



Presents

"Peace...Is It Just a Dream?"

Discovery Guide

By

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All Scripture quotations, unless otherwise noted, are taken from the New International Version.

Prayer Focus: Lord, help us as Your disciples to embrace our call to be peacemakers and ambassadors of reconciliation in a world that that so desperately needs to know the Prince of Peace.

Reference Scriptures: Romans 5:1; Philippians 4:6-7; Luke 8:43-48; Matthew 5:9; Ephesians 2:11-21; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21.

I. Understanding Peace

Read **Romans 5:1** and **Philippians 4:6-7**.

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, has called us to be agents of peace in a broken and divided world. The Hebrew word for peace is shalom, which means completeness or wholeness. It is not merely the absence of war and violence. It also communicates the profound sense of community, reconciliation and harmony that stems from righteousness and justice.

1. Is there a difference in having peace with God (Romans 5:1) and having the peace of God (Philippians 4:7)? Do you think you can have one without the other? Discuss.
2. Drawing from the definition of shalom/peace in the introductory statement, how does it apply to your relationship 1) with God 2) with yourself 3) with others?
3. If peace means community, reconciliation and harmony, can you have peace with people who are different from you—culturally, religiously, socio-economically, etc.? If yes, what did Jesus mean when he said he didn't come to bring peace, but a sword (Matthew 10:34)? If no, what does Romans 12:18 mean when it says that if it is possible live at peace with everyone?

II. Personal Encounter with the Prince of Peace

**The speaker shares an experience in which she felt de-valued when her shalom was taken away from her through an unfortunate case of mistaken identity. For the hemorrhaging woman in Luke 8:43-48, it was her disease that had banished her to being a social outcast with a distorted identity... until she had a personal encounter with the Prince of Peace. After the woman was healed by touching Jesus, he said, "Daughter, your faith has made you whole. Go in peace." He called her "daughter," implying a relationship, and he restored her whole being. Jesus gave her shalom and a new identity in society.*

Read **Luke 8:43-48**:

4. Break into smaller groups and discuss questions 4 & 5. Is there an experience or incident in your life in which you felt that your shalom was taken away from you, and as a result you felt alienated, rejected, or misunderstood?
5. Is there an experience or incident in your life in which God gave you shalom, and as a result, you received a new identity—a new or renewed sense of belonging as a beloved child of God and member of a family and/or community? Share how that made you feel. How did it change the course of your life from that point on?

III. Our Mission To Be Peacemakers

Contrary to popular belief, peacemakers are not passive persons who are void of convictions or standards; they are not people who agree with sin and unrighteousness. In fact, the word "makers" assumes that attaining peace requires work and a process. Peacemakers are not satisfied with the world as it is. So their concern is not "keeping" peace—they are about "making" peace. Scripture also calls them ambassadors of reconciliation—those who work to bridge dividing walls that separate people from each other, themselves, and ultimately from God.

Read **Matthew 5:9**: “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God.”

6. Can you give a few examples of what it means to be a peacekeeper versus a peacemaker?
7. What can we learn from Jesus, the Prince of Peace, about our mission as peacemakers? Including but not limited to the hemorrhaging woman, how did Jesus deal with people who were different than he was? (A few other examples: Zacchaeus; woman caught in adultery; the rich young ruler, etc.)

Read **Ephesians 2:11-21**.

8. Based on this Scripture, why do you think peace and reconciliation among people in God’s family is one of our main identifying characteristics as children of God?

Read 2 **Corinthians 5:17-21**.

9. Based on this Scripture and your understanding of the word “reconciliation,” why is engaging in the ministry of reconciliation and peacemaking in the world at large one of our main tasks as children of God?

10. Personally reflect on your call to be a peacemaker/reconciler and spend some time praying that God would empower you to:
- Help people experience wholeness and a new identity found in Jesus Christ
 - Diffuse violence and antagonism by being a witness of peace among people who are different than you
 - Be a good neighbor, identifying and empathizing with people's daily struggles
 - Bring people out of isolation and alienation into healthy community life
 - Give voice to the voiceless
 - Defend the rights of those faced with injustice
 - Bridge the dividing walls that separate people from each other
 - Other _____

**Reference to "the speaker" means Marion Skeete. For a copy of the video message that accompanies this discovery guide, please visit our website and click on Videos & Guides: www.legacy-makers.org*