

# Monday

*Search me, O God, and know my heart! Try me and know my thoughts! And see if there be any grievous way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting!*

*Psalm 139:23-24*

*Pray for us, for we are sure that we have a clear conscience, desiring to act honorably in all things.*

*Hebrews 13:18*

As we saw in Romans 5 on Sunday, Christ provides peace with God through salvation. Before salvation, our sin separated us from God, and we were His enemies. But when we are justified (declared righteous) by faith in Christ, then we are at peace with God (Romans 5:1). We were the enemy of God; now we are adopted as God's children.

But as believers, we still struggle with sin, and when we sin, we should confess our sin and seek God's forgiveness (1 John 1:9). The writer of Hebrews asked his readers to pray for him, and he also declared that he was sure he had a clear conscience. Paul also spoke of having a clear conscience before others in the sight of God (2 Corinthians 4:2). As believers, sin can affect our fellowship with God, and we should seek to maintain peace and a clear conscience before God. Maintaining a clear conscience requires humility to admit when we are wrong and also to be willing to give up sin that can be appealing or enjoyable to us. It requires prayerful introspection of our lives, praying that God would show us our struggles and help us in turning from them. It also requires humility to listen to others when God uses them to confront us (Galatians 6:1).

1. Different times of life can lead us to face different types of temptations. When we spend a lot of time with others, we can face certain temptations that they may bring. But when we spend a lot of time in isolation (and have more free time to seek entertainment), we can face different temptations. As life is different right now, how can I seek to avoid these different temptations and maintain peace and a clear conscience before God? Am I willing to confess sin in order to maintain a clear conscience?

---

---

---

2. Am I willing to pray like David and ask God to search my life and show me where there is sin in my life and where things need to change? What things in my life need to change?

---

---

---

3. The writer of Hebrews also asked his readers to pray for him even as he sought to have a clear conscience. Am I willing to seek accountability with others when I do face struggles? Am I willing to ask them to pray for me and to help me with the temptations that I may face?

---

---

---

# Tuesday

*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.*

*John 14:27*

John 13-17 is often called the “Upper Room Discourse.” The night that He was betrayed, Christ celebrated the Passover with His disciples in the upper room of a house. During that time, He taught them concerning several different topics. When He was finished, He and the disciples went to the Garden of Gethsemane where He was betrayed by Judas. The time of Christ’s trial, crucifixion, and burial was a fearful time for the disciples. But they did not need to fear, as Christ promised peace. God can give peace even in fearful times.

Like joy, the world’s peace often rests on circumstances. When things are going well, the world is at peace. When things are not going well, then the world does not have peace. When people are afraid of sickness or lacking basic necessities, they often lose their peace and panic. But as believers, we can have peace even in the midst of difficult times. Because we as believers are at peace with God, we can have peace in our hearts no matter what circumstances we are facing. Yes, we can be wise and cautious in life, and we can show Biblical love to others by looking out for them and doing what we can to help them stay healthy. But we also do not need to fear. We follow a wise and sovereign God, and we can trust in Him and live at peace, even when times are difficult and uncertain.

1. Where do I usually seek peace in my life? Do I look for peace in good circumstances, or do I look to God for my peace? In the midst of a hard time where the world is lacking peace, how can I find peace in God today?

---

---

---

2. Worry often accompanies fear. When we are afraid of something, then we often worry about it hurting us or causing problems for us. What am I afraid of? Instead of being afraid and worrying, how can I trust God in prayer (Phil 4:6-7)?

---

---

---

3. The world often fears death because they do not know what comes after death. So when we are confronted with disease and death, the world often responds with fear and panic. As believers, we do not need to fear death, because we can be certain of our eternity (1 John 5:13). But recognizing the brevity of life can lead people to see their need for a Savior. Will I pray that God would use this time to lead others to Him in salvation? With whom can I share the Gospel?

