

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. ***Enjoy discovering more about Him!***

"PEACE ON EARTH" | LUKE 2:14 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

What do most people mean when they say they want peace?

"Jesus Came to Give Us Peace"

The Bible teaches that peace starts with a relationship with Jesus, which is why He came. **What does that show about God?**

"Peace With God"

The Bible teaches we were made for a relationship with God and our souls are restless and burdened until we enter into a relationship with Him, which was made possible by Jesus. **What does a good relationship with God look like?**

"Peace of God"

The peace of God is the internal mental and emotional sense that God is in control and there's no need to worry or fear. **Why do so many believers still struggle with so much worry and fear? What would the church be like if believers experienced the peace of God more?**

"Peace With Others"

Believers show they have peace with God and the peace of God when they work at having peace with others. **What are ways believers can bring peace to others in our culture today?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

People can't create a solid, long-lasting peace on their own. That's why Jesus came, to bring us a peace that could only come from God. We can have peace with Him, peace from Him, and bring peace to others. **What is one way you can deeply connect with God this week? What is one area in which you can trust God this week? Who is one person you can bring peace to this week? Pray and ask God to mold you into a person of peace.**

Peace On Earth

I. Announce:

- A. **Slide1 Selah:** Due to the Christmas holiday, *Selah Worship Community Group* will take a break in December. It will resume on January 27th.
- B. **Slide2 Fostering a Hope Community:** Just a reminder that Fostering a Hope Community will **NOT** have a meeting in December and **will resume 3rd Wed in Jan.**
- C. **Slide3 Christmas Eve Service:** We want to invite you all to our Christmas Eve services at **9&11am**, **5&7pm**. At our evening services we will have a few special surprises! All 4 services will be **family services**, where we will have a **candle lighting** and the **same Christmas message**. Please join us with your family and friends for a special service as we celebrate **“God with Us.”**
- D. **Slide4 Wednesday Refresh:** Starting a week from this Wed night, the 27th, we will be changing up the last Wed night of the month. We’re calling it *Wed Refresh*. Still with worship and communion, **but** instead of a regular vs/vs teaching, I want to change it up a little bit to provide a **more intimate & more interactive gathering**. That might look like, Q & A (maybe me Q & you A!), maybe certain topics on my heart, maybe all worship, each month will be different.
1. **This Wed night:** message, Christmas theme, *What Child is This?* (not Joshua)
- E. **Slide5 Prayer:** *God our hopes and fears of all our years are met in Thee tonight/day*

II. Intro: Peace On Earth

- A. Well I took a pause out of **1 Corinthians**, **and** the topic of *sexual immorality* we were talking about (for the last 2 weeks), to step right into *our Christmas Season and Story*, and talk about **Peace**. Specifically, *Peace On Earth!* ... **Wait** is there?
1. **Can Ukrainian Christians sing *peace on earth*? Myanmar believers? Followers of Jesus in Gaza & Jerusalem? Port-au-Prince & the largest refugee camp in the world Katapulung, Bang.? [mill will know world peace]**
2. **Yes** they can sing *Peace on Earth*, **but** what did the angel say/mean?

B. Slide6a JESUS CAME TO GIVE US PEACE (historically)

1. 700 years before Jesus would come to earth, it was *prophesied* by Isaiah, that Messiah's *name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace*. *7 Of the increase of his government/ reign and of peace there will be no end*. Is.9:6,7
2. Slide6b Then when Jesus came, in Lk.2:14 it says *Glory to God in the highest, & on earth peace among* (who?) *those with whom he is pleased!*
- This is **God's Peace Accord** w/humanity!
 - a) So Christmas Peace/God's Peace *isn't for everyone*. *On earth peace to men on whom His favor rests* (NIV). - The key that unlocks *the treasure chest of God's peace* is *faith in God*. Rom.15:13 *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing!*
3. Slide6c Then in Jn.14:27, right before he went back, he said **Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you.**

