

## The gospel of Jesus Christ produces peace

The Hebrew word for “peace,” *shalom*, is a word with a beautiful connotation. It means not only the absence of strife, but the positive enjoyment of all that is truly good in life. It is the word used in the priestly blessing upon Israel: “The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace” (**Num. 6:24-26**). The God who is described in this blessing is the Giver of “peace.” Not only is peace one of His highest gifts, but the Beatitudes teach that the “peacemakers” will be called “sons of God” (**Mt. 5:9**). Surely, we cannot claim to worship God and not value peace.

The peaceful fellowship for which man was made would never have been broken if sin had not entered the world. It is the selfishly demanding nature of sin that causes discord, strife, and even violence. If it is sin that destroys peace, then it is obvious that sin must be dealt with if peace is to be reestablished. This is exactly what the gospel of Christ does. It makes all other kinds of peace possible by restoring peace between man and God. In **Rom. 5:1**, Paul wrote “Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” This week, let’s meditate on this great fact: *the gospel of Jesus Christ produces peace*.

The peace with God, and consequently the peace within ourselves, that comes from the gospel ought to show up in more peaceful relationships with those around us. Paul taught, “If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all” (**Rom. 12:18**). And not only should our own relationships be more peaceful, but we have the opportunity as Christians to help bring peace to the relationships of our friends and neighbors who are at enmity.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are to exert a beneficial influence on those we come in contact with. One of the very best ways we can influence others for good is to be peacemakers — using our influence constructively in establishing better relations among those whose lives we touch. Throughout the coming week, let’s think of ways we can be agents of God’s peace in the world. This is not easy work. Indeed, working constructively toward peace challenges both our wisdom and our courage. It calls for the highest and best that is within us. So may we be people whose work results in a greater degree of harmony, based upon the truth of God’s word.

### Monday: James 3:13-18

**Key Idea:** It is sinful self-will that produces strife.

**Questions for Family Growth:** What two different kinds of “wisdom” does James discuss in this passage? What results from each? In **4:1**, where does James say “quarrels” and “fights” come from? What does James mean by his statement in **3:18**?

**Wisdom for the Day:** **Proverbs 11:14**.

## Tuesday: Isaiah 9:6,7

**Key Idea:** Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace.

**Questions for Family Growth:** In what sense can it be said that Jesus is the “Prince of Peace”? In [Mt. 10:34-36](#), Jesus said that He came to bring a “sword.” Why is this statement not in conflict with the statement that He is the Prince of Peace?

**Wisdom for the Day:** [Proverbs 11:15](#).

## Wednesday: Ephesians 6:15

**Key Idea:** The gospel of Jesus Christ is a gospel of peace.

**Questions for Family Growth:** Why is the gospel described as the “gospel of peace”? What did the angels say in [Lk. 2:14](#)? Considering the amount of strife in the world, has the gospel failed to bring the peace that was promised?

**Wisdom for the Day:** [Proverbs 11:16-21](#).

## Thursday: Romans 5:1,2; Philippians 4:6,7

**Key Idea:** In Christ, we can have peace with God and peace within ourselves.

**Questions for Family Growth:** How did Christ’s death make possible peace between man and God? How can we obtain that peace and keep it? What is the “peace of God” that can guard our “hearts and minds through Christ Jesus” (NKJV)?

**Wisdom for the Day:** [Proverbs 11:22](#).

## Friday: Romans 12:18

**Key Idea:** We ought to pursue peace with those around us.

**Questions for Family Growth:** In practical terms, what does this passage require us to do? Why is it sometimes not possible to enjoy peace with particular individuals? What should we do when faced with that kind of situation?

**Wisdom for the Day:** [Proverbs 11:23](#).

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