

Peace: In Troubled Times

Week 4 LifeGroup Study Guide

Introduction

One of my seminary professors was fond of reminding us, “When things look their worst, Christ Jesus is at his best”. Life can be filled with difficult times, times where peace seems far off, times where trouble and despair are all around. Jobs are lost, people are diagnosed with cancer, accidents take lives, and people we love and cherish die. In the midst of such despair and pain when things look their worst where can we turn?

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

God of our salvation, you have made yourself known in your Son Jesus Christ, who came down from heaven to give us salvation. By your word give us faith that rests peacefully in you. Amen.

Session 4 Readings

Luke 24:13-35 and Habakkuk 3:17-19

Our first text for this week is Luke 24:13-35. The text is right after the crucifixion of Jesus on the first day when the women go to the tomb where Jesus lay only to see the stone rolled away, and the angels tell them that Jesus is risen. After Jesus is crucified did his follower have hope?

The men on the road to Emmaus are talking about all the things that had happened when Jesus approaches them, their eyes being kept from recognizing him, they stood still and were sad. What were their hopes for Jesus? Do our hopes for Jesus obscure our ability to see what he is actually doing?

As they continued to Emmaus Jesus interpreted to them all the things about him in all the scriptures. Jesus teaches as they go yet when were their eyes opened to actually recognize Jesus? What is the significance of how Jesus reveals himself to them?

The preaching text for this week is from Habakkuk 3:17-19, my study bible labels this final part “Trust and Joy in the Midst of Trouble”.

Read the text out loud, what did you hear?

Habakkuk begins the closing of his work in the same way that he began. Verse 17 is filled with dire imagery. The fig that doesn't blossom, olives that fail, flocks cut off with no herds in the stalls. Are there or have there been times when you can relate to Habakkuk's complaints? Do you have much hope during those times?

The final two verses however take a different tone from verse 17. In verses 18 and 19 we hear a confession of faith. In the midst of the prophet's suffering and despair what is Habakkuk's final confession? What is Habakkuk going to do?

Where, or in what does Habakkuk finally find salvation, strength, and finally peace?

Habakkuk has brought his complaint to God, he has been honest with God and God replied to Habakkuk honestly. But in the end God was doing a work that Habakkuk and Israel could not see. God was removing all of the wrong places they had placed their hope and their faith in the hopes of obtaining peace. The one place we receive true hope and peace is in Jesus Christ, the one who gave his life away for you and me, the one who was poured out on the cross that we might have salvation.

Take Away

In the midst of troubled times always remember that God continues to work in this old world, and that there is nothing outside of his power.

Closing

Close your time in prayer.