

Peace: In Troubled Times

Week 2 LifeGroup Study Guide

Introduction

Today's readings sound similar as the Prophet Habakkuk and the Apostle Paul both speak of the supremacy of faith. As Lutheran's we have a unique place in the Christian Church because of our confession that salvation comes through faith alone, period. The old creature in us however wants to have its place in the mix and so it tries to make our works part of salvation. God however is determined to do it all, leaving nothing up to you. Such is the nature of our God revealed in Jesus Christ. So loving and merciful is Jesus Christ, he simply does it all and gives you the gift of forgiveness, salvation, and faith itself.

Peace and Troubled Times in Your Life

Youth and family guru Rich Melheim, in talking about the importance of Highs and Lows as a family, says if you don't know your kid's high for the day you don't know your kid, and if you don't know your kid's low for the day, you don't know your kid. **Go around your group and share what might be giving you peace today, and what might be troubling you today.**

Pray

Gracious God, your mercy and love for us is beyond our understanding. Give us faith that trusts in you alone for all good things, for you are the one who gives us true peace. Amen.

Session 2 Readings

Galatians 2:15-21 and Habakkuk 2:1-5

Galatians is Paul's letter to the churches in Galatia that he had planted. The reason Paul writes this letter is to deal with a problem that has developed, specifically, new preachers have come and told the Galatian Church that they must first become Jews before they can become Christians. Paul recognizes that this has added something to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, so he must now preach against it.

Read Galatians 2:15-21. Pay close attention to Paul's confession of faith. As Jew or Christian how are we justified? How are we not justified? Can works of the law justify anyone?

Paul deals with the law in a shocking way; he says that he has died to the law. What does it mean to "die" to the law?

Paul makes another shocking assertion, I have been crucified with Christ, and it is no longer I who lives but Christ who lives in me. Does this give you peace?

Paul's final confession is of his current life; the life I live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. Do these words give you peace and comfort in the midst of all the craziness of our world today?

The preaching text for this week is from Habakkuk 2:1–5, in these verses God is replying to Habakkuk's complaints.

Read the text out loud, what did you hear?

Habakkuk tells us at the beginning of chapter 2 that "he will stand at his watch post....and will keep watch to see what he will say to me." See how the prophet, who has leveled his complaints against God, continues to trust that God will answer him, even when those around him distrusted God. What strengthens your faith in the day of trouble?

God reminds the prophet that God is still in control of all matters, "for there is still a vision for the appointed time; it speaks of the end, and does not lie". All that the prophet foretold will come to pass. Waiting is suffering, how have you suffered God as you waited?

"The righteous live by their faith", in the midst of waiting, in the midst of calamity, destruction, trouble, the righteous live by faith. Where as your faith given you peace in troubled times?

Jesus is the peace giver, through his word and the Holy Spirit faith is given, faith continues to be given and sustained through God's Word and the sacraments. How have you found this to be true?

Take Away

This week repeat these words every day "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life."

Closing

Close your time in prayer.