

COLOSSIANS 3:15 – Let the Peace of Christ Rule

→ *What does the word 'peace' mean to you? Would you say you were a peaceful person or do you find peace elusive? What role does the Lord have in your pursuit of peace? What does it mean to describe Jesus as the Prince of Peace?*

DEFINING TERMS

PEACE (Eirene) = Sense of TRANQUILLITY, WELL-BEING ... SECURE, SETTLED HEART ... SHALOM.

CHRIST (Christos) = The ANOINTED ONE

RULE (Brabeuo) = Paints the picture of an UMPIRE / REFEREE

HEART (Kardia) = SEAT & CENTRE OF SPIRITUAL LIFE

Pull that all together: SOMEONE or SOMETHING is RULING; let it be the PEACE of Christ.

→ *What does the world generally teach about peace? What do we mean by 'counterfeit' peace? Is peace internal or external?*

WHAT ARE THE OTHER POTENTIAL RULERS?

- a) FEAR
- b) STRESS & ANXIETY
- c) EASE & COMFORT
- d) SELF-PRESERVATION
- e) Deep INSECURITIES
- f) HURT or WOUNDEDNESS
- g) ANGER
- h) UNFORGIVENESS

THE POINT: These various CONTESTANTS are all going to take us in VERY DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS to the peace of Christ.

→ *Where would each of those take you if they ran their natural course? What would they do to your relationships? How might they corrupt your decisions? What do they do to your mental health?*

→ *Are you vulnerable to any on that list? How do they manifest for you? What effect do they have on your heart? How do they jeopardise your pursuit of peace?*

THE BIG IDEA

We usually think of peace as being a desirable OUTCOME.

But in this context, we're talking about it as a powerful spiritual FORCE.

- * Peace is ACTIVE, not PASSIVE.
- * It's not just a nice FEELING or QUIET life.
- * Not so much about what peace FEELS LIKE, but what it DOES.

- * Peace shouldn't just be the OUTCOME of your godly decisions; it should be the DRIVING FORCE behind those decisions.

→ *We are far more likely to have peace on the back end if we allow it to rule on the front end. Discuss!*

WHAT JESUS SAID (John 14:27, 16:33)

- * You HAVE peace: It's the POSITION you stand in, GIFT you've been given, RESOURCE you can draw from.
 - * There will be TROUBLE ahead, but I HAVE GIVEN you peace and you need to PUT that peace TO WORK.
- *Why can we, as Christians, describe peace as 'a position we stand in?' How is it 'a resource we can draw from?' How do you 'put peace to work?'*

KEYS TO WALKING IN PEACE

1. Choose in WHAT / WHOM you are going to place your TRUST (Romans 15:13, Isaiah 26:3)
 - * You will not find peace in any PART of your life that is not SUBMITTED to God (Job 22:21).

→ *Why is trust so important? Is it possible to have peace without trusting God? What other things do you tend to inadvertently trust in and why? Why is it impossible to find true peace in an area of your life which is not fully submitted to God?*
2. RECOGNISE & REJECT the ANTAGONISERS (2 Timothy 2:22, Philippians 4:6-7)
 - * If you can IGNORE the CLAMOUR, you can DRAW from the DEEP WELL of God's peace.

→ *Why is it that those other potential rulers shout so loud? How good are you at recognising they've kicked in? How do you go about rejecting them?*
3. DO what peace DEMANDS (James 3:17-18)
 - * Do EXACTLY what peace says. Don't PROCRASTINATE or REASON yourself out of it.

→ *"Sometimes peace makes hard demands. It might be counter-intuitive. Your flesh might not like it. We must allow it to lead nevertheless." Discuss!*

If the peace of Christ rules, YOU CAN HAVE

1. Spiritual HEALTH & WELLBEING
2. RECONCILED relationships
3. SPIRITUAL rather than CARNAL responses & outcomes
4. UNITY

→ *Which of those do you have currently? Which do you lack? What role does peace play in accessing them fully?*