
Where's Your Heart At?

Part 1 - Peace

It seems that the world, which was already overwhelming in its sheer volume of social media and consumerism before COVID-19, has become, for many people, far too overwhelming.

How do we stay connected to this world? How do we carry out our cultural mandate from Genesis 2: 'bringing order out of chaos'?

A Point of Difference?

We're going to try to take some time to reflect on what it means to follow Jesus in this uncertain time.

The good news of Jesus changes the world when we're in it, and if we're overwhelmed by the world, then we can't be part of God's solution to help everyone!

Today: we're talking about peace.

God's Heart

The Bible talks about peace in the context of *shalom*.

Peace is the lived reality of our covenant relationship with God.

And that comes to us because God is a God of peace: we see right back in the garden that peace looks like intimacy, openness and divine purpose. (Genesis 2)

Romans 16:20

God's heart desire for us is for our hearts to find His peace, and to live out the shalom peace that is an expression of His nature.

Prince of Peace

Isaiah 9:6 - a royal ruler marked by peace!

How much do we need a ruler who rules in peace in our world today?

In our humanity, we see the brokenness and the need for it to be fixed; our hearts cry when disease and disaster strike, when injustice and irreconcilable worldviews clash, and we know that it needs to be fixed. But, like little children, we can impotently bang our fists on our chest and cry out that things must be different!

An Example of Peace

Jesus calms the Storm - Mark 4:35-41

Jesus had authority over the storm that He could sleep in (Bill Johnson).

When we are anxious, we can't hear His voice. (Randy Clark)

Person of Peace

John 14:27

Philippians 4:4-7

Colossians 3:15

But here's what I think the Lord is saying to us in this moment:

“Stop. Stop. Stop. This isn’t another thing to do. Peace is the moment when you come to the end of yourself, when you run out of capacity and energy, and you choose to fall back into My arms.”

You can keep juggling your life while God looks on, but when it falls, your attention can finally rest on Him.

“...my covenant of peace shall not be removed,” says the Lord, who has compassion on you.’ - Isaiah 54:10 (ESV)

1 John 4:4

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.” Matthew 11:28-30 (MSG)

Pray like this:

Jesus, I choose to make you bigger in my perspective than the storms that rage around me.

Jesus, I choose to come to you, to hand over my burdens – of fear, of disconnection, of self-reliance. I choose You and your invitation to receive peace.

If you’ve never come to Jesus, today He’s inviting you to receive Him and the peace that comes with a relationship with the Prince of Peace.

Discussion Questions:

1. What would peace mean to you in your life right now?
2. What does the absence of peace look like?
3. How have you experienced God's peace in the past?
4. How have you navigated the storm of COVID-19, racial tensions and the volume of the world's media in this season? Share your testimony of overcoming as well as your burden of struggling.
5. Spend time praying through the above passage from Matthew 11:28-30. Allow Jesus to exchange His light burden for your heaviness.
6. Maybe you need to exchange your desire to fix the world in your own strength, and trust Him to lead you through your day and your response to the world's needs.