

WELCOME

Most people would define peace as a feeling – as a sensation in the soul. We want to trade our anxiety, depression, and fear for tranquillity, and we often adopt harmful and temporal practices to achieve this feeling. Substances such as drugs and alcohol can create an artificial “peace” and sedate our mood. The problem comes when the feeling wears off and we are left, once again, with the chaos of our soul. Biblical peace is not based on feelings or circumstances. In the Bible, the presence of peace is about right relationships with God and our neighbours. We can find the strength to battle anxiety in right relationships – with God, others and ourselves.

Key Question: Where do I find _____ to battle my anxiety and fear?

Key Idea: I am free from _____ because I have found peace with God, peace with others and peace with myself.

Key Verse: “Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with _____ present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4: 6-7)

(Key Application #1): Come to _____ in your relationship with God .

(Key Application #2): As much as it is up to you, live at peace with all _____.

(Key Application #3): Learn to live with peace with _____.

GETTING STARTED

Begin your discussion by reciting the key verse and key idea together as a group. On your first attempt, use your notes if you need help. On your second attempt, try to state them completely from memory.

KEY VERSE: “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 minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4: 6-7)

KEY IDEA: I am free from anxiety because I have found peace with God, peace with others, and peace with myself.

GROUP DISCUSSION

As a group, discuss your thoughts and feelings about the following declarations. Which statements are easy to declare with certainty? Which are more challenging? Why?

- I know God has forgiven me because of what Jesus has done.
- I am not angry with God, myself or others.
- I forgive people who deeply hurt me.
- I have an inner peace from God.

1. Although true peace is accessible to all who call Jesus Christ their “Lord,” many continue to live with fear and anxiety. Why do you think this is the case?

2. What are some of the biblical ways to overcome fear and anxiety? What have you found to be most successful?

3. Who in your life maintains a state of peace even in the most troubling situations? What part does faith play in that person's ability to remain at peace?

4. What thoughts or behaviours tend to feed your feelings of fear and anxiety? What boundaries can you set in place to avoid those pitfalls?

CASE STUDY :

Use the following case study as a model for a real-life situation where you might put this week's key idea into practice.

Your neighbour Kyle has been coming to church with you for about a year. He was baptised this Summer and is trying to read the Bible on his own. He calls you occasionally when he runs into passages that he doesn't understand. During a recent conversation Kyle admitted, 'I'm grateful for what God has done in my life. I want to make it up to him, but I have done way too many rotten things. I'm afraid I'll never be able to make things right with him. Honestly, I spend most nights tossing and turning, wondering how I can undo the mistakes from my past.'

Use the following key applications from this session, what could you say or do to help Kyle make peace with his past?

KEY APPLICATION #1: Come to peace in your relationship with God

KEY APPLICATION #2: As much as it is up to you, live at peace with all people.

KEY APPLICATION #3: Learn to live at peace with yourself.

CLOSING PRAYER:

Close your time together with prayer. Share your prayer requests with one another. Ask God to help you put this week's key idea into practice.