

Finding Peace When Others Drive Me Crazy

Lesson 3 of 4 in the series: "Finding the Missing Peace"

A. We live in a fallen world filled with sinful people who drive each other crazy and have no idea how to find peace.

"...No one is righteous—not even one. 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.' 'Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their tongues are filled with lies.' 'Snake venom drips from their lips.' 'Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.' 'They rush to commit murder. Destruction and misery always follow them. **They don't know where to find peace.**'" Romans 3:10-17 (NLT)

Life Application: We believe everyone on earth needs Jesus!

"We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard. Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins. For God presented Jesus as the sacrifice for sin. People are made right with God when they believe that Jesus sacrificed his life, shedding his blood." Romans 3:22-25a (NLT)

B. Even after we become Christians, we still drive each other crazy because we have hurts, hang-ups, and sinful habits we need to surrender to Jesus.

"...Live no longer as the Gentiles do, for they are hopelessly confused. Their minds are full of darkness; they wander far from the life God gives because they have closed their minds and hardened their hearts against him. They have no sense of shame. They live for lustful pleasure and eagerly practice every kind of impurity. But that isn't what you learned about Christ. Since you have heard about Jesus and have learned the truth that comes from him, throw off your old sinful nature and your former way of life, which is corrupted by lust and deception. Instead, **let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes.** Put on your new nature, created to be like God—truly righteous and holy." Ephesians 4:17-24 (NLT)

Life Application: "...God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him."
Philippians 2:13 (NLT)

C. We will always need to work at finding peace because we will always have people around us who can drive us crazy.

"Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. Don't repay evil for evil. Don't retaliate with insults when people insult you. Instead, pay them back with a blessing. That is what God has called you to do, and he will grant you his blessing. For the Scriptures say, 'If you want to enjoy life and see many happy days, keep your tongue from speaking evil and your lips from telling lies. Turn away from evil and do good.

Search for peace, and work to maintain it." 1 Peter 3:8-11 (NLT) (See also Psalm 34:12-14)

"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. **If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.**"

Romans 12:14-18 (NIV)

D. Three things we can do to find peace when others drive us crazy:

1. We can make a realistic assessment of ourselves and our expectations.

"...Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you." Romans 12:3 (NIV)

Some false ideas I may have about relationships that can rob me of peace:

- If I can just convince him/her of the facts, he/she will respond differently.
- I can never be happy until this relationship is fixed.
- If I just work harder, I can "fix" him/her.
- I love him/her too much to let him/her face the consequences of his/her actions.

Life Application: I can find peace when I take responsibility for my choices/actions, NOT the choices/actions of others.

“Looking at the man, Jesus felt genuine love for him. ‘There is still one thing you haven’t done,’ he told him. ‘Go and sell all your possessions and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.’ At this the man’s face fell, and he went away sad, for he had many possessions.” Mark 10:21-22 (NLT)

2. We can make a realistic assessment of the person and the problem driving us crazy.

“...Fix your thoughts on what is true, and honorable, and right, and pure, and lovely, and admirable. Think about things that are excellent and worthy of praise. 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 4:8-9 (NLT)

Life Application: We can listen to the person driving us crazy to make sure we understand the problem correctly.

“My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry, because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires.” James 1:19-20 (NIV)

Life Application: We can ask the Lord to give us His love and compassion for the person driving us crazy.

“You have heard the law that says, ‘Love your neighbor’ and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you! In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:43-45a (NLT)

3. We can surrender ourselves, the person, and the problem driving us crazy over to the Lord.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)

“You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!” Isaiah 26:3 (NLT)

perfect peace = calm assurance that God is working and that His way is best

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Connect Group Questions

Read Isaiah 26:3, 1 Peter 3:8-11, & Roman 12:14-18. Then discuss the following questions.

1. What does peace look like in your home, neighborhood, or workplace/school?
2. Being offended is inevitable, but living offended is a choice. How would your relationships change if you let go of the offenses you experience more quickly?
3. Are there any offenses driving you crazy right now? Why is letting go of these offenses so difficult?
4. Discuss the following three ways we can find peace when others drive us crazy:
 - We can make a realistic assessment of ourselves and our expectations. (Romans 12:3)
 - We can make a realistic assessment of the person and the problem driving us crazy. (Philippians 4:8-9)
 - We can surrender ourselves, the person, and the problem driving us crazy over to the Lord. (Philippians 4:6-7)
5. Which of the following false ideas about relationships have you allowed to rob you of peace?
 - If I can just convince him/her of the facts, he/she will respond differently.
 - I can never be happy until this relationship is fixed.
 - If I just work harder, I can “fix” him/her.
 - I love him/her too much to let him/her face the consequences of his/her actions.

Great resource: Bechtle, Mike. *People Can’t Drive You Crazy If You Don’t Give Them the Keys*. Revell Publishing, 2012.