

"The Peace Christ Brings"

John 16: 27-33

6/26/22

Discussion Guide

Prepare for the discussion by playing a song about the peace of Christ.

Read the Passage:

No, the Father himself loves you because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. ²⁸ I came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father."

²⁹ Then Jesus' disciples said, "Now you are speaking clearly and without figures of speech. ³⁰ Now we can see that you know all things and that you do not even need to have anyone ask you questions. This makes us believe that you came from God."

³¹ "Do you now believe?" Jesus replied. ³² "A time is coming and in fact has come when you will be scattered, each to your own home. You will leave me all alone. Yet I am not alone, for my Father is with me.

³³ "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: 27-33

1. If you were on your deathbed, who would you want to talk to? What would you say? Who would you be thinking of?

Respond to the fact that it was you Jesus was thinking of when he was on his deathbed.

2. Before we get too deep in the discussion on peace we first should to define what the Bible means by "peace." Find a Bible dictionary and look up the word to see what it means? How is the Bible's definition of peace different from how we use it colloquially?
3. What is the connection between truth and peace? Give some examples of how important it is to have truth in order to experience peace.

4. Respond to Flannery O'Connor's response to her critics:

"The job of an artist is to understand and show what is. You can't know what is unless you have dogma. You can't know if something is wrong, or grotesque or distorted unless you know what is right, beautiful, true. If there is no such thing as dogma, then who needs an artist? Gallup polls will suffice. If nothing is true then there is no way to evaluate life. All we can do is describe what is without comment and you don't need an artist to do that! Because of this, some people will find my work disturbing because where they see normalcy, I see distortion."

5. How does the world experience peace if they do not believe in God, or in the hope of resurrection? What do you think about the researcher's observation about non-depressed

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people who do not believe in God and believe that in the end all they have to look forward to is rot?

Here's what she said: *"For people to live and cope with this truth they have to shut off their mind to it. They have to not think about, and live in denial of it. If they actually thought about the true implications of their beliefs they would be horribly depressed."*

6. Do we really have to believe what Jesus said of himself in vs. 27-28 and in other places of the Bible, that he was the divine Son of God who came into the world to atone for our sins and has ascended to the Father to be our Advocate? Isn't it enough for us to agree on His teachings?

7. Read the passage and reflect on the peace that it offers.

What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who then is the one who condemns? No one. Christ Jesus who died—more than that, who was raised to life—is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Romans 8: 32-35

8. The disciples made a bold profession as to who Jesus was but did not live consistent with their belief. Pastor Richard told a story of a woman who refused to forgive him even though as Christians we are to *"forgive just as God in Christ has forgiven you."* Ephesians 4:32

What are other commonly held beliefs that Christians struggle to live out with integrity? Is there an example where you witnessed this?

9. What teaching of Jesus have you struggled to live out even though you want to? (And trust me we all have them!)

10. If we really believed this statement made by Jesus: *"In this world you will have trouble, but take heart, I have overcome the world"* (vs. 33) what difference would it make in our lives?

11. I can't imagine going through the series of losses that the Spaffords experienced. What is more amazing is how they were able to tap into the resources of their faith in order to walk through their grief. Share a time when you experienced a significant hardship or tragedy and what truth of Jesus or truths from Jesus did you cling to in order to experience peace when there was no peace?

End the study by listening to a version of *"It is Well with My Soul."*