

Small Group Guide: The Stillness of Heaven – The Promise of Peace

****Sermon Series:**** Advent – Week 2: Peace

****Scripture Focus:**** John 14:27, Isaiah 9:6, Luke 2:14

****Date:**** December 7, 2025

Opening Prayer

Begin your group time with prayer, asking God to open hearts and minds to receive His peace and to speak truth into your lives through this discussion.

Ice Breaker (5-10 minutes)

- What is your favorite "peace and quiet" place or activity?
- When you see the word "Peace" on decorations this season, what emotions or thoughts does it stir in you?

Sermon Overview

This week's message explored the biblical concept of peace, contrasting worldly peace (absence of conflict) with God's peace (presence of God in the midst of conflict). Jesus is introduced as the "Prince of Peace" (Sar Shalom), who offers both peace WITH God (reconciliation through salvation) and peace OF God (supernatural calm in daily life).

Key Takeaways

1. ****Peace is a Person, not just a concept**** – Jesus is called "Sar Shalom" (Prince of Peace), meaning He commands wholeness and restoration.
2. ****Two dimensions of peace:****
 - ****Peace WITH God**** – Reconciliation through Christ's sacrifice (Romans 5:1)
 - ****Peace OF God**** – Supernatural stability in the midst of life's storms (Philippians 4:6-7)
3. ****Biblical peace is paradoxical**** – Found in surrender, not control; present in tribulation, not just in calm.

4. **Peace must be practiced** – Through prayer, thanksgiving, and trust in God's sovereignty.

5. **We are called to be peacemakers** – Ambassadors of Christ's reconciliation to a broken world.

Discussion Questions

Understanding the Message (15-20 minutes)

1. **The pastor said, "We often see peace on the walls but don't feel it in our hearts." Why do you think there's such a disconnect between the cultural celebration of peace and our actual experience of it?**

2. **Read Isaiah 9:6. What does the title "Prince of Peace" (Sar Shalom) reveal about Jesus' authority and purpose? How is this different from how the world typically pursues peace?**

3. **The sermon contrasted the "Pax Romana" (Roman peace through force) with the peace Jesus offers. What are some modern examples of "false peace" that our culture promotes?**

4. **Explain the difference between "peace WITH God" and "peace OF God." Why is the first one necessary before we can experience the second?**

Personal Reflection (15-20 minutes)

5. **Romans 5:1 says we have "peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Have you experienced this reconciliation? If so, how has it changed your relationship with God? If not, what questions do you have?**

6. **The pastor said, "Most of your anxiety comes from trying to control what only God can command." What areas of your life are you currently trying to control instead of surrendering to God?**

7. **Read Philippians 4:6-7. The prescription for peace includes prayer, petition, and thanksgiving. Which of these three is hardest for you to practice consistently? Why?**

8. **Isaiah 26:3 promises "perfect peace" (shalom shalom) to those whose minds are "stayed" on God. What practical steps can you take this week to keep your mind focused on God rather than on your circumstances?**

Application and Action (15-20 minutes)

9. **Jesus said in John 16:33, "In this world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." What current "tribulation" in your life needs the peace of God? How can this group pray for you?**

10. **The sermon emphasized that we're called to be "peacemakers," not just "peace-lovers." What does it look like practically to bring reconciliation, calm, and the gospel into your relationships this week?**

11. **The pastor mentioned that "you will always fall in the direction you lean." Are you leaning more on your own understanding or on God right now? What evidence supports your answer?**

12. **How can you be an ambassador of Christ's peace to someone in your life who is experiencing chaos, fear, or anxiety this Advent season?**

Practical Applications

Choose one or two of these to commit to this week:

Individual Practices

- **Daily Surrender:** Each morning this week, identify one thing you're trying to control and consciously surrender it to God in prayer.

- **Peace Inventory:** Make a list of what steals your peace. Bring each item to God in prayer using Philippians 4:6-7 as your guide.

- **Scripture Meditation:** Memorize John 14:27 or Isaiah 26:3. Repeat it whenever anxiety rises.

- **Gratitude Journal:** Write down three things you're thankful for each day, recognizing God's presence in your circumstances.

Relational Practices

- **Peacemaking Mission:** Identify one broken relationship and take a step toward reconciliation this week.
- **Share the Gospel:** Have a conversation with someone about the peace that comes through knowing Christ.
- **Encourage Someone:** Send a text, card, or message to someone who needs to know God's peace is available to them.

Group Commitment

- **Prayer Partners:** Pair up and commit to praying for each other's specific "peace needs" throughout the week.
- **Accountability Check-in:** Text or call your prayer partner mid-week to share how you're practicing surrender and trust.

Memory Verse

John 14:27 – "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."

Closing Reflection

The pastor concluded with this truth: "The world's peace depends on circumstance; God's peace depends on Christ."

Final Question: What would change in your life this week if you truly believed that peace is not the absence of problems, but the presence of God?

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

- Pray for each person's specific areas where they need God's peace
- Ask God to help the group surrender control and trust His timing
- Pray for opportunities to be peacemakers in your spheres of influence
- Thank God that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, has come and will come again

Looking Ahead

Next week's Advent focus: ****Joy****

Encourage group members to observe where they see (or don't see) genuine joy this week and come prepared to discuss.

Leader Notes

- Be sensitive to group members who may not yet have "peace with God" through salvation. Be prepared to explain the gospel and offer to pray with anyone interested.
- Some may be experiencing significant anxiety or mental health struggles. Affirm that seeking professional help is wise and doesn't contradict faith in God's peace.
- Keep the discussion focused on Scripture and personal application rather than political or cultural debates about "peace."
- Create space for silence and reflection—sometimes peace is experienced in the quiet moments together.