

Week Two Peace



READ

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this. (Isaiah 9:6-7 NIV)

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. - (John 14:27 NIV)

UNDERSTAND

Is there anything crazier than the Christmas season? The hustle and bustle of holiday shopping, family gatherings, church services, work parties, Christmas performances, and the general busyness that comes with the season. There's just something about the Christmas season that seems to raise the collective blood pressure of the population, huh?

What's interesting is that this frantic feeling of frenzy is the exact opposite of what this season is meant to be. While the rest of the world is pulling us toward presents, parties, and planning, Jesus is simply leading us toward peace.

In a world marked by tragedy, division, and corruption (sound familiar?), Jesus came to bring His long promised peace to the people. His birth permanently turned the page from pandemonium to peace, letting all of us know that even when everything around us feels crazy, we can still have peace. Lasting, eternal, deep rooted peace.

When chaos swirls around you this Advent season, choose peace. When you feel the stress of family dynamics or the tug of tension threatening to break you, choose peace. When you feel rushed and spread thin, choose peace. When you feel the pull toward perfection, choose peace. And when you feel the weight of weariness in this world, choose peace.

So as this Advent season marches on and we move closer and closer to Christmas, no matter what's happening around you, cling to Jesus. Cling to the One who brings peace. Make His peace the banner over your Christmas season.

RESPOND

Questions for Discussion:

What is one thing that really stresses you or your family out during the holiday season?

What does peace look like to you?

How can you make a choice to let the peace of Christ permeate your holiday season?

PRAYER

God, you are the bringer of peace. You are the One who can sustain us when life feels chaotic. As Christmas approaches, help me to choose peace. Fill me with your peace and focus my eyes on You.

FAMILY TIME

Grab some pens, small pieces of paper, and your family! Have everyone in your family write down on pieces of paper some things that really stress them out about the Christmas season. Have each person fold their answers up and put them in the middle of the table.

Before you take a look at their answers, read John 14:27 with your family. Talk together about what peace means to each one of you and how peace is possible in our lives because of Jesus.

Then, start going over the things each of your family members wrote on the pieces of paper. As you talk about the things that each of you said might be stressful this season, brainstorm ways you can instead choose peace.