

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Advent Week 2 –The Way of Peace

Texts: Isaiah 11:1-10 • Romans 15:4-13 • Matthew 3:1-12

Theme: *The peace of God comes not by avoiding conflict but by the transforming reign of the righteous King.*

1. WARM UP QUESTIONS

What's something people usually do to "avoid conflict"?

Does avoiding conflict ever produce true peace? Why or why not?

2. SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: ISAIAH 11:1-10: PEACE THAT RESTORES

Read Isaiah 11:1-10 together.

Discussion Questions

1. Isaiah describes a "shoot from the stump of Jesse."
 - **Where in your life do you resonate with the image of a stump, something that feels cut down or lifeless?**
 - How does God's promise of new growth speak into that?
2. Isaiah's description of wolves with lambs, children with once-dangerous animals...
 - **What part of this vision feels most surprising or beautiful to you?**
 - How does this reshape the way you think about *peace*?
3. Where do you see God already bringing small signs of restoration, ie, in you, your relationships, or your community?

3. SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: ROMANS 15:4-13: PEACE THAT FLOWS FROM HOPE

Read Romans 15:4-13 together.

Discussion Questions

4. Paul says God is the one who “fills us with all joy and peace in believing.”
 - **What does it mean for peace to come from *believing* rather than from our circumstances?**
 - Where have you been waiting for circumstances to change before you feel peace?
5. Paul’s prayer emphasizes the Holy Spirit causing us to “abound in hope.”
 - **Where do you need hope to overflow in your life right now?**
 - What might it look like to open that space to God this week?

4. SCRIPTURE REFLECTION: MATTHEW 3:1-12: PEACE THAT CONFRONTS & PREPARES

Read Matthew 3:1-12 together.

Discussion Questions

6. John the Baptist calls people to “prepare the way of the Lord.”
 - **How is repentance like preparing a road?**
 - What obstacles might be in your life that keep peace from entering freely?
7. Repentance as “renovation” means God sometimes tears down what can’t support His peace.
 - **Is there an area where God might be calling you to allow some “demolition”?** (A habit, attitude, pattern, relationship dynamic, internal lie, etc.)

5. FOUR DIMENSIONS OF KINGDOM PEACE

(Based on the sermon’s teaching: peace is relational, restorative, confrontational, missional.)

Choose at least one or two to discuss deeply:

A. Peace is relational.

8. How does your relationship with Jesus, not your circumstances, shape your experience of peace?

B. Peace is restorative.

9. Where do you most long for God to bring restoration?
 - In your heart?
 - In a relationship?
 - In your home or community?

C. Peace is confrontational.

10. What is one thing in your life or character that consistently fights against peace? How might God be confronting that out of love?

D. Peace is missional.

11. Who is someone God might be calling you to be a peacemaker toward this week?

6. MAKING STRAIGHT THE PATHS FOR PEACE

12. **Repent:** What step of repentance is God inviting you to take — not in shame, but in hope?
13. **Reconcile:** Is there a relationship that needs a conversation, an apology, or forgiveness?
14. **Restore:** Is there an area of life that needs repair rather than avoidance?
15. **Trust:** What situation do you need to entrust to Christ instead of trying to manage on your own?

7. CLOSING REFLECTION & PRAYER

“What path in my life needs to be made straight so the peace of Christ can enter freely?”

Then close in prayer, inviting God to:

- illuminate crooked places,
- bring healing where there is brokenness,
- deepen trust,
- and establish His transforming peace.