C. Slide7 In the Bible there are 3 Main Categories of Peace:

1. Peace with God - Eternal - Spiritual - a Peace you can **Know**.
2. Peace of God - Internal - Emotional - a Peace you can **Feel**.
3. Peace with Others - External - Relational - a Peace you can **Show** to/others.
 - a) Note: They build on each other.
4. **First**, I have to have *peace with God*. **Then** I received the *peace of God* (and I start feeling good about me, i.e. *peace within my self, peace within my soul*). **Then** I can have *peace with you*.
 - a) These 3 kinds of peace start with **Jesus!**

III. Slide8a PEACE WITH GOD [Eternal - Spiritual - a Peace you can Know]

- A. Rom.5:1 *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have **peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ.*

B. Slide8b Alexander Maclaren, *Peace comes not from the absence of trouble, but from the presence of God.* * [it takes a spiritual experience to attain this biblical peace]

C. Slide8c Mt.11:28-30 NLT *Then Jesus said, “Come to me, all of you who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you (More Work!!!) rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you. Let me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls (Jer.16:16). 30 For my yoke is easy to bear, and the burden I give you is light.”* [vss are the center of a *nothing bundt cakes* ... frosting falls into center]

1. It's a rest and peace for your soul. It's, *Soul peace. Soul rest.* Not just physical rest (we need that) **but** we also need *Soul rest.*
2. Our problem **isn't** overloaded, muscles. **No**, it's an *overloaded mind, it's tension, it's ego, it's spiritual, it's emotional.*
3. We need rest from *anxiety, worry, tension, guilt, fear.*

D. So how do I get ... this **Soul Rest**?

1. Well **1st**, it's something **no one else can give you.** *The government can't give it to you, nor your business, nor talk shows, nor your doctor, nor your political party preference. Only Jesus!*
2. **Again**, this is *Soul rest.* Something that's internal, at a deeper level. It's *the peace that only he can give you.* Why, because He's God, because He made you, because He wired you, because He knows you and how you tick.

E. Slide9 **Three Steps to Peace With God.**¹

1. **Come to Jesus (Come to Me).** *It's not a pill, it's not a program, not a philosophy.* The source of **peace** is a **person/Jesus!**
 - a) **How do you unwind?** *music, gym, beach, mountains* (all of those are good) **but** they don't always touch the soul level.
 - b) **The world says, often religion says:** *do more, be more, give more, have more.*
 - c) **Jesus says:** *come! You don't have to do more ... come to Me for rest.*

¹ YouTube, The Christmas Gift of Peace with Rick Warren

2. **Slide10 Connect with Jesus** (*Yoke up with Me*). **Not** the yellow part of an egg, **but** no that **wooden crosspiece which attaches 2 animals** (2 oxen). It was designed to lighten the load, evenly distribute the weight.
- Every time we get *detached* from God, we get *stressed out*.
 - One of the reasons that we're *tired and stressed out* is when we yoke ourselves *to the expectations of other people*. What will other people think?
 - Often**, we think the answer is *escape*. But pick the most beautiful place in the world - you go there - the problem is - that *you brought you with you*.
3. **Slide11 Let Jesus Change me** (*Let Me teach you*). **Jesus** can teach you about **stress management**. **He** can teach you about **real peace**, about walking in the rhythms of life that you don't know how to do.
- Slide12** Is.26:3 ESV **You keep him in perfect peace** (Heb. *shalom, shalom*) *whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock* (Lt. *Rock in perpetuity, or the Rock of ages*)
 - Shalom as a verb means:** *when life is no longer whole and needs restored*.
 - Eg.** It refers to **a state of completeness/made whole**, like when **Job** said, *You shall know that your tent is at peace, and you shall inspect your fold and miss nothing*. 5:24.
 - And** It refers to **a state of well-being** like when **David went to see if his brothers were well** (1 Sam.17:18), the word for **well** is **shalom**.

