

"The Way to Peace"

How can we find peace in these uncertain times? Hello, I'm Phil Sanders, and this is a Bible study "In Search of the Lord's Way." We serve the God of peace, and our Father in heaven is indeed the God of peace for us, even in uncertain times.

Welcome to In SEARCH of the Lord's Way! We're here to search the Scriptures for God's will. The Scriptures give us the unchanging promises of God. Psalm 19 and verse 7 says the "testimony of the Lord is sure"; you can count on God's Word. Psalm 93 and verse 5 explain that God's "testimonies are fully confirmed." Again Psalm 119:89 says, "Forever, O LORD, Your word is settled in heaven." Now while the world is uncertain about many things and uncertain about the future, we can have full confidence in God's Holy Word. Thanks for taking time with us today. We'd love to hear from you. We and want to be a part of your life each week.

Paul said in 2 Thessalonians 3 and verse 16, "Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in every circumstance. The Lord be with you all!" Our Father in heaven and the Lord Jesus grants peace to His people. Not every circumstance will be easy or without pain, but every circumstance can have the reassurance that God is with us and loves us. Romans 8:31 to 2 reminds us, "What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?" Nothing, can separate us from the love of God. Because of Jesus, we can have peace! We can have hope! We can have eternal life with God!

The Lord wants us to live with confidence not uncertainty. He wants us to put our trust in Him. When we consider the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, we have proof of God's love for us and proof of life beyond the grave. Peace isn't freedom from all trouble; peace is confidence in God's abiding love even in the midst of suffering and evil.

We offer this study on the way to peace free! If you'd like a printed copy and live in the United States, mail your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call our toll-free telephone number. That number is 1-800-321-8633. We also have many free programs and materials on our website, www.searchtv.org. You can also see us on YouTube.

We'll now worship in song, we'll read from Isaiah 9:6 to 7, and we will examine the peace the Lord Jesus gives us.

Our reading today is from Isaiah chapter 9 verses 6 and 7. Here the prophet is predicting the coming of the messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ.

For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
And the government will rest on His shoulders;
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.
There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace,
On the throne of David and over his kingdom,
To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness
From then on and forevermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

And yes the Lord Jesus did found His kingdom on the day of Pentecost. And that's the church. And it's been in place all these years. Let's pray together. Heavenly Father we're thankful for the power of

Your Son to bring us peace. And help us to live in peace with others and with You and with ourselves. In Jesus name, Amen.

Romans 15:33 simply says, "Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen." How does God's peace dwell in our hearts? How do we find peace? Well, first, we'll explore having peace with God Himself. Romans 5:1 and 2 says, "Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God."

When our hearts are fixed on loving and serving God, we find peace with God. Isaiah 26:3 to 4 says of God that, "You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD GOD is an everlasting rock."

One reason God forgives comes from the desire to be free from anger and wrath. God said to Israel in Isaiah 43:25, "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake, And I will not remember your sins." Oh, I'm thankful for a God who understands and offers the way for our sins to be forgiven through the blood of Jesus. Psalm 103 verses 8 to 14 explains the character of God: "The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. Just as a father has compassion on his children, So the LORD has compassion on those who fear Him. For He Himself knows our frame; He is mindful that we are but dust."

In Christ we have the blessing of the blood of Christ not only when we're baptized but all through life. 1 John 1:7 to 9 says to Christians, "but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all (all) unrighteousness." Now forgiving through the sacrifice of Jesus is God's way to peace. Now God knows that we are flawed and need forgiveness. And He offers continually peace to those who continually love and obey Him.

Second, we'll explore having peace with others. The Lord said in Matthew 5 and verse 9, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God." Hebrews 12:14 says, "Pursue peace with all men, (all people) and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord." Remember Jesus said in Matthew 6 verses 14 and 15, "For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. "But if you do not forgive others, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions." Living with peace in your heart is not a trivial thing. And this why Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:26 to 27, "Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil."

Now people can certainly be difficult to live with! Colossians 3:12 to 15 reminds us, "So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. Beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful."

Now even when others don't respect what's right, as God's people we should follow the Lord. Romans 12:18 to 21 says, "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take

your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," says the Lord. "But if your enemy is hungry, feed him, and if he is thirsty, give him a drink; for in so doing you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Proverbs 16 and verse 7 reminds us that, "When a man's ways are pleasing to the LORD, He makes even his enemies to be at peace with him."

We have an obligation to follow the Lord. 2 Peter 3:14 quotes Psalm 34:14 and says, "Who is the man who desires life And loves length of days that he may see good? Keep your tongue from evil And your lips from speaking deceit. Depart from evil and do good; Seek peace and pursue it." When people choose to live for the Lord, they find a life with fewer regrets and greater satisfaction. Life is not always easy for the Christian, but the promise of God's grace and eternal life are priceless gifts. The ability to pray to the Father and be heard gives us peace and assurance. The forgiveness of sins and hope of eternal life because of the sacrifice of Christ gives us peace when we lie down to sleep. Oh, peace with God is a foretaste of heaven.

When Christianity began, there was conflict between Jews and Gentiles. Now some Jews thought the Gentiles had to become Jews in order to become Christians, and they were very mistaken. Christians do not have to keep the Law of Moses to be right with God. Ephesians 2:13 to 18 says, But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off (that is you Gentiles) have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father."

