



THE PEACE PROMISE: #2: PERSISTING IN PEACE

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Pastor Randy Remington

BIBLICAL TEXT(S)

*"Sometimes,
our sickness
is our secrets,
but the Scriptures
teach us that what
comes into the light
is made light.
Your illness is
not your identity."*

–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.**" (Philippians 4:4-97)*

"However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:20)

"I have been deprived of peace; I have forgotten what prosperity is. So I say, "My splendor is gone and all that I had hoped from the Lord." I remember my affliction and my wandering, the bitterness and the gall. I well remember them, and my soul is downcast within me. Yet this I call to mind and therefore I have hope: Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. 24 I say to myself, "The Lord is my portion; therefore I will wait for him" (Lamentations 3:17-24)

"The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me, because the LORD has anointed me to...comfort all who mourn, and provide for those who grieve in Zion—to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair." (Isaiah 61:1a, 2b-3)

"I keep my eyes always on the Lord. With him at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will rest secure." (Psalm 16:8-9)

MESSAGE SUMMARY

It is easy to say to someone "rejoice in the Lord always," when you are in good times. It's easy to hear "rejoice in the Lord always," when you are in a good season of life. But Paul tells us to "rejoice in the Lord always" not while he's on a beach enjoying life, but while he's in prison. Therefore, he has more credibility to call us to "rejoice in the Lord always".

The reality is, we can experience the peace of God in the middle of troubled times. The peace of God is beyond human explanation, and it protects our hearts and our minds. We can choose to rejoice in the midst of suffering because our foundation for rejoicing is that our names are written in the Book of Life, as Jesus says in Luke 10:20. Our foundation for rejoicing in the middle of suffering is in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Therefore, no matter what life throws at us, we can always rejoice. The Prophet Jeremiah, after seeing his city destroyed and taken over by Babylon, was experiencing deep pain and suffering. But he chose hope. We have the choice to rejoice in our sufferings, which opens us up to receiving the peace of God.

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 would be your perfect vacation?
2. What would your perfect day on your perfect vacation look like?

Transition: The reality is, we all desire all of life to be like the perfect day of our perfect getaway. Unfortunately, though great days come and go, so do really tough days and dark seasons. We're going to wrestle with what to do to experience the peace of God in the midst of those hard times.

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. What were Jesus' disciples excited about when they returned to Jesus in Luke 10:17-20?
2. What are some of the things we can get excited about in place of our foundation for rejoicing, which is the hope we have because of what Christ has done?
3. According to Philippians 4:4-7, what is it that we ought to replace anxiousness with?

LOOK OUT

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

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. Where have you see anxiousness permeate our culture? (i.e. social media, the news, conversations with friends, etc.)
2. Who are examples of people who went through great trials, yet did not allow their suffering to define them or hold them back?
3. Who are some modern day examples of followers of Jesus who praised God in the middle of suffering (this could be someone you know personally, or someone whom you have heard of).

LOOK IN

These are questions that help you consider personal application.

Spend about 15-20 minutes on three questions max

1. What in your life could be a cause of anxiety?
2. What can you do to combat that anxiety according to Philippians 4:4-7?
3. What are the areas of your life you can be grateful to God about?

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 could your life look like if every morning you spent time writing down and thanking God for three things? Imagine what doing this every day for a month would do to you. Imagine what practicing this everyday for one year would do for your relationships. Imagine how well doing this everyday for ten years would equip you for walking through life's sufferings.