

AN INVITATION TO A JOURNEY



SMALL GROUP GUIDE



HOW DID IT GO? (10 MINUTES)

To grow in your relationship with God, did you...

- Watch the official music video of “Less Like Me,” pray about each of these attributes, and ask God to help you be more like Him?
- Imagine a church in which the miracle of forgiveness occurs every day and pray that God will remove whatever restraint is holding you back from extending and seeking forgiveness?

To invest in your neighbors, did you...

- Seek out and forgive someone for some perceived (or real) transgression that has caused a strain in your relationship?
- Ask forgiveness for a wrong you may have inflicted?
- Any other way God stirred you to put this passage into practice?

Scripture Passages

Colossians 3:1-3 (ESV) 1 If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. 3 For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory.

Colossians 3:14-15 (ESV) 14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. 15 And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

John 14:27-29 (NIV) 27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. 28 You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I. 29 I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe.

John 14:27-31 (The Message) 25-27 “I’m telling you these things while I’m still living with you. The Friend, the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send at my request, will make everything plain to you. He will remind you of all the things I have told you. I’m leaving you well and whole. That’s my parting gift to you. Peace. I don’t leave you the way you’re used to being left—feeling abandoned, bereft. So don’t be upset. Don’t be distraught. 28 You’ve heard me tell you, ‘I’m going away, and I’m coming back.’ If you loved me, you would be glad that I’m on my way to the Father because the Father is the goal and purpose of my life. 29-31 I’ve told you this ahead of time, before it happens, so that when it does happen, the confirmation will deepen your belief in me...”

OCTOBER 31

SERMON TITLE:

Is Living in Peace
Even Realistic?

SCRIPTURE:

Colossians 3:1-3; 14-15
John 14:27-29

HEAD (15-20 MINUTES)

Read aloud the passages for this week.

1. When we have been “raised with Christ,” lifestyle change follows. What does Paul say is the #1 change?
2. List the commands in verses 14-15 for those who strive to achieve “his peace.”
3. How does, “I am going away, and I will come to you” give us peace?

HEART (15-20 MINUTES)

1. How can the peace of Christ rule your relationships? If you were able to attain this peace, how would your friends describe you?
2. John 14:27-29 talks about the peace that is “not as the world gives.” Discuss the differences between the “peace of the world” (or the peace that the world espouses) and the peace of Christ. (Consider discussing worldviews, hobbies, and even some of the different philosophies that the world tries to tell us will bring us ultimate peace. For example, self-helpism, feminism, moralism, marxism, deconstructionism, capitalism, etc. These “isms” all have some element of good in them— to lesser or greater degrees. But ultimately they all fail to give us the ultimate and eternal peace, hope, and freedom we are seeking.)
3. Peace can determine if you’re letting Christ rule in your heart. What Scriptures sustain you and come to mind when you need peace?

HANDS (10 MINUTES)

Reaching Upward: Growing in Your Relationship with God

- Another word for rule could be “arbitrate”- like an umpire. Ask Christ to be your final arbiter and the highest authority in every dispute you might have.
- Peace with God is an eternal birthright of all believers. Ask God for thanksgiving and praise so that your peace streams out to others.
- Meditate on John 14:27-31 from The Message.
- Consider listening to Podcasts that guide you through contemplative and meditative prayer:
 - <https://pray-as-you-go.org/>
 - <https://encounteringpeace.com/>

Reaching Outward: Investing in Your Neighbors

- Letting peace rule does not mean avoiding hard issues. Be willing to confront sin and stand for truth but still be saturated in love.
- Our witness to the world of our own peace can call to others to come and enjoy peace. Watch for someone who exhibits motivations consistent with the name of Christ. Focus on exhibiting peace yourself.

Reaching Beyond

- Take a day or an overnight retreat to pray and meditate to gain more of God’s peace. Go to a quiet place such as the Villa de Matel in SE Houston [Ruah Spirituality Center | Sisters of Charity](#) or the Lanier Theological Library in NW Houston [Lanier Theological Library | A Houston Theological Resource](#).

➤ Head

Observe the text and the author’s main points.

➤ Heart

Envision how the text—when applied—might transform your inner life in terms of your thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors.

➤ Hands

Apply the text by moving from inward reflection to outward action looking for practical ways to live the text out in our lives to serve others.

➤ Neighbor

Anyone in your life—whether a friend, colleague, family member, classmate, or literal neighbor—to whom you can show God’s love.

