

Discussion Questions May 2018 Peace Is A Gift (April 29 - June 02)

Exploring the gift of peace that can burst into our lives unexpectedly, often in the midst of struggle, loss and rejection - bringing surprising blessing.

The following discussion questions are designed to accompany the [Peace Is A Gift Resource Pack](#) to help adapt the material for small group work. These questions are just a guideline and there is no need to go through all questions in a single session, or in the following sequence. Feel free to pick and choose what interests your group.

Part 1: Peace follows obedience		
<p>Read Acts 8: 26-40</p> <p>In these 14 verses there are several different instances of obedience layered on top of one another.</p> <p>What did you learn from the story of Philip meeting the Ethiopian government official?</p>	<p>Read Mark 10: 42-45</p> <p>Jesus is speaking here of an alternative hierarchy, one where leaders act like servants not tyrants.</p> <p>Why should we be careful about attributing our decisions in life to obeying God?</p> <p>When is it right to ask questions of God about sacrifice and obedience?</p>	<p>How can we support each other to understand the difference between obedience and love?</p>

Part 2: Peace rests with the rejected		
<p>Read Acts 10: 44-48</p> <p>This week we are using the story of the Gentiles receiving the Spirit to reflect on the gratitude of those who have been rejected and now find themselves encountering the peace of acceptance.</p> <p>God throughout the Bible, and throughout history, uses the rejected, the marginalised, and the oppressed to bring peace.</p> <p>Does peace rest with the rejected only when they know they have been wronged?</p> <p>How can gratitude flow from rejection?</p>	<p>Read Deuteronomy 34: 1-7</p> <p>Moses led a long life full of incredible incident and adventure, but it was also peppered with rejection. In his last moments he is denied the chance to cross over into the promised land, but instead finds a different peace.</p> <p>Are some people chosen to live out a life of rejection in order to bring peace?</p> <p>How easy is it to stand alongside the rejected and become one of the rejected?</p>	<p>Why are we so afraid of rejection if rejection can take us to the place of peace?</p>

Part 3: Peace follows risk		
<p>Read Philippians 1: 3-11</p> <p>Verses 9-11 are about discerning what is best.</p> <p>Can you spell <i>faith</i> 'R-I-S-K'?</p> <p>What element does risk play in your life or in your faith?</p>	<p>Read Acts 1: 15-17, 21-26</p> <p>What is the difference between obedience and guidance?</p> <p>If we feel guided by God, is it really a risk?</p>	<p>To say peace follows risk, could such peace be a form of reassurance, or is it more?</p> <p>Is peace a gift or a reward for being a risk taker?</p>

Part 4: Peace lives with surprise		
<p>Read Joel 2: 18-29</p> <p>Should we all open ourselves to look for guidance and peace through dreams and visions?</p>	<p>Read 1 Corinthians 12: 12-27</p> <p>Paul uses a vivid analogy of the different parts of the body working together to capture how a group of diverse people can be united.</p> <p>Can you describe the peace that comes through unity of purpose? Think of examples from your own life and experience.</p>	<p>Do you think hope is essential to make peace a reality?</p>

Part 5: Peace comes through loss		
<p>Read Matthew 5: 4</p> <p>Why did Jesus call those who mourn blessed?</p> <p>Why is it that serving others is often a remedy for dealing with grief?</p>	<p>Read Romans 8: 31-39</p> <p>What is this profound inner confidence that can sustain a grieving person in the midst of loss?</p>	<p>Read Psalm 23: 4</p> <p>Are we called to travel through grief because it has an ending?</p>