

Is Peace Possible?

Jesus defeated death that we might live in *increasing* peace now (John 20:19-21). But often our idea of peace is wrong. In an anxious, uncertain, chaotic, depressed, and angry world, we tend to think that peace is that rare moment when things are circumstantially perfect without any conflict (which means we never have peace). But what if peace is not the absence of something but the presence of someone? Real peace comes when we radically focus on Jesus (Isaiah 26:3). Our lives are full of constant stimuli – social media, TV, videos, texting, emails, calendars – that are vying for our attention and focus. We need *habits of faith* that turn our mind's eye towards Jesus and heaven. Those habits include worshipping together, engaging in God's Word together, praying and listening for His voice, and participating in true Biblical community and fellowship.

GET THINGS STARTED

What would the perfect, peaceful day look like for you? What would you do or not do? Who would you want with you or not with you? What would you want, and what would you avoid, to have that restful, peaceful day?

GO DEEPER

1. In John 20:19-21, the first words that Jesus spoke to His disciples (that He repeats) after His resurrection were *peace be with you*. What does this charge reveal about His heart and desire for His followers? Why is it significant that Jesus offers peace after His resurrection?
2. According to John 16:33, where do followers of Jesus find their peace? What are the promises Jesus makes in this verse that enable us to take heart?
3. From Isaiah 26:3, God keeps in perfect peace those whose minds are stayed on Him. What does it mean to have your mind stayed on Him? What does it look like to have a radical focus on Jesus? What are the habits of faith that keep our mind's eye on Him?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. How much peace do you have right now, and do you think peace is possible? In what ways have you possibly had a wrong perspective of what true peace is? What needs to change to have an accurate view of peace?
2. What distracts you most from having a mind stayed on Jesus that leads to perfect peace?
3. What habits of faith are you practicing so that you can maintain your focus on Jesus and experience peace? What habits do you need to put into place? What keeps you from stepping into those habits?

PRACTICE IT NOW

As a group, take time in prayer to ask for the peace of God to come upon you. Ask God for an increased capacity to have a mind radically focused on Him. Ask Him to help you have a healthy, accurate understanding of what peace truly is and how it is obtained, that *peace is not the absence of something but the presence of someone*. Pray that you develop the proper habits of faith that keep you in a place where peace is constant rather than momentary.