Summary

This sermon explores the nature of God's peace and how it sustains us through the inevitable storms of life. The pastor draws from the story of Jesus calming the storm in Mark 4 to illustrate that Jesus was present the entire time, even while asleep, and that His question to the disciples was not about the storm around them but about the storm within them. True peace is not something we experience after the storm passes. It is something God provides in the middle of it, when we choose to keep our minds fixed on Him rather than on the chaos surrounding us. Using Isaiah 26:3 and Philippians 4:7, the pastor challenges the congregation to surrender what they cannot control and to rest in what they already know about God. He emphasizes that what holds our attention will determine the level of peace we live in, and that God's peace is not passive but active, guarding our hearts and minds like a soldier standing watch. Ultimately, the peace God produces in us is not just for our own benefit. It becomes contagious and changes the atmosphere around us, making us a blessing to everyone we encounter.

Intro Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come before You today as a group of people who are navigating the storms of life. Some of us are in the middle of one right now, and some of us are just catching our breath from the last one. Lord, we ask that You quiet the noise around us and within us so that we can truly hear what You want to speak to our hearts today. Open our minds and soften our hearts. Help us not to deflect what You want to do in each of us personally. We trust You, and we invite Your Holy Spirit to lead this time together. In Jesus' name, amen.

Ice Breaker

What is one thing that almost always helps you feel calm or at peace when life gets stressful?

Key Verses

- Isaiah 26:3
- Philippians 4:7
- Mark 4:37-40
- 1 Corinthians 14:33

- Colossians 3:15
- Galatians 5:22-23

Questions

- The pastor opened with the image of two people in the same storm reacting completely differently. When you face a difficult season, do you tend to be the person running around in panic or the one sitting calmly? What do you think makes the difference?
- Isaiah 26:3 (ESV) says God keeps in perfect peace the one whose mind is 'stayed' on Him. The pastor described 'stayed' as leaning, resting, and being supported. What does it practically look like for you to keep your mind stayed on God during a hard time?
- The disciples did not question Jesus' ability to help them. They questioned whether He cared. Have you ever been in a season where you stopped asking 'Can God help me?' and started wondering 'Does God even care?' What brought you to that place, and what helped you move through it?
- The pastor said, 'God's silence in your situation is not proof of God's absence.' How does that statement challenge or encourage you? Can you think of a time when God seemed quiet but was actually still at work?
- The sermon used the image of two dogs, one calm and one anxious, reacting to the same noise. The pastor said what holds our attention will influence our peace. What are the things in your daily life that most often pull your attention away from God and toward fear or anxiety?
- Philippians 4:7 (ESV) describes God's peace as something that 'guards' our hearts and minds. The pastor described this as a military term, like a soldier standing watch. In what areas of your heart or mind do you most need God's peace to stand guard right now?
- The pastor made the point that peace is contagious, but so is chaos. When you walk into a room, what kind of atmosphere do you think you typically carry? Is that the atmosphere you want to be known for?
- The sermon closed with three takeaways: Jesus is present even when He is quiet, do not let the storm around you become the storm inside you, and the peace God produces in you becomes a blessing to others. Which of these three points speaks most directly to where you are right now, and why?

Life Application

This week, choose one area of your life where you have been trying to control the outcome, the circumstances, or even another person's actions. Write it down. Then intentionally surrender that specific

thing to God in prayer each morning. When your mind drifts back to worry or fear about it, redirect your thoughts by recalling one truth you already know about God, that He is faithful, that He is good, or that He is in control. At the end of the week, reflect on whether intentionally fixing your mind on God made a difference in your level of peace.

Key Takeaways

- Peace is not something we experience after the storm passes. God's peace is available to us in the middle of the storm, and it is connected to where we allow our minds and emotions to rest.
- Just because Jesus is quiet does not mean He is absent. God's silence is not proof of His absence, and He is often working in us before He works on the circumstances around us.
- What we allow to hold our attention will determine the peace we live in. Focusing on what we cannot control produces fear and anxiety, while keeping our minds fixed on God produces perfect peace.
- God's peace actively guards our hearts and minds like a soldier standing watch, protecting the places where fear wants to take over and changing what comes out of our mouths.
- Peace is contagious. The peace God produces in us is not just for our own benefit. It changes the atmosphere around us and becomes a blessing to everyone we encounter.

Ending Prayer

Lord, we thank You for this time together and for the reminder that You are always present, even in the middle of our storms. We confess that we have often spent more energy trying to calm the waves around us than trusting You to calm the storm within us. Right now, we choose to surrender the things we have been gripping too tightly. We ask that Your peace, the peace that surpasses all understanding, would guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus. Help us to keep our minds stayed on You this week. And Lord, let the peace You place in us spill over into every room we enter and every person we encounter. May we be carriers of Your presence and Your peace. In Jesus' name, amen.