

## Small Group Guide: Peace in the Midst of the Storm

Based on the sermon from Philippians 4:1-9

Opening Prayer (5 minutes)

Begin by asking God to speak to hearts, help the group surrender opinions and emotions to Him, and guide the discussion toward His truth.

Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Question: Share about a time when you got emotionally invested in something (a sports team, a debate, a project) and realized later you may have taken it too far. What helped you gain perspective?

Scripture Reading (5 minutes)

Have someone read Philippians 4:1-9 aloud. Encourage the group to listen for words or phrases that stand out.

Key Takeaways from the Sermon

We "leak" spiritually - We need continual filling with the Holy Spirit, not just a one-time experience

Peace defies logic - God's peace isn't dependent on circumstances but on our relationship with Him

Our emotions can obscure perspective - Like passionate sports fans, we can lose objectivity when we pick "teams" in life

We're called to be peacemakers - Not to pick sides and divide, but to bring Christ's peace to every situation

Obedience over opinion - Submitting to God's Word even when it challenges our natural reactions

Discussion Questions (30-40 minutes)

Section 1: Personal Spiritual Health

The pastor mentioned that he "leaks" spiritually and needs continual filling. On a scale of 1-10, how full is your spiritual tank right now? What causes

you to "leak"?

Read Philippians 4:6-7 again. What does it practically look like to "not be anxious about anything" in your current life situation?

The sermon emphasized worship and brokenness before God. What's the difference between emotional worship and true surrender? Which do you tend toward?

## Section 2: Perspective and Emotions

The pastor used sports team loyalty to illustrate how our emotions can cloud our judgment. What are some "teams" (political, social, cultural) that Christians tend to pick that might be dividing the church?

How do you know when your passion for something has crossed the line from healthy conviction to ungodly division?

Read Philippians 4:8. What are you currently filling your mind with? How does this list compare to your social media feed, news consumption, or conversations?

## Section 3: Living as Peacemakers

The pastor challenged us to pray for people we disagree with. Who is someone you struggle to pray for? What would it look like to genuinely intercede for them this week?

Read Matthew 5:38-48. Jesus calls us to love enemies and go the extra mile. Share a specific situation where you could apply this "above and beyond" principle this week.

Read Romans 13:1-7. This passage about submitting to authorities can be challenging. How do we balance being "salt and light" with submission to governing authorities? Where might we be in rebellion?

## Section 4: The Church's Witness

The pastor said, "The darker it is, the more power that light has to shine." How can the church be a light of peace in divisive times without compromising truth?

Paul addressed Euodia and Syntyche publicly and called the church to help them reconcile (Philippians 4:2-3). Is there division in our church, community, or families that we're ignoring rather than addressing in love?

Practical Applications (15 minutes)

This Week's Challenge - Choose One or More:

Option 1: The Peace Audit

Spend 15 minutes in prayer asking God: "What things in my life are stealing my peace?" Write down what comes to mind and surrender each one to God.

Option 2: The Enemy Prayer

Identify someone you disagree with or who has hurt you. Commit to praying for them daily this week (not that they'd change, but genuinely for their well-being).

Option 3: The Extra Mile

Look for one opportunity this week to go "above and beyond" for someone, especially someone who might oppose you or whom you find difficult.

Option 4: The Media Fast

Take a break from news and social media for 3 days. Replace that time with Scripture reading (try Philippians, Colossians, or the Psalms). Journal about the difference in your peace level.

## Option 5: The Philippians 4:8 Filter

Before posting on social media, texting, or speaking this week, run your words through the filter: Is it true? Noble? Right? Pure? Lovely? Admirable? Excellent? Praiseworthy?

Accountability (5 minutes)

Share which practical application you're committing to this week

Exchange contact information with one other person to check in mid-week

Agree to share results at the next meeting

Closing Prayer (5 minutes)

Go around the circle and have each person pray one sentence asking God for:

His peace in a specific situation

Help to love someone difficult

Strength to obey His Word over personal feelings

Close with someone reading Philippians 4:7 as a blessing over the group.

### For Further Study

Wednesday night message on worship (referenced in sermon - watch online)

Nehemiah 8 - The passage about people standing for God's Word

Colossians 3:12-17 - Putting on characteristics of peace

James 4:1-10 - Where conflicts come from and how to find peace

### Leader Notes

Be prepared for political/social tensions to surface. Redirect to Scripture and Christ-centeredness

Create a safe space where people can admit struggles without judgment

Model vulnerability by sharing your own areas where you need God's peace

If division surfaces in the group, address it directly but lovingly, following the Philippians 4:2-3 model

Emphasize that peace doesn't mean agreement on everything, but unity in Christ above all