

*After His departure from earth, what “gift” did Jesus give us?
(Jn 14:16) What is it about this promise that gives you the most peace?*

John 14:16-18 NLT - 16 And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, who will never leave you. 17 He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive him, because it isn't looking for him and doesn't recognize him. But you know him, because he lives with you now and later will be in you. 18 No, I will not abandon you as orphans--I will come to you.

WRAP-UP

When the angels announced Messiah’s birth to the shepherds they declared, “peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased.” That peace comes from Jesus, the Prince of Peace. But if we are to enjoy His peace, we need to make Him Lord in our life. His peace comes as we choose to live under the authority of Jesus and give him total control. Outside of that authority we can’t expect to enjoy the peace the world cannot offer and cannot understand.

Memory Verse

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.
- John 14:27 NIV

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: _____

Pray for your group members’ needs: (see back for more space)

Challenge- Be aware of what you might still be trying to control rather than allowing Jesus to take authority and take steps to release it to Him.

“Prince of Peace”

Watching and Waiting - Week #4

INTRODUCTION

As we conclude our Watching and Waiting sermon series, we look at Jesus as the Prince of Peace. And although we are watching and waiting for the peace only Jesus can give, we find that the Christmas season often leaves us struggling to find peace amidst the frantic pace. At Christmas we realize there are problems we can’t solve, people we can’t control and expectations we can’t meet. But the solution we seek isn’t in what the world has to offer us, it is in placing ourselves under the authority of the one who can bring us peace.

Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)

Which would you say was hardest for you this Christmas; solving problems, controlling people, or meeting expectations?

STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)

1. Prince of Peace

Isaiah 9:6 NLT - 6 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

Isaiah used the term Prince of Peace to describe the Messiah. The word for prince is *sar* and refers to a ruler or captain. Isaiah could have called him the giver of peace, or the author of peace, but calling Him Prince shows us that the peace Jesus gives us is linked to his authority in our lives.

Who are some of the people who held authority over your life (family, military, employer)? Now, consider the benefits they offered in that role. (protection, provision, guidance). What happened to those benefits when you stepped outside of their authority, perhaps by breaking their rules?

2. Living Under Jesus' Lordship

Christmas celebrates the coming of Jesus to take His place the world. But perhaps more importantly, what is the place He occupies in your life? Is the Prince of Peace also the Lord of your life? To answer that question, we need to ask ourselves, "What does it mean for Jesus to be Lord?"

How is that defined in Matthew 7:21?

Matthew 7:21 NLT - 21 "Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter.

It is very simple- the Lord (*kyrios*) is the owner, the master and the one in control. Most of us invite Jesus to be Lord, but resist turning over total control. The more we grow in knowing Him, the more we trust Him and the more we choose to live under His authority.

In which of these areas have you had the most (and the least) success in releasing control to God?

- Finances
- Relationships
- Forgiveness
- Pride

Are there other areas you can think of that Jesus doesn't yet control in your life?

Philippians 4:6-7 NLT - 6 Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all he has done. 7 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.

This verse is not a magic formula to gain God's peace. It is a description of life under the Lordship of Christ. Worry or anxiety is a choice we make, but it's not always an easy one.

What was the last thing that caused you anxiety or worry? How would you describe your "struggle" to gain God's peace in that situation?

Coming under Christ's authority combats that anxiety.

Are you able to counter your anxiety through prayer, or recalling scripture, or acknowledging God's faithfulness to you in past circumstances? What other weapons are in your arsenal against anxiety?

3. Peace from the World or from Jesus

John 14:27 NIV - 27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

The Hebrew word for peace is shalom. It is defined as rest, tranquility, wholeness, or completeness. In John 14:27, as He was concluding His time on earth, Jesus assured his disciples that He was leaving them peace. He specifically contrasted His peace, and the world's peace.

How would you describe the peace that the world offers?

What are some of the things we do differently from others that reflects God's presence and peace in our lives?

Jesus' death and resurrection gave us far greater peace than the world offers.

How has the peace Jesus brought us affected our relationships?

Ephesians 2:13-14 NLT - 13 But now you have been united with Christ Jesus. Once you were far away from God, but now you have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ. 14 For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us.