



Finding True Peace: How Jesus Brings Us Back to God

By Ariel Presswood

Key Scripture:

Romans 5:1-11 – "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Objective:

This activity set is designed to help participants deeply explore the themes of reconciliation, peace, and hope through Jesus Christ. Through scripture study, reflective discussions, hands-on activities, and personal application, participants will gain a rich understanding of how faith in Jesus restores our relationship with God and brings true peace to our hearts, relationships, and communities.

Through this experience, participants will:

- Understand the biblical concept of justification and how faith in Jesus brings reconciliation with God.
- Explore the transformative impact of experiencing God's peace on personal and communal relationships.
- Recognize how suffering and trials, when viewed through the lens of faith, build character and deepen our hope.
- Identify barriers that prevent people from fully embracing the peace of Christ and learn strategies to overcome them.
- Develop and apply practical ways to live as peacemakers in a divided world.

Section 1: Reflect and Discuss

Deep Reflection Questions:

1. What does it mean to be "justified by faith," and how does this lead to lasting peace with God?
2. How does Jesus' sacrifice restore our relationship with God, and why is reconciliation necessary for true peace?
3. How does experiencing peace with God transform the way we relate to others?
4. What are some common obstacles that prevent people from fully embracing the peace of God?
5. According to Romans 5:3-5, how can suffering and trials produce perseverance, character, and hope?
6. Why do we sometimes struggle to trust that God's peace is sufficient for us in all circumstances?
7. What role does the Holy Spirit play in filling our hearts with God's love and assurance of salvation?
8. How can we be ambassadors of Christ's peace to those around us who are struggling or feel lost?
9. What practical ways can we cultivate and maintain peace in our daily lives, families, and communities?
10. How can gratitude and worship strengthen our sense of peace with God and provide encouragement to others?
11. In what ways can we practice forgiveness as a key to experiencing peace in our hearts and relationships?
12. How does cultural division impact our ability to experience and share Christ's peace?
13. What are the signs of someone who has fully embraced the peace of Christ in their life?

Family or Group Discussion Prompts:

Understanding Reconciliation Through Christ

- Discuss why humanity needed reconciliation with God and how Jesus fulfilled that need.
- How does Romans 5:8—"But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us"—reveal the depth of God's love?
- What examples from the Bible illustrate reconciliation between God and humanity? (e.g., The Prodigal Son, Jesus forgiving Peter, Paul's conversion)
- What does it mean to live in a state of peace with God, even in uncertain times?

Living Out Peace in Our Daily Lives

- Reflect on personal experiences where trusting in Jesus brought peace during a difficult time.
- How does forgiveness contribute to peace in our relationships, and what steps can we take to forgive those who have wronged us?
- What are some practical ways to be peacemakers in our families, workplaces, and communities?
- How can we remind ourselves daily that peace with God is the foundation of our faith?
- How do our words and actions reflect Christ's peace to a watching world?
- In what ways can we help foster peace in a community or church experiencing division?

Section 2: Engaging Hands-On Activities

Activity 1: The Bridge to Peace

Objective: Illustrate how Jesus serves as the bridge between humanity and God, restoring peace and reconciliation.

Materials Needed:

- Large sheet of paper or whiteboard
- Markers
- Cutouts or drawings of two cliffs (one labeled "Humanity" and one labeled "God")
- A cross-shaped cutout

Instructions:

1. Draw two cliffs on opposite sides of the paper, labeling one "Humanity" and the other "God."
2. Discuss how sin created a separation between us and God (Isaiah 59:2).
3. Place the cross cutout in the middle, forming a bridge between the two cliffs.
4. Explain how Jesus' sacrifice restores our relationship with God, allowing us to cross over into peace and reconciliation.
5. Have participants write personal prayers or reflections on the cross, thanking Jesus for bringing them peace.

Activity 2: The Ripple Effect of Peace

Objective: Demonstrate how peace with God leads to peace in our relationships and communities.

Materials Needed:

- A large bowl of water
- Small stones or pebbles
- Paper and pens

Instructions:

1. Gather participants around the bowl of water.
2. Have them write down things that cause anxiety, conflict, or unrest in their lives on slips of paper.
3. Discuss how God's peace can transform these struggles.
4. Drop a small stone into the water and observe how the ripples spread.
5. Explain that just as the ripples expand outward, God's peace in our hearts can extend into our relationships and communities.
6. Encourage participants to commit to being peacemakers in their daily lives.

Activity 3: Peace in Action Challenge

Objective: Encourage participants to actively share Christ's peace with others in tangible ways.

Materials Needed:

- Index cards
- Markers

Instructions:

1. Have each participant write down a commitment to take one action during the week to bring peace to someone (e.g., reconciling with a friend, encouraging a family member, praying for someone in need).
2. Discuss how small acts of kindness and grace reflect the peace of Christ.
3. Throughout the week, encourage participants to keep a journal reflecting on how their action impacted themselves and others.
4. Share testimonies in the next gathering about the experience.

Final Reflection and Prayer:

1. Thank God for sending Jesus to reconcile us and bring us true peace.
2. Pray for those who are struggling to experience peace in their hearts and lives.
3. Ask for guidance in being peacemakers, reflecting Christ's love and grace in all relationships.
4. Commit to living in the assurance that Jesus has made a way for us to live in harmony with God and others.

This expanded activity set offers an immersive and dynamic approach to understanding how faith in Jesus restores peace with God, transforms relationships, and strengthens our hope. Through deep discussions, interactive exercises, and personal applications, participants will leave with a renewed commitment to embracing and sharing the peace of Christ in all aspects of their lives.