

INTRODUCTION

As Aaron mentioned on Sunday, in order to be outrageously peaceful we must acknowledge that there is only one true source of peace – Jesus. However, if Jesus *is* peace, and lives inside us, why aren't we always outrageously peaceful?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What is your definition of peace?
2. Look up the following Scripture and list what you learn about peace from these passages.

Psalm 29:11 _____

Psalm 34:14 _____

Psalm 119:165 _____

Isaiah 9:6-7 _____

Luke 2:14 _____

John 14:27 _____

Galatians 5:22 _____

Ephesians 2:14 _____

3. The Bible uses two main words for peace – in the Old Testament, the Hebrew word ‘shalom’ (‘shalom’), meaning ‘complete’ or ‘sound’, and in the New Testament, the Greek word ‘eirēnē’, meaning ‘one’, ‘quietness’, ‘rest’. In English, the word ‘peace’ is more passive, conveying an absence of hostility. In Hebrew, however, the word is active, meaning “to be complete or whole” or “to live well”. Does the meaning of the words change how you view peace?
4. Read Isaiah 43:1-3 and John 16:33; note that both Isaiah and Jesus state that there WILL be problems. Does the idea of peace in the midst of distress seem paradoxical to you?
5. Aaron shared that outrageous peace is the acknowledgement of the presence of Jesus. In Exodus 33:14, God says, “My presence will go with you, and I will give you rest.” In this Christmas season, we celebrate Emmanuel, *God with us*. How do you acknowledge His presence in your life?

Study Questions for Community Groups

6. Read Isaiah 26:3. The phrase ‘perfect peace’ in Hebrew is ‘shalom shalom’. How is *shalom shalom* attainable? What does that mean to you?
7. Read Philippians 4:4-7 and Colossians 3:15. How does gratefulness relate to peace?

SCRIPTURE

²²Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of Him to the other side, while He dismissed the crowd. ²³After He had dismissed them, He went up on a mountainside by Himself to pray. When evening came, He was there alone, ²⁴but the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it. ²⁵During the fourth watch of the night Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶When the disciples saw Him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear. ²⁷But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”

Matthew 14:22-27

APPLICATION

“It Is Well With My Soul” is a hymn written by Horatio Spafford. After the Great Fire in Chicago affected him greatly financially, he planned to travel to Europe with his family. He was delayed by business, and his wife and four children went on ahead. While crossing the Atlantic, the ship sank after a collision with another ship, and all four of children died. His wife survived and sent him a telegram that said “Saved alone.” Shortly afterward, Spafford traveled to meet his grieving wife. As his ship passed where his children had died, he was inspired to write these lyrics. Reflect on this hymn this week as you acknowledge the presence of Jesus in your life.

*When peace, like a river, attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll;
Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say, it is well, it is well with my soul.*

It is well with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.

*Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come, let this blest assurance control,
That Christ hath regarded my helpless estate, and hath shed His own blood for my soul.*

It is well with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.

*My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious thought!—My sin, not in part but the whole,
Is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more, praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!*

It is well with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.

*For me, be it Christ, be it Christ hence to live: if Jordan above me shall roll,
No pang shall be mine, for in death as in life thou wilt whisper Thy peace to my soul.*

It is well with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.

*But, Lord, 'tis for Thee, for Thy coming we wait, the sky, not the grave, is our goal;
Oh, trump of the angel! Oh, voice of the Lord! Blessed hope, blessed rest of my soul!*

It is well with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.

*And Lord, haste the day when the faith shall be sight, the clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
The trump shall resound, and the Lord shall descend, even so, it is well with my soul.*

It is well with my soul, it is well, it is well with my soul.