

The Gift of Peace

Message 1 of 5 in the series: "The Gift that Keeps on Giving"

A. God gave us His Son Jesus to bring peace into our fallen world and our daily lives.

"For a child is born to us, **a son is given to us**. The government will rest on his shoulders. And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**. **His government and its peace will never end**. He will rule with fairness and justice from the throne of his ancestor David for all eternity. The passionate commitment of the LORD of Heaven's Armies will make this happen!"

Isaiah 9:6-7 (NLT)

IMPORTANT! We desperately need Jesus because without Him no one would find true peace. "No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God. All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one... **They don't know where to find peace.**" Romans 3:11-12 & 17 (NLT)

1. Jesus made it possible for us to have peace with God. "For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, and through him God reconciled everything to himself. **He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross**. This includes you who were once far away from God. **You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions**. Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and **you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault.**" Colossians 1:19-22 (NLT)
2. Jesus makes it possible for us to experience peace of mind and heart. "**I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart**. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid." John 14:27 (NLT)

- We will experience more peace if we give all our worries and concerns to God in prayer. "Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. **Then you will experience God's peace, which exceeds anything we can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.**" Philippians 4:6-7 (NLT)

Life Application: "So let us come boldly to the throne of our gracious God. There we will receive his mercy, and we will find grace to help us when we need it most." Hebrews 4:16 (NLT)

- We will experience more peace if we meditate on God's Word and do what it says. "**Those who love your instructions have great peace** and do not stumble." Psalm 119:165 (NLT)

"**Keep putting into practice all you learned and received from me—everything you heard from me and saw me doing. Then the God of peace will be with you.**" Philippians 4:9 (NLT)

- We will experience more peace if we surrender control of our minds to the Holy Spirit. "Those who are dominated by the sinful nature think about sinful things, but those who are controlled by the Holy Spirit think about things that please the Spirit. So letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But **letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace.**" Romans 8:5-6 (NLT)

"**You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you**, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!"

Isaiah 26:3 (NLT)

3. Jesus makes it possible for us to have peace regardless of our circumstances. "Now may the Lord of peace himself **give you his peace at all times and in every situation.**" 2 Thessalonians 3:16a (NLT)

B. God gave us the Holy Spirit so that the peace we've received through Christ will be a gift that keeps on giving.

"Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing...**When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples**. This brings great glory to my Father." John 15:5 & 8 (NLT)

"But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, **peace**, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control." Galatians 5:22-23a (NLT)

IMPORTANT! As we remain connected to Jesus, the Holy Spirit will produce an overflowing abundance of peace in our lives so we will be able to share the peace Christ has given us with others. "For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of **living a life of goodness and peace and joy** in the Holy Spirit. If you serve Christ with this attitude, you will please God, and **others will approve of you, too.**"

Romans 14:17-18 (NLT)

“When people’s lives please the LORD, **even their enemies are at peace with them.**” Proverbs 16:7 (NLT)

1. We can share the gift of peace with others by being peacemakers. “**Blessed are the peacemakers**, for they shall be called sons of God.” Matthew 5:9 (NKJV)
 - Peacemakers help people reconcile with God. “...God has given us this task of reconciling people to him. For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them. And **he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation**. So we are Christ’s ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us. We speak for Christ when we plead, ‘Come back to God!’” 2 Corinthians 5:18b-20 (NLT)
 - Peacemakers help people reconcile with each other. “Now I appeal to Euodia and Syntyche. Please, because you belong to the Lord, settle your disagreement. And I ask you, my true partner, to **help these two women**, for they worked hard with me in telling others the Good News.”
Philippians 4:2-3a (NLT)
 - Peacemakers seek reconciliation with people who’ve sinned against them as well as people they’ve sinned against. “**If another believer sins against you**, go privately and point out the offense. If the other person listens and confesses it, you have won that person back.” Matthew 18:15 (NLT)
“So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that **someone has something against you**, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. **Go and be reconciled to that person**. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.” Matthew 5:23-24 (NLT)
 - Peacemakers strive to live in peace with everyone. “If it is possible, **as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.**” Romans 12:18 (NIV)
“Search for peace, and work to maintain it.” 1 Peter 3:11b (NLT)
2. We can share the gift of peace with others by praying for them.
“I urge you, first of all, to pray for all people. Ask God to help them; intercede on their behalf, and give thanks for them. **Pray this way for kings and all who are in authority so that we can live peaceful and quiet lives marked by godliness and dignity**. This is good and pleases God our Savior who wants everyone to be saved and to understand the truth.” 1 Timothy 2:1-4 (NLT)

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Connect Group Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the following reasons Jesus is called the “Prince of Peace” in the Bible. (Isaiah 9:6-7)
 - Without Jesus, no one would ever find true peace. (Romans 3:11-12 & 17)
 - Jesus made it possible for us to have peace with God. (Colossians 1:19-22)
 - Jesus makes it possible for us to experience peace of mind and heart. (John 14:27)
 - Jesus makes it possible for us to have peace regardless of our circumstances. (2 Thessalonians 3:16)
2. Discuss the following ways we can experience more peace:
 - We can give all our worries and concerns to God in prayer. (Philippians 4:6-7, Hebrews 4:16)
 - We can meditate on God’s Word and do what it says. (Psalm 119:165, Philippians 4:9)
 - We can surrender control of our minds to the Holy Spirit. (Romans 8:5-6, Isaiah 26:3)

Why do we often struggle to do these things?
3. If God wants us to produce an abundance of spiritual fruit (John 15:5-8), why do you think we spend so much time asking God to give us things we want only for ourselves? (Romans 14:17-18)
4. Discuss the following ways we can be peacemakers:
 - Peacemakers help people reconcile with God. (2 Corinthians 5:18b-20)
 - Peacemakers help people reconcile with each other. (Philippians 4:2-3)
 - Peacemakers seek reconciliation with people who’ve sinned against them as well as people they’ve sinned against. (Matthew 5:23-24 & 18:15)
 - Peacemakers strive to live in peace with everyone. (Romans 12:18-20, 1 Peter 3:11)

Why would doing these things cause people to call us “sons of God”? (Matthew 5:9)

5. Some additional Bible verses on peace to consider:

“The LORD gives his people strength. The LORD blesses them with peace.” Psalm 29:11 (NLT)

“A peaceful heart leads to a healthy body...” Proverbs 14:30a (NLT)

“...a wonderful future awaits those who love peace.” Psalm 37:37b (NLT)

“In peace I will lie down and sleep, for you alone, O LORD, will keep me safe.” Psalm 4:8 (NLT)

“Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.” James 3:18 (NIV)