



Unit .04

Bonus Session

The Prince of Peace

Scripture



Isaiah 9:1-7

1 Nevertheless, the gloom of the distressed land will not be like that of the former times when he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali. But in the future he will bring honor to the way of the sea, to the land east of the Jordan, and to Galilee of the nations.

2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; a light has dawned on those living in the land of darkness. **3** You have enlarged the nation and increased its joy. The people have rejoiced before you as they rejoice at harvest time and as they rejoice when dividing spoils.

4 For you have shattered their oppressive yoke and the rod on their shoulders, the staff of their oppressor, just

as you did on the day of Midian. **5** For every trampling boot of battle and the bloodied garments of war will be burned as fuel for the fire. **6** For a child will be born for us, a son will be given to us, and the government will be on his shoulders. He will be named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. **7** The dominion will be vast, and its prosperity will never end. He will reign on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish and sustain it with justice and righteousness from now on and forever. The zeal of the LORD of Armies will accomplish this.

What “dark” situations have you walked through? How did God bring “light” in those times of darkness?

How has Christ brought peace within your life?



99 Essential Doctrines

Christ as King

God has always been King over His creation, whether in heaven or on earth. Yet some of His creatures in both realms have rebelled against Him, leaving destruction in their wake. To restore His broken world, God promised a King who would deliver His people and restore all of creation. The promise of a coming King finds its fulfillment in Jesus Christ and looks forward to its perfection when Jesus returns for His bride, the church.

Main Point

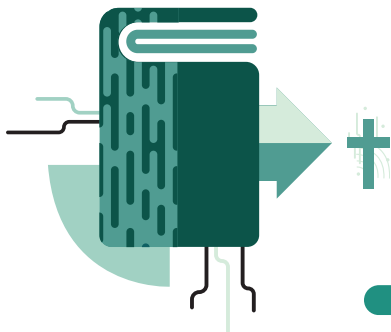
Jesus is the Prince of Peace, who brought salvation to the world.

How has your relationship with Christ brought you peace with others?

**Which type of peace Christ provided is most meaningful for you right now?
Which do you feel like you need to rest in more?**

Which of the four names describing Jesus is most meaningful to you? Why?

Jesus' obedience isn't just an example for us; it changes us. How does this knowledge affect the way you respond to Him?



Christ Connection

Jesus is the Prince of Peace of whom Isaiah and the other Old Testament prophets spoke. Through His sinless life, death, and resurrection, Jesus makes right what we made wrong because of sin.

Our Mission



Head

How do the circumstances of Jesus' birth help us understand how His rule is different from other kings?

What aspects of Jesus' character set Him apart from what we might expect from a king?



Heart

Why do you think the message of justice would have been good news for Isaiah's hearers?

How does God's justice through Christ's death and resurrection bring us peace with God?

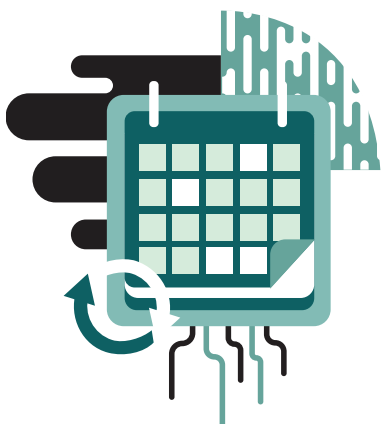


Hands

What things have distracted you from the true meaning of this Christmas season?

What ways can you redirect your attention to Christ and serving others this year?

