



From Here to There

Peace

Genesis 1-3, John 16:33, Philippians 4:4-7
Danny Hall • September 29, 2013

The character of peace

The challenge to peace

The foundation of peace

The practice of peace



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Message-based Group Lesson

Overview

In Philippians 4:6 Paul encourages us to not be anxious about anything. When we read that, most of us think something like this. "Don't worry about anything? Really? You just don't understand what is going on in my life right now?" But of course God knows exactly what is going on in our lives and he still says to us, "Don't worry about anything." How is it possible to have such peace? This week's lesson will explore this struggle for peace.

The OT Hebrew word for peace is shalom, a word that at its root means wholeness or full wellness. The NT Greek word for peace is eirene (from which we get the name Irene and the word irenic). This word has at its root the idea of things being tied up together into a whole. Again the idea is wholeness. The lack of this wholeness is characterized by a sense of fragmentation in our lives and results most blatantly in worry. All of this flows from our fundamental state of alienation; alienation from God, ourselves, and others. The good news is that there is restoration and that real peace is possible to us in Christ.

Engaging with each other

1. Where does your mind go when you wake up in the middle of the night?

Engaging with the Bible

1. In the introduction to this lesson there are brief descriptions of the roots of the OT and NT words for peace. How do these concepts help us think about peace?
2. Skim the first three chapters of Genesis. What types of alienation do you see here? How is alienation the root to our lack of peace?
3. Read Romans 5:1 and Colossians 1:20. How would you describe the foundation to peace?

4. How do the following verses help us cultivate a deeper experience of God's peace? Psalm 4:8, Psalm 119:165, Isaiah 26:3
5. Read Romans 12:18, Ephesians 4:3, and Hebrews 12:14. As those who are at peace with God, what are our responsibilities toward others? What are the limits to this?
6. From Philippians 4:6-7 how would you describe a framework for living a life of peace?

Engaging with our lives

1. What specific things make it hard for you to live in peace?
2. Reflect on your answers to question 4 above. Which one in particular do you need to put into practice? What one step can you take this week?
3. Think of a person or situation that is causing your peace to be disturbed. As far as it depends on you, what can you do to live at peace with this person or in this situation?
4. Read aloud together the blessing from Numbers 6:24-26 (below).
²⁴ The Lord bless you and keep you;
²⁵ the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you;
²⁶ the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.