---

---

---

# Wednesday

*I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith.*

*Philippians 1:23-25*

Paul wrote Philippians while imprisoned in Rome, yet Philippians is marked by great joy. The reason Paul could have such joy while in prison is that he had learned to be at peace and content with God's plan for his life. His imprisonment could end in one of two ways. Either he would be released from prison and be free to travel and share the Gospel, or he would be executed for his faith. In Philippians 1, he spoke candidly about the results of these two options. Philippians 1:21 says, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." If he continued to live and was released from prison, he could continue to live for Christ and share the Gospel with others. But if he was executed for his faith, he considered it great gain. In verse 23, he stated that he desired to be with Christ because it is far better. Considering these two possible outcomes, he clearly knew which one he preferred. Yet he also had come to the conclusion that God planned for him to be released from prison, live longer, and continue to serve Him. Paul wasn't getting exactly what he wanted, but he was at peace and content with God's plan.

God is sovereign and in control, and God's knowledge and wisdom far exceeds our own. At times we may pray for something or desire something that seems good to us. We may genuinely have pure motives and desire things that seem like they would accomplish great things spiritually. But God chooses to allow something different to happen, and things don't go the way that we want them to. At those points in our lives, we can trust God's wisdom and control, knowing that He knows what is best, even if we don't understand what is happening. When we trust in God's wisdom, we can be at peace with the results, even if they are not what we would have chosen. That's what Paul did in Philippians 1, and that's what we can do today, even as circumstances may not turn out the way that we want. As believers, God produces peace in our lives, and as we trust in Him, that peace can include being at peace and content with our circumstances.

1. At times we might pray for a good thing where we think things should work out a certain way. But in His wisdom, God does not answer the way that we would choose. At those times, am I willing to trust in God's wisdom and acknowledge that His wisdom and knowledge are greater than mine?

---

2. If I examine my life honestly and find that I am genuinely following God faithfully, then am I at peace and content with where I am in life right now? If not, will I pray and seek God's help in being at peace and content with whatever circumstances I might face (Phil 4:11-13)?

---

---

3. Paul was at peace and content with his circumstances even when things were not turning out how he wanted them to. But even as God chose to do something different than what Paul wanted, Paul recognized how God could use the different circumstances. Paul recognized how he could still serve God. As circumstances in our country and in my life are different than I might want right now, how can I still serve God during this time?

---

---

---

# Thursday

*And Jehoshaphat stood in the assembly of Judah and Jerusalem, in the house of the LORD, before the new court, and said, "O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not God in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. In your hand are power and might, so that none is able to withstand you . . . O our God, will you not execute judgment on them? For we are powerless against this great horde that is coming against us. We do not know what to do, but our eyes are on you."*

*2 Chronicles 20:5-6, 12*

When the Moabites and Ammonites attacked Judah, Jehoshaphat had the right response. Judah faced a great enemy, and Jehoshaphat did not know what to do to defend his kingdom. He knew he was powerless in his own strength to defeat the enemy, and he did not know how to fight them successfully. But he looked to the Lord and sought His help. In a time of fear and uncertainty, he acknowledged His need for the Lord. When he looked to the Lord, the Lord provided a great victory. Judah was told to stand up for battle, but then watch the salvation that the Lord would provide. When the day of battle came, Judah's enemies turned against each other and destroyed each other. God gave Judah a great victory, and they did not even need to fight the battle.

We love to be in control of what happens in our lives. But times like this when we face uncertainty from sickness and are forced to be isolated remind us that we are not in control. We don't always know what's best in a situation, and we don't always know what to do. But when we face times of uncertainty, it reminds us of our need for the Lord. We should turn our eyes to the Lord and seek His wisdom and help. We must trust Him now when things are uncertain, but we must also learn the lesson of our need for Him. Even when life stabilizes and we begin to feel like we are in control again, we must continue to seek the Lord's guidance and wisdom.

1. When I am uncertain and don't know what to do, where do I turn for wisdom? Do I have the tendency to try to figure everything out on my own, or do I have the tendency to turn to God and seek His wisdom?

---

---

---

2. Will I commit to faithfully praying and seeking God's guidance in my life? Times of uncertainty remind us of our need to trust God, and we need to trust Him now. But will I also commit to seeking God's help and leading even when things return to normal?

---

---

---

3. God gives us wisdom for life through His Word. Like with prayer, we often think that we are too busy to spend much time in the Bible. But as many sources of busyness have been stripped away, will I commit to spending more time in God's Word, both to know Him better and also to find His wisdom and guidance? How can I maintain this time of reading even when things begin to get busier again?