Daily Devotions



Day 1

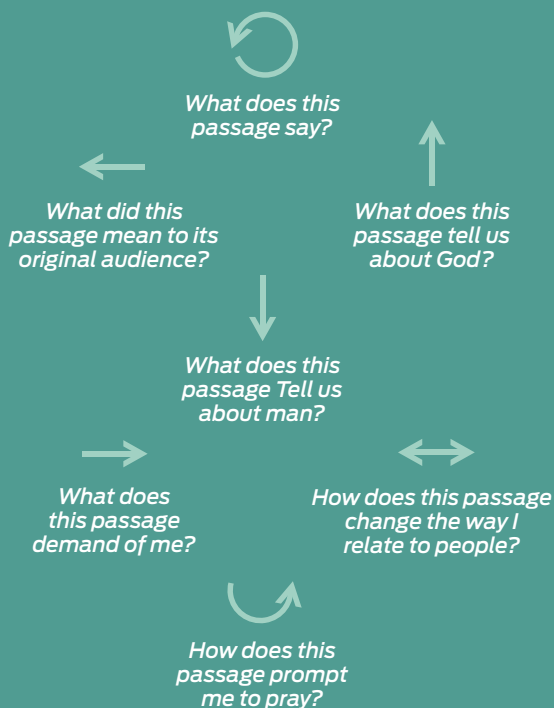
Isaiah 9:1-3

The relationship between happiness and joy is interesting. To some, these two words are synonyms. To others, they describe very different experiences: Happiness is a situational feeling while joy is an ongoing decision. They may overlap, and often do, yet one can be joyful (as Christians are commanded) while not feeling happy. While the second perspective is valid, we must be careful not to divorce these two ideas, if they are not the same. Christians' joy should fuel our happiness. The sullen but joyful Christian should not be what the world thinks of when they think of us.

The reason rests in the source of our joy: Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:4). We are commanded to be joyful at all times because the source of our joy is consistent—our salvation through Christ, the gospel. No matter what might be happening in our lives—or how difficult and painful it might be—Christ is always there and He is always the same. Our salvation is secure; we are a forgiven people who have received His righteousness. This is why we rejoice—even at times through tears.

When you think of the gospel, what is your usual emotional response? Why?

The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Isaiah

9:4-5

We were once captive to sin and death, but in Christ, we have been set free. Jesus didn't just take this old yoke off of us and cast it aside, He shattered it; it can never be placed on us again. This is the good news of the gospel.

As amazing as that is, our freedom does not end there. Our freedom is not just understood in terms of *from*, but also *for*. Our freedom is not to be used as an opportunity to sin in an abuse of grace, but rather for service of others (Gal. 5:13). As believers, we have the ability to refrain from sin and to obey God. One way we obey God is by submitting to His authority and loving and serving others. This is the freedom we have, and it is found in voluntarily yielding to our Father and placing others' needs above our own.

Which aspect of your freedom tends to be more challenging for you: abstaining from sin or obeying God? Why?

John

16:33

As Jesus wrapped up His upper room discourse the night He was betrayed, He explained that He told the disciples these things to give them peace. But in the very next sentence, with no transition or explanation, Jesus told them they would suffer. If we only see peace as a tranquil stream, this makes no sense. But if we understand peace as more than that—as the peace Christ gives us within us, with others, and with God—reconciling these two ideas is no problem. Peace from the Lord and suffering for the Lord are not mutually exclusive. As we suffer on His behalf, we can know we are following His example. In this, our pain is being used for His glory and purposes; this is what fuels our inner peace.

As Jesus wrapped up this idea, He explained another way peace and suffering work together: As we suffer in the world, we can know that one day all such suffering will end. Jesus has won and one day when He returns, He will make all things new. This is our future hope because we have been given peace with God our Father through Jesus' suffering.

What can you do now to prepare your mind and heart to remember the Lord's peace the next time you experience suffering?

Isaiah

9:6-7

We have to be careful: judgment removed is not justice satisfied. We might believe it is at times if we focus on one aspect of the gospel—how we are no longer under God’s judgment. Of course, this is certainly true—gloriously so. Yet, we have to take a step back and look at the gospel more broadly to see God’s justice displayed. God did not just remove judgment from us and cast it aside; He placed it squarely on His Son. God’s full judgment was poured out on Christ. He bore the penalty for our sin. This is why God is just.

When we remember this, we can better understand God’s complete and unwavering justice. He always acts justly because being just is part of His nature—it is one of His attributes. Therefore, all He does is just. This justice is a hallmark of His kingdom. We see it in the gospel—how we become part of His kingdom—and we see it in how He administers His kingdom. All He has done, all He does now as He advances His kingdom, and all He will do when His kingdom comes in fullness is marked by justice.

How does God being just give you confidence and hope in life today?

Matthew

5:38-42

Believers know God is just. Our trust and hope in the gospel hinge on His justice. Still, we often find it difficult to live under God’s justice in day-to-day life. People wrong us. People hurt us. People reject us. In our flesh, we want to lash out—to get even—to administer justice. Often, we feel vindicated in this desire—especially when we are wronged on behalf of Christ.

But Christ has called on us to set aside this desire, not to pursue justice on our own, but to trust in Him to bring about justice in His time and in His way. We may not see it right now, but we can know justice is coming, and we can rest in that. This is why Jesus told His followers to bear wrongs with patience and love. Because we don’t have to worry about righting any wrongs against us: that is God’s role, not ours.

When have you tried to pursue justice on your own instead of trusting in God’s justice? What actions did you take?