

Everyone Wants Peace

Lesson 03 of the series, "All I Want for Christmas"

I. Our world is desperately looking for peace.

Internal peace = freedom of the mind from annoyance, distraction, anxiety, etc.; tranquility; serenity.

"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 3:12,17 (NLT)

"...those who still reject me are like the restless sea, which is never still but continually churns up mud and dirt. There is no peace for the wicked,' says my God." Isaiah 57:20-21 (NLT)

II. Jesus is the Prince of Peace.

"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)

III. Through a personal relationship with Jesus, we can experience true peace.

"May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace." 2 Corinthians 1:2 (NLT) (See also Rom. 1:7, 1 Cor. 1:3, Gal. 1:3, Eph. 1:2, Phil. 1:2, Col. 1:2, 1 Thess. 1:1, 2 Thess. 1:2, Titus 1:4, Philemon 1:3)

a. Jesus made it possible for us to have peace with God, the source of all peace.

"This is the message of Good News for the people of Israel—that there is peace with God through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all." Acts 10:36 (NLT)

"...we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us." Romans 5:1 (NLT)

b. We can experience God's peace if we pray.

"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

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

c. We can experience God's peace in every circumstance if we surrender control of every part of our lives to the Holy Spirit.

"Now may the Lord of peace himself give you his peace at all times and in every situation."
2 Thessalonians 3:16 (NLT)

"...the Holy Spirit—he will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I have told you. 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 14:26-27 (NLT)

"...letting your sinful nature control your mind leads to death. But letting the Spirit control your mind leads to life and peace." Romans 8:6 (NLT)

d. We can experience God's 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)

"May God give you more and more grace and peace as you grow in your knowledge of God and Jesus our Lord." 2 Peter 1:2 (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)

e. We can experience God's peace if we stay away from peace-stealers.

- Overloaded schedules - "I have no peace! I have no quiet! I have no rest! And trouble keeps coming!" Job 3:26 (GW)

- Rebellion - “When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, “I will confess my rebellion to the LORD.” And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.”
Psalm 32:3-5 (NLT)
- Doubt - “You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!”
Isaiah 26:3 (NLT)

IV. God wants us to help spread peace to others.

External peace = a state of harmony between people or groups, especially in personal relations.

- a. We can do our part to live at peace with others.

“If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay,’ says the Lord. On the contrary: ‘If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head.’” Romans 12:18-20 (NIV)

- b. We can be peacemakers.

“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” Matthew 5:9 (NKJV)

- c. We can pray for peace.

“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)

“For the Kingdom of God is ... a matter 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)

V. Seven questions to ask ourselves about having peace and being peacemakers this Christmas:

- Have I surrendered control of my life to the Prince of Peace?
- What problems or concerns do I need to give to God in prayer?
- When will I spend time in God’s Word?
- To whom do I need to apologize?
- Who do I need to forgive? (Forgive = let go of the past)
- To whom could I show kindness? (Especially if they haven’t been kind to me.)
- When will I pray for peace in me, my family, neighborhood, city, state, country, world?

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Additional Bible Verses We Need to Consider:

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

“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 14:30 (NLT)

“For those who follow godly paths will rest in peace when they die.” Isaiah 57:2 (NLT)

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

“Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.” Psalm 34:14 (NIV)

Connect Group Questions

1. At Christmas time, people often say they want “peace,” but what kind of peace are they usually referring to when they say this? How does that compare with the peace that God gives?
2. Horatio Spafford wrote the hymn entitled “It Is Well With My Soul” (*look up in Wikipedia*). How would you describe his spiritual maturity based on 2 Peter 1:2? Can you also have this same level of faith?
3. Would people describe you as person of peace or a person who falls to pieces? Why would they describe you that way?
4. In Matthew 5:9, Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.” Why do think He said this?
5. Why are people so desperate for peace? How can you help them find peace that passes all understanding?
6. Go through this list of questions to find out how you can bring peace to others this Christmas:
 - To whom do you need to apologize?
 - Who do you need to forgive?
 - Is there someone you have not spoken to in a long time that you need to contact?
 - Are there relationships that you need to help repair?
 - Who can you show kindness to this Christmas?
 - Who can you intercede for that desperately needs peace in their life?