IV. **Slide13a PEACE OF GOD** [Internal - Emotional - a Peace you can Feel]

- A. *Peace with God* was **Judicial** (the war with God is *now over*). **Next** we can enjoy *the Peace of God* which is **Experiential**. It's a *day by day experience* of the believer, **but** can be unfortunately forfeited.
- B. Phil.4:6,7 *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the*

peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. [or NLT *Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything*]

1. 2 Options: worry or worship. pray or panic. trust yourself or trust God.

a) 1 way leads to peace. 1 way leads to panic (& pressure & lack of peace).
(which often leads to getting perturbed, decision paralysis, rapid palpitations, & excess perspiration) ... if you like "p"s.

C. Slide13b Jn.14:27 *Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you.*

V. Slide14a PEACE WITH OTHERS [External - Relational - a Peace you can Show]

A. The further we get away from God, the more we mess up our relationship with everyone else.

1. Do you want to strengthen your marriage? Get close to God. (triangle)

2. The further away I get from God, the more cranky I get with you.

3. Coffee cup an allergy: if you have a coffee cup not filled it can take a lot of shaking. If you fill it to the top the slightest shake will cause it to spill over.

a) When I'm filled with self, the slightest bit of shake in my life will cause me to spill over. When I'm emptied of myself, I'm full of peace, nothing shakes me.

b) Ps.16:8 David said, *I have set the Lord always before me; because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.*

B. Maybe this morning you desire peace in your marriage, with one of your children, peace in your financial situations, peace in a work situation. How do we help bring Peace to Others?

C. Slide14b This 3rd Peace is the toughest kind of peace.

1. 2000 yrs ago Peace came down from heaven in the form of a Baby.

a) Today to have that peace on earth ... it doesn't just hover over our planet, we must demonstrate it in our culture & society - in our church & in our neighborhoods.

2. This is the *toughest* kind of peace. It's the **turn your cheek** kind of peace. It's the **walk a 2nd mile** kind of peace. It's the peace that **gives instead of takes**. It's a peace that **goes & shows** it, **instead of** waits for the other person to bring it.
3. Peace is often the theme of *Christmas*, *but* should also be the theme of **Slide14c** our **Christian life** ... *The Fruit of the Spirit is ... Love, Joy, Peace.*

D. **Slide15 Come to Me** - The *clarion cry* of the Christianity is the gentle word... *Come!*

1. **The law repels, the gospel attracts.** The law shows the distance which there is between God and man; **the gospel bridges** that canyon, & brings the sinner across it. [not go to *Moses*, but **come** to **Me**]
 - a) **Not** come to *Christianity*, **not** to *Communion*, **nor** to *CM*, but **Come to Me**.
2. **Come to a Person** to **Jesus**, the *living Savior*.
3. **Come at once**, Jesus is ready *now*. **Are you?**
4. **Come All who Labor and are Burdened**, none will be refused.
5. **Come with** your burdens on your hearts. - **Burdened w/weariness**, disappointments, despair, or discouragement. **Burdened w/sin**, guilt, remorse, or fear of death. **Burdened w/sorrow**, poverty, oppression, slander. **Burdened w/care**, anxiety, greed, or ambition. **Burdened w/doubt**, temptation, conflict, or depression.
6. **Come** as you are. **Come** by faith ... *and I will give you rest*.
7. **The Lord** said to Noah, **Come into the ark**.
8. **Jesus** said to Zacchaeus **Come down from that tree**.
9. **Jesus** said to Lazarus **Come forth**.
10. **Jesus** was asked, *where are you staying?* He said, **Come and see**.
11. **Jesus** wraps up the revelation, *And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!"* *And let him who hears say, "Come!"* *And let him who thirsts Come.* *Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely.* Rev.22:17

E. *Will you respond to Jesus' invitation to **you** this morning?

F. **Benediction:** *Now may the God of Peace Himself give you **peace** always in every way.*

G. Keywords: peace,