
CBC WEEKLY RESOURCES



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COMMUNITY BIBLE CHURCH
3645 Cashiers Rd, Highlands, NC 28741

I. SERMON RECAP

In this week's message from Pastor Gary, delivered amid the chill of a winter storm, we continued exploring the "Established" series, focusing on the profound gift of peace through the Holy Spirit. Pastor Gary opened with a compelling truth: this peace is not dependent on our circumstances but is a divine gift that surpasses human understanding. Through deep, purposeful prayer characterized by adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication, believers can experience a peace that guards their hearts and minds, much like a sentinel watching over a city.

Pastor Gary encouraged us to use times of quiet prayer to cleanse our hearts and minds, acknowledging our need for God's forgiveness and realizing the potential of our identity in Christ. He reminded us to focus our thoughts on what is true and praiseworthy, ensuring that our hearts remain steadfast and trusting in God. As we reflect on God's boundless power, we are invited to ask Him boldly for what seems impossible, confident in His ability to provide.

May you be blessed with the peace of God that transcends all understanding, guarding your heart and mind in Christ Jesus this week. Remember, God is always ready to pour His infinite blessings upon us as we seek Him wholeheartedly.

Chapters

Introduction to Storms and Peace

Beyond Understanding: Divine Peace

The A.C.T.S. of Prayer

The Sentinel of Our Hearts and Minds

Boldness in Our Requests

II. STUDY GUIDE

Key Points:

- Balance personal and community prayer for spiritual depth.
- Understand and live out your identity in Christ for lasting peace.
- Practice a worship-first approach: adoration, confession, thanksgiving, supplication.
- Cultivate stillness before God to hear His voice.
- Focus on God's power, trusting in His boundless capabilities.

Key Scripture:

Philippians 4:6-7 - "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 your minds in Christ Jesus." [NIV]

Other Relevant Verses:

Galatians 5:22 - Fruit of the Spirit includes peace.

James 1:2 - Consider it pure joy in trials, linked to joy and peace.

Isaiah 26:3 - Perfect peace is for those who trust in God.

1 Thessalonians 1:8 - The gospel ringing out reflects inner peace.

Psalms 55:22 - Cast your cares on the Lord, relating to prayer for peace.

Proverbs 16:3 - Commit to the Lord for establishment.

Ephesians 3:20 - God can do immeasurably more, aligning with bold requests.

Matthew 5:9 - Blessed are the peacemakers, applying peace in action.

John 14:27 - Jesus gives peace, not as the world does.

III. DEVOTIONAL MATERIAL

Day 1: Establishing Peace

Question: How can I experience peace despite my circumstances today?

Reading: Philippians 4:6-7

Devotional: In times of chaos, the Word invites us to pray with thanksgiving, freeing us from the shackles of anxiety. This peace is not just an emotional tranquility, but a divine steadiness offered to believers. Apply this peace today by scheduling times of prayer, purposing to thank God in all circumstances.

Challenge: Spend 10 minutes in Thanksgiving Prayer, writing down gratitude for both small and large blessings.

Day 2: Your Identity in Christ

Question: What does it mean to live out my identity in Christ?

Reading: Galatians 5:22

Devotional: Our identity in Christ is intertwined with the fruit of the Spirit, including peace. This identity equips us to love, to endure, and to remain at peace amidst challenges. Embrace your identity by reflecting on which aspects of the fruit of the Spirit are evident in your life and which need further cultivation.

Challenge: Identify and display one fruit of the Spirit more intentionally throughout your day.

Day 3: The Prayer of A.C.T.S.

Question: How can my prayer life be more structured and fulfilling?

Reading: Psalm 55:22

Devotional: Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, Supplication. This method stabilizes our spiritual focus. As we cast our cares upon God through structured prayer, we invite divine peace into our lives. Begin using the A.C.T.S. model during your prayer time today and experience firsthand the tranquility it brings.

Challenge: Write out one complete prayer using the A.C.T.S. model.

Day 4: Peace as a Sentinel

Question: What 'guards' do I need in my life to protect my heart and mind?

Reading: Isaiah 26:3

Devotional: Just as a sentinel watches over a city, God's peace protects the depths of our souls when our minds are steadfast. By fostering a consistent focus on Christ and His promises, we cultivate an inner landscape prepared for enduring peace and joy. Examine your mental focus today and let steadfastness in God be your guide.

Challenge: Identify and eliminate one distraction that hinders your peace.

Day 5: Bold Prayers and Boundless Expectations

Question: How can my prayers reflect God's boundless power?

Reading: Ephesians 3:20

Devotional: The limitless capacity of God invites us to dream beyond our human constraints. Our prayers should embody a confidence that God desires to work mightily in and through us. Shift your focus from small to significant, expecting God to open doors otherwise thought impossible.

Challenge: Pray specifically for one seemingly impossible situation, fully trusting in God's will.

IV. SMALL GROUP RESOURCES

Opening:

Welcome everyone warmly before inviting a participant to lead the group in prayer, yearning for God's peace to manifest richly in all lives present.

Sermon Recap:

Pastor Gary's message invites us to embrace a peace that surpasses understanding, a divine serenity obtained through purposeful prayer and trust in God.

Highlights include:

- The divine peace that is not circumstantial.
- The significance of prayer in experiencing peace.
- God's limitless ability to provide, encouraging bold prayers.

Icebreaker Question:

What is one way you cultivated peace in a difficult situation this past week?

Scripture Exploration:

Philippians 4:6-7

- What does it mean to present requests with thanksgiving?
- How does this peace transcend understanding?
- How can we guard our hearts and minds against anxiety?
- Discuss the role of thanksgiving in securing peace.
- Share a personal experience of peace amid chaos.
- How does community prayer bolster individual peace?

Galatians 5:22

- Describe the relationship between love, joy, and peace.
- How does peace as a fruit of the Spirit manifest in your life?
- Discuss how circumstances can challenge the fruits.
- What metaphor can describe the fruit of peace in your heart?

Ephesians 3:20

- What does "immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine" mean to you?
- How can recognizing God's power change our prayer life?
- Share a time when God exceeded your expectations.

Takeaway Discussions:

How do these passages collectively encourage a steadfast heart and mind?

In what ways can you bring these teachings into your daily routine?

Discuss how peace can influence your community and interactions.

Application:

Encourage each member to incorporate stillness and bold prayer into their personal and communal prayer practices, seeking peace and addressing God confidently.

Closing:

Share prayer needs, encouraging openness among the group before closing with prayer, perhaps inviting the Spirit to instill peace in all hearts.

Leader Notes:

Foster a safe space for sharing and encourage everyone to participate in discussions. Use open-ended questions to deepen exploration and be attentive to the Spirit's direction in prayer and discussion. Aim to cultivate a communal atmosphere where peace is practiced and shared.