Christianity unites all people into one body, no matter where you live or what language you speak. 1 John 4 and verse 14 says, "We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son to be the Savior of the world." Hebrews 2 verse 9 says, "But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone." And 1 Timothy 2:3 to 4 says, "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men (all people) to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." I tell you everyone can be saved and everyone can know the truth and be right with God. They must hear the gospel though, and believe it.

John 3:16 to 18 says, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life. For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. He who believes in Him is not judged; he who does not believe has been judged already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." Now it does matter whether we believe, it matters whether we repent, it matters whether we love the Lord, and whether we obey what He teaches.

God's ways are full of love, life, and wisdom. Many miss this because they choose to follow their own hearts. God said in Jeremiah 17:9 to 10 that, "The heart is more deceitful than all else And is desperately sick; Who can understand it? I, the LORD, search the heart, I test the mind, Even to give to each man according to his ways, According to the results of his deeds." Now you're choosing whether you want peace in your life or confusion and chaos.

James 3:13 to 18 demonstrates the difference between the person who lives for Himself and the person who listens to the wisdom of God. James said, "Who among you is wise and understanding? Let

him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant and so lie against the truth. This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing. But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.” I tell you if we want peace, we must listen and follow the wisdom that comes from God. Selfish ambition and jealousy will only lead to conflict and chaos.

Third, we’ll explore having peace with ourselves. Forgiveness from God opens the door for a person to find peace within. When people have a guilty conscience, they’re ashamed and can’t find peace. Guilt is painful and it produces shame. It is hard for an evil person to feel good about himself or his deeds. And even a callous person will hide his shame. Romans 2:9 to 11 says, “There will be tribulation and distress for every soul of man who does evil, of the Jew first and also of the Greek, but glory and honor and peace to everyone who does good, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For there is no partiality with God.”

You know even if a person denies the reality of sin, he knows in his heart that he will one day give an account to God. There is a day of judgment for all of us. Isaiah 57:20 to 21 says, “But the wicked are like the tossing sea, For it cannot be quiet, And its waters toss up refuse and mud. ‘There is no peace,’ says my God, ‘for the wicked.’” I tell you a guilty conscience is a foretaste of the hereafter separated from God. It’s filled with sorrow and regret, weeping and gnashing of teeth. But a clean conscience is a foretaste of heaven. It knows that the old man of sin is dead and past. One can become a new creature in Christ, freed from sin, guilt, and shame.

When people worry and are afraid, their minds lack faith in God and cannot find peace. Philippians 4:6 to 7 says, “Be anxious for (that is worry about) nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” Oh, God sees and He knows all your struggles. Proverbs 3:5 to 6 says, “Trust in the LORD with all your heart And do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, And He will make your paths straight.”

God wants you to have peace within. Philippians 4 verse 9 says that, “The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, (Paul’s saying to them) practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.” Oh read the word of God, listen to what God says. The word of God has the answers to the confusion and chaos of life. Live for the Lord Jesus!

Let’s pray together. Father we’re thankful that Your ways are the ways to peace. Help us to follow them and to find the peace and hope and love that You have in store for us. In all things, help us to do Your will. In Jesus name, Amen.

When we have hard days, let’s look to Jesus! Hebrews 12:1 to 3 says, “Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.” We can find peace and courage in the Prince of peace.

Jesus died on the cross so that we could have peace with God. That peace comes when we're lovingly united with Christ by faith, repentance, and baptism. 1 Peter 3:21 says that, "baptism now saves you—not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." When one is baptized into Christ for the forgiveness of sins and salvation, by grace he also can enjoy a good conscience. In salvation one realizes God no longer holds his past sins against him. He's no longer separated from God's favor and blessing. A good conscience brings peace of heart and soul.

Now you might have a guilty conscience. Many people are afraid of death, because they don't know what lies ahead and they do know they've sinned against God. If you had to face God today, would you meet Him with confidence or with fear? Do you have any hope of eternal life? Today you're nearer facing God, having salvation or condemnation, than you have ever been before. Are you right with God?

We hope that today's study about the way to peace has helped you see its value and turn to the Lord's way. If you live in the United States and want a free printed copy, send your request to In Search of the Lord's Way, P.O. Box 371, Edmond, OK 73083 or send an e-mail to searchtv@searchtv.org. Or, you can call the Search office toll-free at 1-800-321-8633. There's a schedule of our programs and a map with churches in your area at www.searchtv.org. And you can watch SEARCH on YouTube! Subscribe to our channel, "SearchTVMinistry" and like the programs. We also offer free Bible Correspondence courses. Now don't worry, we're not asking for money. We're here to help you draw close to God.

Show God your love by worshiping at church. I tell you, you need a church family. If you can attend, don't neglect worshiping at church. There's probably a church of Christ near you. And if you're looking for a healthy, Biblical church home, we'll be glad to help you find one. Well we'll be back next week, Lord willing. So keep searching God's Word with us and tell a friend about this program. Let them know that you watch and encourage them to watch too. And as always we say to you, God bless you and we love you from all of us at In Search of the Lord's Way.