

## Peace

**Purpose:** To create in the students the desire to apply the principles for having God's peace in all situations.

**Objectives:** By the end of the lesson the students will

1. Be able to explain to someone else how they can have peace in their lives.
2. Be willing to apply principles for having peace in their lives.

**Key Verse(s):** Romans 5:1-2, John 16:33

### I. Introduction

“How many of you feel stressed today? I'm going to add to that stress by giving you a test! Immediately, for some of you your stress just intensified because of test anxiety! Please get out a pencil or pen.”

*Hand out a copy of the Holmes and Rahe Stress Test and have students circle the events that have taken place in their lives in the past year. Then have them add up their score. Over 200 is high. (Take 5-7 min. Watch the time on this part.)*

*When they are finished, say, “If you feel stressed, you probably should. It is not the total of points you have but how you handle stress that is important. Some people are more able to cope with change than others. Can we go through change and yet have peace inside?”*

*Share the following illustration.*

Long ago a man sought the perfect picture of peace. Not finding one that satisfied, he announced a contest to produce this masterpiece. The challenge stirred the imagination of artists everywhere, and paintings arrived from far and wide. Finally the great day of revelation arrived. The judges uncovered one peaceful scene after another, while the viewers clapped and cheered.

The tensions grew. Only two pictures remained veiled. As a judge pulled the cover from one, a hush fell over the crowd. A mirror-smooth lake reflected lacy, green birches under the soft blush of the evening sky. Along the grassy shore, a flock of sheep grazed undisturbed. Surely this was the winner.

The man with the vision uncovered the second painting himself, and the crowd gasped in surprise. Could this be peace? A tumultuous waterfall cascaded down a rocky precipice; the crowd could almost feel its cold, penetrating spray. Stormy-grey clouds threatened to explode with lightning, wind and rain. In the midst of the thundering noises and bitter chill, a spindly tree clung to the rocks at the edge of the falls. One of its branches reached out in front of the torrential waters as if foolishly seeking to experience its full power.

A little bird had built a nest in the elbow of that branch. Content and undisturbed in her stormy surroundings, she rested on her eggs. With her eyes closed and her wings ready to cover her little ones, she manifested peace that transcends all earthly turmoil.

A Wardrobe from the King, Berit Kjos, Page 45-46

What is peace? Peace is not calm, undisturbed circumstances or surroundings. It is a harmonious relationship with God, ourselves and with others and a sense of rest or contentment as a result of those relationships.

*Read John 16:33.* Jesus said peace was in Him. In the world we would have tribulation, but because of good cheer, He has overcome the world. There will be tribulation in our lives but in Jesus we have peace.

Today we're going to talk about how we can experience true peace in our lives. There are three kinds of peace. Peace with God, Peace of God and Peace with others. Although we'll just touch on each of these today, I hope that the results will bring us all to more peace.

## II. Peace with God

Before we can have the internal peace that we all desire, we must begin with external peace with God. The first step for having inner peace is making peace with God. This begins with our salvation. Read Romans 5:1-2.

*Have a volunteer read the verse aloud. Then, comment on how any peace we experience must first come from a right relationship with God through Jesus Christ.*

## III. Peace of God

All Christians have peace with God because of faith in Christ as Savior. But not all Christians experience the peace of God that comes through abiding in Christ/walking in the Spirit/walking by faith.

A. *Read John 14:27 & John 16:33.*

What is the difference between the peace given us by Jesus as mentioned in John 14:27 & 16:33 and the peace the world gives?

*(Responses should sound similar to: The world gives unstable, fragile, insecure peace. Jesus gives deep, strong, lasting peace. It's based upon Jesus and not ourselves. We live it by faith.)*

B. *Read Philippians 4:6-7. Ask the following questions.*

1. In the face of anxiety, what are we to do? (*Don't worry, but pray*)
2. What has God promised? (*His supernatural peace*)
3. What has He not promised? (*Not necessarily our request, but peace*)

## IV. Peace with Others

The Personnel Journal reported this incredible statistic: since the beginning of recorded history, the entire world has been at peace less than eight percent of the time! In its study, the periodical discovered that of 3530 years of recorded history, only 286 years saw peace. Moreover, in excess of 8000 peace treaties were made--and broken.

Moody Bible Institute's Today In The Word, June, 1988, p.33

Peace with others flows out of peace with God and the peace of God controlling us.

Hebrews 12:14 and Romans 12:18 tell us to live at peace with everyone if at all possible. This is to be our goal. Sometimes it is not possible. What are some practical things that you can do to help this process?

## V. Conclusion

In which area of your life do you most lack peace? *With self? With others? With God?* Why do you think you lack peace in those areas?

*Close in prayer in small groups. Advise students to pray that God's peace would be real in the areas of life they discussed.*

Peace in the Bible is often used as a greeting; "Grace and peace to you," or as farewell. The Jews greet each other in Hebrew with "Shalom" (peace). A benediction is found in Numbers 6:24-26:

"The Lord bless you, and keep you;  
The Lord make His face shine on you,  
And be gracious to you;  
The Lord lift up His countenance on you,  
And give you peace."

The Apostle Paul says in 2 Thessalonians 3:16:

Now may the Lord of Peace Himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.

### THE STRESS OF ADJUSTING TO CHANGE

| <u>Events</u>  | <u>Scale of Impact</u> |
|--|------------------------|
| Death of a spouse  | 100                    |
| Divorce  | 73                     |
| Marital separation                                       | 65                     |
| Jail term  | 63                     |
| Death of close family member                             | 63                     |
| Personal injury or illness                               | 53                     |
| Marriage   | 50                     |
| Fired at work  | 47                     |
| Marital reconciliation                                   | 45                     |
| Retirement   | 45                     |
| Change in health of family member                        | 44                     |
| Pregnancy  | 40                     |
| Sex difficulties   | 39                     |
| Gain of new family member                                | 39                     |
| Business readjustment                                    | 39                     |
| Change in financial state                                | 38                     |
| Death of close friend                                    | 37                     |
| Change to different line of work                         | 36                     |
| Change in number of arguments with spouse                | 35                     |
| Mortgage over \$10,000                                   | 31                     |
| Foreclosure of mortgage or loan                          | 30                     |
| Change in responsibilities at work                       | 29                     |
| Son or daughter leaving home                             | 29                     |
| Trouble with in-laws                                     | 29                     |
| Outstanding personal achievement                         | 28                     |
| Wife begins or stops work                                | 26                     |
| Begin or end school                                      | 26                     |
| Change in living conditions                              | 25                     |
| Revision of personal habits                              | 24                     |
| Trouble with boss  | 23                     |
| Change in work hours or conditions                       | 20                     |
| Change in residence                                      | 20                     |
| Change in schools  | 20                     |
| Change in recreation                                     | 19                     |
| Change in church activities                              | 19                     |
| Change in social activities                              | 18                     |
| Mortgage or loan less than \$10,000                      | 17                     |
| Change in sleeping habits                                | 16                     |
| Change in number of family get-togethers                 | 15                     |
| Change in eating habits                                  | 15                     |
| Vacation   | 13                     |
| Christmas  | 12                     |
| Minor violations of the law                              | 11                     |
| Raising Financial Support (faith-supported missionaries) | 40                     |