



Christmas at The Cove 2015

Part 3 – How To Find Peace Study Guide

Christmas can be an incredibly stressful season. In addition to the surface-level stresses such as calendars and budgets, we face deeper stresses like relationship conflict and loss. When Isaiah foretold the coming of Jesus, he was called the “Prince of Peace” which almost seems comical when held up against the chaos of the first Christmas and what we experience today. However, Jesus really did come to bring peace, and in this study, we will explore how that is possible.

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice.”
Philippians 4:4 (ESV)

1. Do you feel stress during the Christmas season? Are you feeling stress right now? What is causing it?
2. **Read Philippians 4:4-5.** What is the relationship between God’s “nearness” and having joy? Discuss this very practically. When have you felt God near or thought about His return and it helped you to have joy during stress?
3. **Read Philippians 4:6-7.** These verses are packed with understanding on how to have peace.
 - How does bringing our requests to God, with thanksgiving, help reduce anxiety? Have you seen this principle at work?
 - In the midst of stress and chaos, what is the peace of God like? What does it feel like?
 - How does the peace of God “guard” our hearts and our minds in Jesus?

“Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”
Philippians 4:8 (ESV)

4. **Read Philippians 4:8.** Discuss the following questions...

- Do you find yourself gravitating towards negative thoughts or positive ones? Why?
- Why is it so hard to stay focused on what's good?
- What are some things you can do to stop shifting focus to what is making you anxious?

5. **Read Philippians 4:9.** Paul tells the Philippians to look at his example and put what they see into practice, and then peace will be with them.

- Have you seen someone else go through stress with unexplainable peace? What did they do?
- What can you do practically to increase your level of peace? Are there lifestyle changes you need to make?
- As you close, pray together about these situations and changes.