



BIBLE READING NOTES

PEACE, PRESENCE, PURPOSE

PREPARE

Peace, presence, purpose - Look at these three words from Sunday's sermon.

Which of them do you feel the need for most in your life at this point in time – the peace of Jesus, a sense of hope from his living presence, or purpose for your life direction?

BIBLE PASSAGE

On the evening of that first day of the week, when the disciples were together, with the doors locked for fear of the Jewish leaders, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you!" After he said this, he showed them his hands and side. The disciples were overjoyed when they saw the Lord.

Again Jesus said, "Peace be with you! As the Father has sent me, I am sending you." And with that he breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone's sins, their sins are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven."

John 20: 19 - 23

EXPLORE

In John 14 v 27, Jesus tells his disciples 'Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you'. In verse 21 of today's reading, he says again 'Peace be with you!' The word 'Shalom' (peace) is a Hebrew word used for greeting and parting. But there is an added sense to the word Shalom, and it is this which Jesus leaves us when we follow him. Put together a sense of what Shalom means from these verses:

- 'The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.' **John 10 v 10b**
- 'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good' **Genesis 1 v 31a**
- 'You anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows'. **Psalms 23 v 5b**
- 'and in Christ you have been brought to fullness'. **Colossians 2 v 10a**





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From the picture you have of shalom, how can you be encouraged by the **peace** that Jesus offers?

- Think about last week's sermon, when Jesus said we are more blessed now that we can't see Jesus than the first disciples were when they were with him. In verse 22, Jesus says 'Receive the Holy Spirit'. What does the Holy Spirit give us now that Jesus is no longer physically **present**? See John 14 v 26; John 16 vv 13-15
- In verse 23, Jesus talks about the importance of forgiveness – our **purpose** as his disciples. Does it surprise you that this is our purpose? Why? How can forgiveness be significant if we take this command seriously in our daily lives? Think of some everyday examples, particularly in the current situation.

RESPOND

As you consider what we have looked at today, take some time to write down thoughts. What does the shalom that Jesus offers mean to you where you are at today? How does the knowledge that we have the Holy Spirit present with us bring us comfort as we live this strange situation out? As you ponder the purpose of forgiveness, bring your relationships before God and ask him to prompt you where needed.

PRAYER

Jesus, thank you that you say to us today 'Peace be with you!' Thank you that the Holy Spirit is present with us in every situation, bringing comfort.

Thank you that you don't ask us to forgive without giving us what we need to do so.