---

---

---

# Friday

*For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility.*

*Ephesians 2:14-16*

As believers, Christ is our peace. In salvation, He has reconciled us to God and brought peace between us and God. He also has formed an incredible body of believers known as the church. “One new man in place of the two” refers to Jews and Gentiles being united in the church. In the Old Testament, Jews and Gentiles were distinct and separate. Gentiles could join the nation of Israel and worship the Lord, but they were still seen as an inferior class. During the time of the New Testament, the temple in Jerusalem had a particular area close to the front where the men could go to worship, but only men of Jewish descent. Behind that was the court of the women, where Jewish women could come and worship the Lord. Outside of that was the court of Gentiles. The Gentile converts to Judaism could only worship in that court, separated from everyone else by a railing covered in warnings to stay in their place. For a Gentile convert to enter the court of the men or court of the women could be punished by death. So they could worship the Lord, but only in a designated, separated area, and they could be put to death if they tried to get too close to the Lord. But Ephesians 2:14 speaks of Christ “dividing the wall of hostility,” referring to that division between Jew and Gentile. Christ created something new, the church, where both Jew and Gentile could come before God on an equal level.

This creation of the church has important implications for our lives together as believers. Christ has united us in Himself, and He has killed the hostility between believers of different backgrounds. On a practical level, this means that our unity in Christ should supersede the small differences of opinion or preference or personality that we might have with a fellow believer. If we both have genuinely been united in Christ, then we are both on the same victorious side, and we should be living at peace with one another.

1. How do I view my fellow believers around me? Do I see myself as united with them in Christ, or do I focus on the differences that we might have with one another?

---

---

2. A time of isolation reminds us of how valuable our times of fellowship truly are. Ephesians 2:16 tells us that Christ gave Himself not only to save us from our sins, but also to unite us together as believers. How should this reality affect my view of fellowship with other believers? How can I value the privilege of church fellowship that I have?

---

---

---

3. If I am a believer, then I am united with other believers in Christ. What other believers can I build up and encourage in the faith this week? How can I pray for them and encourage them?

---

---

---

# Saturday

*Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no “root of bitterness” springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled.*

*Hebrews 12:14-15*

As believers, we are called to strive for peace with everyone. As Ephesians 2 teaches, the basis of our peace with fellow believers is the unity that we have in Christ. Because of the salvation that Christ has provided, we should seek to be at peace with our fellow believers. But we should strive for peace with *everyone*, which includes unbelievers. We should never sacrifice God’s truth in the name of peace. But we also should never unnecessarily sow conflict with unbelievers. As long as we can hold to God’s truth and faithfully live out God’s Word, we should also seek peace with everyone around us, whether believer or unbeliever. At times, it may not be possible to live at peace with someone (Romans 12:18). But if we are not at peace with someone, then the fault should not lie with us.

Verse 15 warns us against a “root of bitterness.” Bitterness often comes from a lack of peace. When someone sins against us, we may become bitter against them instead of forgiving them. When we become bitter, then we are likely not at peace with them. On the other hand, when we sin against someone else and refuse to repent, then that person may become bitter. Instead of allowing that bitterness to fester, we must pursue peace. Sometimes pursuing peace requires us to forgive someone else who has sinned against us. Sometimes pursuing peace requires us to be humble and repent of our own sin. Just as God has provided peace in our relationship with Him, we must strive for peace with everyone.

1. Living at peace requires humility and love. We must be humble enough and love others enough to forgive them when they sin as well as to confess and repent of our own sin. If I am not at peace with someone else right now, am I willing to live in humility and love so that I can pursue peace with them? If sin is involved in the conflict, am I willing to forgive them for their sin and also repent of my own sin?

---

---

---

2. The word “strive” implies the idea of difficulty and hard work. God calls us to strive for peace with everyone, but that is not always easy. It takes work to pursue peace with everyone, and it can require us to give up many things, including pride, preference, time, and energy. Am I willing to put in the work required to pursue this peace? If I am not at peace with someone else, what would I need to give up in order to pursue peace with them?

---

---

---

3. With whom am I not at peace today? Even if I cannot see them face to face right now, how can I pursue peace with this person and seek to resolve any conflict that I may have?

---

---

---