



Groups

Thanks for checking out our sermon-based Study Guides!

If you've never used our Study Guides before, you'll find some basic instructions towards the end of the document.

- These study guides will be written by thoughtful and experienced Life Group Leaders.
- Use these guides as a head-start in your own preparation as the needs and culture is different from each group.

NEW THIS YEAR:

As we enter this new season at Grace Chapel in search for the next Senior Pastor, we invite you to consider the significance of this moment and to incorporate a time of prayer for the search.

Outline

- I. Introduction and Main Scripture Readings
- II. Group Discussion Questions
- III. Prayer for Senior Pastor Search
- IV. The Journey Resources
- V. Support for the Leader

How to Use These Study Guides:

1. **Before the meeting:** Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
2. **Check In:** Begin each meeting with a short time checking in with one another.
3. **Read Scripture:** You may want to begin the discussion by reading the Scripture passage together out loud, or by summarizing the passage if everyone has read it ahead of time.
4. **Ask Questions:** Don't feel like you need to discuss every question included in the Study Guide. Pick one or two to start with and see how the conversation flows.
5. **End with Prayer:** Be sure to set aside time for sharing prayer requests and praying together.

If your group meets over Zoom:

- Expect to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
- Be sensitive to attention spans over zoom. Keep meetings shorter than they would be in person.

Group Leader Support:

- Please reach out to your Campus Pastor if you have any questions about leading your group or concerns about your group dynamic.
- If you have questions about or feedback on the Study Guides, please reach out to Pastor [Tim Ghali](#) or [Grace Lee](#) from the Group Life team.

LIFE GROUP STUDY GUIDE

for Sermon given on December 10, 2023
by Pastor Tim Ghali

BLESSED ARE THE PEACE-MAKERS – Matthew 5:3-10, 2Corinthians 5:16-21



I. Introduction

Welcome to week 2 of our Advent series, “And on Earth Peace”. Last week we learned that regardless of your present life circumstances you can find peace in your heart today, there will be peace on earth someday, and we can be instruments of peace every day. This week we want to see ourselves as Peace-Makers, Jesus type of peacemakers.

Questions: How can we become peace-makers?

Bottom Line: Having experienced the peace of Jesus, we can bring peace to conflict, to loneliness, and to anxiety.

Let’s begin in prayer before we begin reading and discussing our text.

Main Scripture Readings:

Matthew 5:3-10

- ³ “Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- ⁴ Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.
- ⁵ Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.
- ⁶ Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
for they will be filled.
- ⁷ Blessed are the merciful,
for they will be shown mercy.
- ⁸ Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.
- ⁹ Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.
- ¹⁰ Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

2Corinthians 5:16-21

¹⁶ So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer. ¹⁷ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come:^[a] The old has gone, the new is here! ¹⁸ All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: ¹⁹ that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. ²⁰ **We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors**, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. ²¹ God made him who had no sin to be sin^[b] for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

II. **Group Discussion Questions:**

1. Pastor Tim began his message by rewriting the beatitudes reflecting the unwritten rules of life in our world: Blessed are the greedy, popular, victorious, ambitious, ruthless, eloquent, smart and talented. Describe several examples of how you have observed this truth.
2. Pastor Tim said that *proximity brings perspective*. We cannot be peace-makers if we feel we disconnected from God, or from one another. Discuss some of the ways that you can grow closer to God, or to one another.
3. Pastor Tim shared a personal story of when he was a youth pastor experiencing conflict, loneliness, and anxiety during a meeting with parents of teenagers that he would supervise on a mission trip. He recounted how a more senior youth leader intervened as a peace-maker and saved the day. Can you think of a time when a peace-maker stepped in to reconcile a conflict that you were involved in? Or perhaps you were the peace-maker. Share with your small group the specific context, your role in it, and what actions the peace-maker took.
4. Think about your home, neighborhood, school, work, or church community. Where do you see conflict, loneliness or anxiety? Give at least one example of how you can be an ambassador of Christ and bring peace to that situation. Share with your small group.
5. As your small group closes in prayer, consider the Middle East conflict in Gaza between Israel, Hamas and Palestine. Will you pray for this Jesus-type of peace that loves neighbor, that loves enemy, that calls for light and love in the darkest and destitute of places.

Take Home Message:

If you have experienced the love, forgiveness, and salvation of Jesus, and you have also experienced the pain and suffering of life, then you have what it takes to be an ambassador of Christ, bringing peace to conflict, to loneliness, and to anxiety.

Let's Pray

III. **Prayer for Senior Pastor Search**

During this next ministry year as we navigate transitions, we invite you to secure time during your life group to pray over the search process. Click [here](#) to access the full resource of the prayer guide.

Prayers for Preparation of the heart

- Pray for God to reveal to you the condition of your soul or the work of God's Spirit within you, as you consider your feelings about the Senior Pastor search process.
- Prayer is not just an opportunity to make requests from God, but to listen to what God might want for us during this season of transition. Pause and listen for any invitation from God that he is asking you to enter into.

Prayers for the Purposes of God

- Pray that God will use the people of Grace Chapel in the fulfilling of his mission to further the Gospel message and for us to be people of peace and healing in a broken world.

Prayers for the People of Grace

- Pray that Grace Chapel will to seek the Lord as we continue our vision to be a vibrant, growing, multicultural community of seekers and believers, discovering life with God for the good of the world. Pray that we will continue with our mission to make and mobilize more disciples for Jesus Christ in Greater Boston and beyond.

Prayers for the Person God's calling

- Pray that they will have a passion to continue the work the Lord is doing at Grace Chapel and that they will be excited about the opportunities here.
- Pray that the new pastor will have a clear vision for how to minister to the people of Grace Chapel and the surrounding community.

Prayers for Discernment

- Pray for God's clear direction in how resumes are examined and interviews conducted.
- Ask God to bring the right person to the attention of the committee.
- Pray for the Search Committee to have God's wisdom in all the questions and information they share with the prospective pastor.

IV. The Journey



We're all on a journey. Where is yours taking you?

The beauty of the way of Jesus is that it's not just good for us, it is good for the world around us. But that kind of beautiful life doesn't come from just hearing the words of Jesus. It comes from putting them into practice.

Three kinds of practice, actually:

- The **with-God life** of our personal habits and routines;
- The **with-others life** of our genuine and life-changing relationships; and
- The **for-the-world life** that makes an impact beyond our immediate homes and families, into our communities and beyond.

Growing as disciples of Jesus will make a Kingdom difference in our world and a transformative difference in our lives as believers and as a group. And these resources are helpful in identifying the next steps for our journeys.

Launching by the end of September: The newly, revised Discipleship Planning Tool

We invite your group to [take the assessment](#) and to spend a session to share about the practice and perspective you chose to focus on for the next three months.

V. Support for the Leader

These Teaching Points are provided to help the group leader make connections from the message to their group with both insights from the Biblical text and opportunities in the life of our church.

Teaching Points:

- In order for two people or two parties to experience peace, both the pain of what happened and the hope for a mutually beneficial future must occur.
- When Jesus talks about peace, he talks about “shalom”, and he talks about a new redeemed world where justice, love, and goodness rule – that’s the type of “Jesus-peace” our souls desire
- Because we have received the peace of Jesus, we can be Peace-Makers in 3 ways:
 - Peace in conflict
 - Peace in loneliness
 - Peace in anxiety
- You have your history, you have your pain, you have your opinions, beliefs, convictions and hopes. Jesus calling for us to be peace-makers supersedes all of these things.
- Because our lives have been changed by the saving grace and peace of Christ, we become peace-makers for Jesus
- Proximity brings perspective