 300 guys to take care of this.

Gideon was going to put together an army of 34,000 men or something, and God said, nah, too many, 300, that's all I need. Wait a minute. You want me to go out there, look like a fool in front of all of those armies with 300, with the 300 Spartans? You want me to go out there with the 300? That's all you want? No, Gideon, that's all I need.

Give me 300 on the right, not 34,000 will look good with numbers. And then we don't have time to get into it. He tells me in chapter 7, he says, just to help you, just to help, just HBO, you help a brother out, sneak over there and listen to what the enemy is saying.

So he did a little, did a little surveillance and went over there and he heard some of the guys talking and some of the Midianites were talking and they said, them Israelites going to kill us. They didn't know God had already gotten them scared. It already got them shaken up.

It already got them. They were already beaten. That's why God only needed 300, because he knew some information.

He had some inside scope. Then I raised the last question. My question, your question, our question.

How do I get to know that he's there? Since him being there is the key to peace. How do I get to know that he's there? Look at Romans chapter 8. Let me read verses 5 through 7. For those who are, Romans 8 verse 5, for those who are according to the flesh set their mind on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the spirit, the things of the spirit. For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the spirit is life and peace.

Because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God, for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so. He says, if you want to have peace, you got to set your mind. You need a mindset.

If you want peace and peace is tied to divine presence, that comes with a mindset. The mind set on the flesh is death. And death is separation from God.

That's what death is. He's talking to Christians. The mindset on the human point of view, the man perspective, the world's perspective, you don't even have to be following the devil.

You just got to be man-ish. The Bible calls it carnally minded. That does not operate with the mindset of the spirit.

What's the mindset of the spirit? God's point of view. Another way of saying the spirit's mind is God's point of view. God's view of a matter is the spirit mind.

You must set it. Because if you won't set it, you won't use it. See, if your mindset is earthly, that's what you're going to use.

He says the mindset, the frame of thinking that you operate by must be spirit. That is God's point of view. And with God's point of view comes God's presence.

And with God's presence comes life and peace. If you want God's presence, you must have his mindset. If you do not have his mindset, you do not have his presence.

If you do not have his presence, you do not experience his life. If you do not experience his life, you don't share his peace. If you want his peace, you have to have his life.

To have his life is to have his presence. To have his presence, you have to have his mindset. I don't have to set my clock.

I don't really have to set my clock. And the reason why is over the years, like many of you, I wake up early. I'll wake up at 3.30 or 4. I'll wake up early.

I'll just, boom, I just wake up, eyes pop open. In other words, there was a time when I had to set my clock if I wanted to get up early. But now I don't have to set my clock externally because it's been set internally.

I got an inside clock. And the inside clock tells me to get up because I've gotten so used to operating by a clock. It's not that it's not set.

It's just not set externally. It's now just set up in my frame of reference because I automatically wake up. That didn't just happen.

That happened coming from setting it intentionally. And then I began to operate because I'd gotten used to operating that way. You see, if you're not used to operating in the spirit, you got to intentionally set it until you've done it enough, till you are built in to respond that way.

See, so many of us have been so carnal for so long that our inside clock is set carnally. We don't have to try to be sinful. We don't have to try to be unrighteous.

We don't have to try to be rebellious. The clock just goes off because it's been set that way for so long. So you must reset the clock intentionally until you learn to get up to God's point of view.

And when you learn to get up to God's point of view, it will be set that way so that that will be your reaction and you will know it's your reaction because when you don't react that way, that will become odd. It'll be, you'll feel weird when you go back to the old world time because you've been so used to operating on the God set. But if that's foreign to you because you only set it on Sunday and you ignore it Monday through Saturday, you're carnally minded.

That is fleshly minded. That is worldly minded. That is man oriented.

Then what you forfeit is shalom because Jehovah gives shalom. Only Jehovah gives shalom. The world gives distraction.

Have you ever been at a concert and you hear the orchestra warm up? And you listen to all the discord, you know, violin is trying to get it, get everything tweaked and the, you know, and the guitar is trying to get everything. And you just got a bunch of noise. Sounds like chaos.

Sounds like chaos, bunch of noise. Then all of a sudden, out of the shadows comes the conductor with the stick and he taps it. And the noise discord comes down and he raises it and he wrings out his arms and all of a sudden that which was chaos before he showed up becomes harmonious when he shows up.

Before he showed up, ain't nothing but drama. It's a bunch of noise that does not relate to anything. It's everybody doing their thing and nothing connected with nobody else.

But when he shows up and makes his presence known and raises his arms, all of a sudden, what was discord now becomes harmony. Everybody's on the same page. It makes sense.

It brings blessing. Why? Not because it was that way. It was because when the conductor showed up, his presence changed what was happening in the room.

Our problem is we're trying to make music with the conductor off stage and we're wondering why there's so much drama when we keep the conductor outside and wonder why we can't have good music in my heart, in my home, in the church, in the world. But we want the conductor to stay outside or just make an appearance and leave again. He wants to run the orchestra and by his presence, harmony prevails.

The question is, do you want peace? Only one person gives it, Jehovah Shalom. But he only gives it on his terms. I will keep him in perfect peace, Isaiah 26 says, whose mind is stayed on me.

I will keep him in perfect peace. You want to know why you're not losing your mind when everything around you has lost its mind? Why are you not crazy when your world is crazy? Why are you together when things are falling apart? Because the conductor has been allowed to make his presence known in your mind.