



THE PEACE PROMISE: #1: PROTECTED BY PEACE

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Pastor Randy Remington

BIBLICAL TEXT(S)

"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, you whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, dear friends!" (Philippians 3:20-4:1)

*"Don't ask
the question, '
Will Christianity
give me peace?'
Ask, 'Is it true?
Because if it is,
you have a Father
who loves you. That
can bring peace."*

—Pastor Randy

*"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 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.*

*Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And **the God of peace** will be with you" (Philippians 4:4-9)*

*"lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth. He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber; indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep."
(Psalm 121:1-4)*

*"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."
(John 16:33)*

"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)

"So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." (Luke 2:15 NKJV)

"...Everything my Father has shown me, I have made known to you." (John 15:15)

*"You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you."
(Isaiah 26:3)*

MESSAGE SUMMARY

Anxiety, fear, stress, and uncertainty have reached epidemic proportions. Together, they can be debilitating. More than 57 million Americans, one-in-six people, suffer from a serious anxiety disorder. All of this boils down to a lack of peace, which is puzzling. We live in a time when people enjoy longer life spans. The diseases that drove child mortality have been defeated. People are arguably safer, overall, than in the past. But still we are a stressed-out population. What does the Bible have to say about this lack of peace?

The fruit of righteousness is peace, as the prophet Isaiah reminds us. Jesus has healed the brokenness between those who trust him and the God who sent him, making us righteous. As Jesus followers, we can know real peace. Truth is not praxis, a method, but a promise. When we believe what God says he has done for us, we can know peace as citizens of God's Kingdom—part of his family—in the midst of any circumstances.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you lead your group through a progression of engagement with the Bible passage and the speaker's message, helping them understand and apply the teaching.

LEAN IN

These are icebreaker/warm up questions, mostly just to get the group talking and start the flow of conversation. Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. What stood out to you in Sunday's sermon? Why was it significant to you?
2. What was your high/low for this past week (or since group last met)?
What was the best thing that happened and the worst thing that happened?
3. What is one thing that you're looking forward to this week that is peace-filled for you?
What's one that you are dreading?

LOOK DOWN

These are questions on the passage and observations about what's been read.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. Why do you think Paul repeats the command to rejoice?
2. What's the difference between prayers and petitions?
3. Why do you notice about how Paul's organizes his final thoughts in 4:4-9?
4. According to the text, what brings peace?
5. What implications do you see in the text for the relationship between circumstances and our experience of God's peace?

LOOK OUT

These questions help connect the world of the Bible to today.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. How do you reconcile the truth of what Paul says, what Jesus says about the world, with the reality you observe? Is that hard? If so, why?
2. What do you see that merits rejoicing? What suppresses joy?
3. Why is it hard for most people in the world to know peace?
4. How can honest conversations with God bring peace to an anxious world?
5. Where do you observe nobility, righteousness, purity, loveliness, and admirable things? Are they rare qualities? Why, or why not?

LOOK IN

These are questions that help you consider personal application.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. Is it hard for you to believe what God says about you as one of his children?
Why or why not?
2. What steals peace from you, and why?
3. How do you relate to the idea that one can choose peace?
4. What spiritual practices have given you peace?
5. How do you see prayer and peace related in your own experience?

LIVE IT OUT

These action steps help apply this week's message to day to day life.

Choose one question and talk it over for 5-10 minutes.

1. What sense of identity or relationship with God that you have either blocks peace or invites it, and what do you think you should do about that?
2. How can you use what you've learned to choose, to seek, peace?
3. What do you need to let go of in order to receive God's peace?