

“Peace Has an Enemy”
Looking for Jesus Sermon Series #3
Matthew 25:15-22
Cross Community Church, Savannah, Ga.
July 26, 2026

Discussion Questions

The sermon describes restoration as a central theme of the gospel -- in what areas of your life do you most long to see God's restoring work, and what might be standing in the way of that restoration?

The pastor warns that the devil is a counterfeit agent who comes disguised rather than announcing his destructive intentions -- in what subtle ways have you seen the enemy present himself as something appealing or beneficial in your own life?

Lakeisha's testimony that 'you can't dine with the devil' challenges the idea that we can engage with sin casually and walk away unaffected -- where might you be tempted to think you can entertain something harmful without serious consequences?

The sermon draws a parallel between the Antichrist offering the Jewish people the restoration of temple worship and the ways idols in our own lives promise fulfillment they can never deliver -- what false promises have you believed from something you placed on the throne of your heart?

Jesus resisted the enemy's temptation at the pinnacle of the temple by quoting Scripture -- how consistently are you equipped with God's Word as a weapon when you face spiritual attack, and what would it look like to be more prepared?

The pastor states that God already knows your breaking point and has, in a sense, already acted to limit what you will face -- how does that truth change the way you approach seasons of intense suffering or hardship?

Augustine is quoted as saying that idol worship is 'worshiping anything that is to be used and using anything that is to be worshiped' -- what good gifts in your life are most at risk of crossing the line from blessing to idol?

The sermon emphasizes that God keeps his covenantal promises even when humans are unfaithful -- how does the reliability of God's character toward Israel encourage your confidence in his promises to you personally?

The pastor connects the city of Jerusalem, whose name means 'foundation of peace,' with the enemy's strategy to attack the very place of peace -- where in your life is the enemy most aggressively targeting your peace with God, and how are you responding?

The sermon closes with the image of Savannah's leaders surrendering to Sherman to avoid destruction, using it as a picture of surrendering to Christ before the coming judgment -- what would full surrender to Jesus look like for you today, and is there anything you are still holding back?

Small Group Guide

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5-Day Bible Reading Plan and Devotional Guide

Based on the Sermon Series: "Peace Has an Enemy" from Matthew 24

Day 1: The God Who Restores

Reading: Jeremiah 31:31-34 — God promises a new covenant with his people, pledging to write his law on their hearts, forgive their iniquity, and remember their sin no more.

Devotional: Restoration is not simply a human longing — it is a divine promise. From the garden to the cross, God has been working to restore what sin broke. The new covenant is not built on human effort or faithfulness but on God's own character. He does not restore us because we deserve it. He restores us because he promised it. Consider today what fellowship with God was always meant to look like. Then consider what Christ did to make that fellowship possible again. The gospel is not merely a second chance. It is a complete restoration. Where in your life do you need to receive that restoration today?

Personal Reflection: Are there broken areas of your relationship with God that you have not yet fully surrendered to his restoring work?

Practical Application: Write down one area of your life where you sense God calling you toward restoration. Bring it to him in prayer today, trusting that he is faithful to complete what he has begun.

Day 2: The Counterfeit and the Cornerstone

Reading: Matthew 4:1-11 — Jesus is led into the wilderness, where the enemy tempts him three times, each time appealing to appetite, pride, and the desire for power. Jesus responds to each temptation with the written Word of God.

Devotional: The enemy does not announce himself as a thief. He presents himself as a solution. In the wilderness, he offered Jesus bread, protection, and kingdoms — all things that were not wrong in themselves, but offered through the wrong source at the wrong time for the wrong purpose. That is the nature of the counterfeit. It resembles the real thing closely enough to deceive. Jesus did not negotiate. He did not reason with the tiger. He stood on the Word of God and said, "Be gone." The same weapon is available to you today. The Word of God is your sword. Use it.

Personal Reflection: What counterfeit promises has the enemy been whispering to you lately? What does Scripture say in response to those specific lies?

Practical Application: Identify one lie you have been tempted to believe this week. Find a specific Scripture that speaks truth against it. Write it down and return to it every time that lie resurfaces.

Day 3: A Faithful God Who Keeps His Word

Reading: Deuteronomy 4:29-31 — Moses tells Israel that even in tribulation, when they seek the Lord with all their heart and soul, they will find him, because he is a merciful God who does not forget the covenant he made with their fathers.

Devotional: God does not abandon his promises when people abandon him. That is the staggering reality of his faithfulness. Throughout every dispensation of history, when man has broken covenant, God has not. He cannot. His word is bound to his character, and his character does not change. The same God who preserved Israel through exile, who remembered his covenant when all seemed lost, is the same God who sees your situation today. You may feel forgotten. You may feel that your failures have disqualified you. But the promises of God are not contingent on your consistency. They are anchored in his.

Personal Reflection: Have you ever felt that your failures placed you beyond the reach of God's promises? How does the faithfulness of God challenge that belief?

Practical Application: Spend time today reviewing a promise from Scripture that you have struggled to believe applies to you. Pray it back to God, acknowledging that his faithfulness is greater than your doubt.

Day 4: A Protective Father Who Knows Your Breaking Point

Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11 — Paul reminds the church that God has not destined his children for wrath but for salvation through Jesus Christ, and calls believers to encourage and build one another up in that hope.

Devotional: God is not unaware of how much you are carrying. He is not watching from a distance, indifferent to your limits. Jesus declared that for the sake of his elect, the days of great tribulation would be cut short — a decision made, according to the Greek, in the past. God looked into the future, saw the

breaking point of his children, and acted. That same protective care governs your life today. He knows the weight of what you are carrying. He knows the day, the hour, and the moment when enough is enough. You are not forgotten. You are held by a Father who knows exactly where your limit is.

Personal Reflection: In what area of your life have you been tempted to believe that God has pushed you past what you can bear? How does today's reading reframe that experience?

Practical Application: Reach out today to one person in your church community who you know is struggling. Offer a word of encouragement grounded in the truth that God has not destined his children for wrath but for salvation.

Day 5: Pure Worship and the Living Hope

Reading: Philippians 2:5-11 — Paul describes the humility of Christ, who did not grasp at equality with God but emptied himself, took on human form, and was obedient to death on a cross. Because of this, God exalted him and gave him the name above every name, before which every knee will bow.

Devotional: There is only one worthy of worship. The enemy has always known this, which is why he has always tried to steal it. He tempted Jesus on the pinnacle of the temple. He will one day set his image in the holy place. But every attempt to rob God of worship will ultimately fail, because the story has already been written. Every knee will bow. Every tongue will confess. The grave could not hold the one who is the living hope, and no power in heaven or on earth or under the earth will prevent the final declaration that Jesus Christ is Lord. Let your life today be an early and willing echo of that coming confession.

Personal Reflection: What has been occupying the throne of your heart this week? Is there anything that has quietly displaced pure worship of Jesus Christ?

Practical Application: Set aside fifteen minutes today for worship with no agenda other than declaring the worth of Jesus. No requests, no intercession — simply adoration. Let that be your response to a week spent in the Word.