



This is Christmas: Peace

Main Idea:

The Christmas season is by far one of the most hectic times of the year. Many people, especially during this season, are desperate for peace. They're looking for refuge from the pressures, commitments, responsibilities, and relational issues that surround them. Many think of peace as something that happens from the outside-in, while Jesus says the opposite. Jesus came to bring peace to earth by bridging the gap between us and God, which leads to both true and everlasting peace.

Opening discussion Question:

What says "Christmas" to you? Do you have anything special you do that makes you "feel" like Christmas is here?

1. In **Isaiah 9:6**, Isaiah prophesied that Jesus will be called the Prince of Peace. Peace can mean different things to different people. What do you picture when you think of peace?
 - a. Being in nature
 - b. Everyone agreeing on everything
 - c. End to discrimination
 - d. Answers will vary
2. Pastor Justin reminded us that our problems don't all go away simply because Jesus is here, but because Jesus is here we have someone to give our problems to. What are some of the problems that often arise during the holiday season?
 - a. Financial issues
 - b. Difficult family relationships
 - c. Stress from overcommitment
 - d. Depression due to personal losses
3. In **1 Peter 5:7** Peter instructs us to cast all our anxieties on God. Why do you think we resist giving ALL our worry and anxiety to God?
 - a. We might think our problems are too insignificant for God.
 - b. Pride tells us we should be able to handle things ourselves.
 - c. Maybe our anxieties are the result of our own actions and we are ashamed.
 - d. We are so used to trying to do things on our own, we forget that God is there for us.
4. Pastor Justin said, "God doesn't respond to need, He responds to faith." What might it look like to have faith in God's ability and desire to handle all our cares?
 - a. Not playing our problems over and over in our heads and instead, taking them to God in prayer.
 - b. Living in confidence that God is handling our problems.
 - c. Responding in faith to Jesus' salvation invitation through repentance and baptism.
5. In **Matthew 11:28-30** Jesus invites us to come to Him when we are weary and burdened, and

promises He will give us rest. In what ways can we practically come to Jesus when we are weary and burdened.

- a. Through prayer.
- b. Spending time reading our Bibles and feeding our souls with God's truth.
- c. Sharing our struggles with caring Christian brothers and sisters who will pray with us and for us.
- d. Care Counseling is another great resource when we're struggling with giving our burdens to Jesus.

Next Steps: What are some struggles and worries that you are trying to handle on your own? Take a few minutes this week to write them down. Ask God in prayer to take your burdens and handle them for you. If you need a little extra help, talk to a trusted friend, your life group leader, or pastor. Real Life also offers free Care Counseling for those who may be struggling to experience God's peace in their life. Find out more information at <https://real.life/counseling/>.

Reading Plan

Sunday - Isaiah 9:1-7

Monday - 1 Peter 5:6-11

Tuesday - Matthew 11:25-30

Wednesday - Psalm 4:1-8

Thursday - Isaiah 26:3; Isaiah 54:10; John 16:33; Romans 5:1

Friday - Luke 1:68-79

Saturday - Philippians 4:4-9