



# PEACE on EARTH

Week 30 | December 23, 2024

It's no coincidence that the day we celebrate the arrival of the **prince of peace** has become one of the most *anxiety-filled* and *stress-inducing* times of the year. It's no wonder, either, that the world sees a spike in levels of **depression**, domestic **disputes**, and mental **breakdowns** during this season. This time in which the angels first heralded "*peace on earth*" has been under intense attack by the enemy from day one. Satan and his forces seek to **steal**, **kill**, and **destroy** our *peace* by any means necessary, for they know **how powerful** this *gift from God* truly is. (*Isaiah 9:6; Luke 2:14; Rev. 12:3-4*)

As we fight this week for our families, churches, and communities we must pray specifically for the **protection** and **enhancement** of peace. The key to seeing this happen comes from *resting in God*, for with Him as our center nothing can shake us. (*Matthew 11:28-30; John 15:5; Luke 6:48*) When we find **our foundation** in Him, our peace will be *strengthened* as we obtain His:

## 1. PRIORITIES (*Matthew 6:33-34*)

- a. **NOTE:** It's truly amazing how having **Godly priorities** can *simplify life* and eliminate much of the **stress** and **anxiety** that *the enemy* seeks to lay on us. The opposite effect can also be seen. When we have **worldly priorities** our worries seem to *compound* and double. Life gets hectic and out of control easily and what's **most important** often gets sacrificed for what's *more urgent*. God's priorities also provide clarity and allow for the setting of **biblical boundaries** with others, to *protect our hearts* and to allow for love to be expressed. (*Psalms 119:37; Luke 10:38-42*)
  - i. **For Ex.** "Father God, thank You for the **gift of peace**, for *sending Your son* as a means to purchase and secure it for sinners like us. In order to **protect** and **strengthen** this *peace in our hearts*, give us this day Your priorities. Break our hearts over what **breaks Yours**. Enrage our spirits over what **enrages Yours**. Captivate our minds over what **captivates Yours**. Might we love *what You love* and hate *what You hate*, caring most about that which is important to You."
    1. **REMEMBER:** *Proper priorities* come from **having** and **living out** of the heart of God. (*Ezekiel 36:26-27*)

## 2. PERSPECTIVE (*Matthew 6:22; Isaiah 26:3*)

- a. **NOTE:** It's incredible the difference that a **bird's eye view** can make in a situation. Oftentimes *our perspective* is the deciding factor in how we **react** and **respond** to different circumstances. Seeing things from *heaven's vantage point*, from God's point of view that is, **allows** and **enables** us to respond according to *His will and way*, acting out of true and genuine love. When instead we **limit ourselves** to our *frame of reference*, we are cultivating an attitude of selfishness that will quickly **rob us** and others of the *precious peace* we have been gifted. (*2 Corinth. 4:18; Col. 3:1-2,12; 2 Corinth. 5:16*)

- i. **For Ex.** “Lord Jesus, our *Prince of Peace*, thank You for Your perfect perspective. You alone can see things from **every angle** and point of view, for You alone know the *past, present*, and *future* and can see into the hearts and minds of all. Help us as Your followers to see things in the **light of eternity**, glimpsing our life from *Your vantage point*. Cut away our selfish perspective, and enable us to see **ourselves** and **others** as You do through a lens of *love, truth*, and *peace*.”
  1. **REMEMBER:** A *heavenly perspective* comes from **having** and **seeing** from the mind of God. (1 Corinthians 2:16)

### 3. **PATIENCE** (Romans 15:5)

- a. **NOTE:** God has shown us all **tremendous patience** throughout our lives. His *willingness to wait* and endure in love and kindness is remarkable when you consider how **stubborn** and **foolish** we can be as humans. This same attitude serves to *protect* and *preserve* our peace in times of stress. The ability to **wait on others** as God has waited on us reveals *our gratitude* for the mercy He has poured out and our willingness to trust in **God's timing** even when it conflicts with *our agenda* reveals our faith in His **goodness**. *Impatience*, on the other hand, is a fruit of and fuel for our **pride** and is a surefire way to kill any *semblance of peace* in our life. (Ephesians 4:2; 2 Peter 3:15)
  - i. **For Ex.** “Holy Spirit, thank You for Your **overwhelming kindness** and **patience** with us over the years. Thank You also for *all of the fruit* that comes from Your indwelling presence. Fill us today with **Your peace** and with the **patience** that *protects it*. Remind us of how You have waited on us, giving us an attitude of **gratitude** and **faith** in *Your timing*. Kill all of our arrogant impatience, blessing us instead with **the humility** it takes to *wait on You* and others.”
    1. **REMEMBER:** *Perfect patience* comes from **having** and **expressing** the love of God. (1 Corinthians 13:4)

### Questions for Reflection:

- How much of your **worry** and **stress** comes from *misaligned priorities*?
  - Ask God to show you what matters most to Him, then **reorient yourself** accordingly.
- From **whose perspective** have you been seeing things from?
  - God's vision is *perfect* while yours is *partial*. Turn to Him to see the full picture.
- Has your **prideful impatience** robbed you of peace?
  - When tempted to *lose your tempter*, pause to remember all God has done for you. **Thank Him** and then show *that same kindness* to others.

**Special Note:** The **peace of God** is *only available* to those who have peace with God. Our first prayer for the lost is always for **their salvation**, even if that comes from a *season of distress*.