

Peace

Opener: Which are you normally during the Christmas season: Peaceful? Stressed? In between?

Scripture: God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. ²Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea. ⁶Nations are in uproar, kingdoms fall; he lifts his voice, the earth melts. ⁷The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. ⁸Come and see what the Lord has done. ⁹He makes wars cease to the end of the earth. ¹⁰“He says, “Be still, and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted in the earth.” ¹¹The Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. Psalm 46 (condensed)

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” Luke 2:13-14

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. Isaiah 9:6-7a

You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. ⁴Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord himself, is the Rock eternal. Isaiah 26:3-4

Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. ¹⁸If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Romans 12:17-18

“Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to turn ‘a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law— ³⁶ a man’s enemies will be in his own household.” Matthew 10:34-36

Discussion Questions

1. Psalm 46 assures us that God will protect us and proclaims His power over all the earth. In verse 10 He encourages us to “be still, and know that I am God.” What does it mean to “be still” before God? What does being still have to do with having peace?
2. Why would peace be emphasized when Jesus’ birth was announced? What do you think the angels meant when they said, “on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests”? Luke 2:13-14
3. We know that the Prince of Peace Isaiah referred to is Jesus. How would you define the peace He gives, and how is it different from the peace the world offers? Is it merely the absence of conflict, or does it involve something more? How can we experience peace with God and the peace of God? Isaiah 9:6
4. Isaiah 26:3 says, “You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.” Give examples of how our minds can become programmed by experiences and influences in a way that blocks the peace God wants to give us. How can our minds be reprogrammed to steadfastly trust in God so that we can have perfect peace?
5. Romans 12:19 tells us, “If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.” How can we do that? Why don’t we want to? What happens if we do all we can, but we still can’t be at peace with someone? How can we know when we’ve done all we can?
6. Matthew 10:34 seems to contradict that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, actually brings peace. How do you reconcile this discrepancy? In addition, we know that while God gives peace, He can also withhold it. Can you describe a time when He used the absence of peace to get your attention?

Wrap Up: In this crazy world, we long for peace on all levels. We want internal and external peace. We want financial peace, physical peace, emotional peace, spiritual peace, family peace, and world peace. It’s only as we grow closer to the Prince of Peace that we understand God’s ways are higher than ours and His power is greater than ours. Because of Him, peace is not an impossible dream. It’s a promise. Adapted from *Worried about Everything Because I Pray about Nothing* by Chad Veach.