

WARM-UP

- Do you recall a promise given to you as a child? How did you feel when it was fulfilled?
- What traits do you admire most in a leader? Tell us why these are important to you.
- Is there a time you reconciled with someone you had a misunderstanding with? Share how you felt afterward.

WORD *⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.*

ISAIAH 9:6-7

In the midst of what's happening around the world, it is easy to be troubled. Our minds can quickly get littered with fears, questions, and anxious thoughts. But God—through the birth of Christ—made a beautiful promise of peace (*shalom*), which is more than just the absence of conflict or anxiety. It is a place of oneness, wholeness, and safety—the kind that transcends challenges and hard times. Today, we will look at how Jesus, our Messiah, is meant to restore our perfect *shalom* with God and rule over us with justice and righteousness.

1 | Jesus is the promised King who will usher in peace.

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **ISAIAH 9:6**

At a time when there was war and continuous distress, the people of Israel received a promise of a great deliverer. Though that promise seemed distant and impossible, it was fulfilled hundreds of years later (John 1:14). That same promise is for us as well, even today. Though we live in a world that rings of confusion and chaos, Jesus came to save us and rule as the *Prince of Peace*. What does Philippians 4:7 say about the perfect peace of God? How has His peace filled your heart in the midst of confusion and uncertainty?

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2 | God's kingdom is characterized by ever-increasing peace.

Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this. **ISAIAH 9:7**

Though life is fleeting, God's kingdom is not. It will continuously grow and spread across the earth through the lives of His people. This kingdom is something we can look forward to, even now, because Jesus came not as a simple herald or messenger of peace. He came to usher in peace as the leader and ruler—the King—of this kingdom. What does Daniel 2:44 say about God's kingdom? How can we take

heart in the face of trials, knowing that we can have God's ever-increasing peace?

3 | God desires to bring peace on earth.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" **LUKE 2:14**

When Jesus was born, a great host of angels told the shepherds of His birth. And they gave glory to God for the peace that He would bring. God loves us so much that He wants us to experience that peace. It is the peace that only He can give, regardless of the situation we are in. If we put our trust in Christ and believe in Him, His perfect peace will rule in our lives. We are justified by faith and have peace with God. We can also experience peace with ourselves and with others. What do you think true peace would look like in your community?

APPLICATION

- Is there a promise from God's word that you are still waiting to see fulfilled? What can you do to remain steadfast in your faith as you wait?
- Do you know someone who is battling with anxious thoughts? How can you help that person find peace and rest in God this week?
- How have you experienced God's peace in your life? Share this with someone this week.

PRAYER

- Thank God for His perfect peace that came to the earth through Jesus Christ. Thank Him that we can experience the great peace of His kingdom.
- Pray for the grace to hold on to God's promises, no matter how long it may take. Declare God's rule and reign over your life and family.
- Ask God to bring a specific person to mind who may need to experience God's peace today. Pray for God's peace that surpasses all understanding to guard this person's heart and mind.



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