

Day 1

Peace

Silence (2 minutes) Take some time to be quiet, to calm down, and to listen. What has God been teaching you? What are the next steps He wants you to take? How is your spirit doing?

Scripture *Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.* Colossians 3:12-15

Discussion In the first two chapters of Paul's letter to the Colossians, Paul prays for them and addresses their change from being dead in their sins to now being alive in Christ. In chapter 3 he gets specific about what attitudes and behaviors are part of their old life that they need to leave behind and what are the new attitudes and behaviors that are part of their new life in Christ. They, and we, are to "*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts*" (verse 15). We are not to let our emotions and thoughts go wherever they want, wherever they are drawn to or seduced. They are to be ruled over, limited, guided. We are to submit our emotions and our thoughts to be ruled by the peace of Christ. We are to do this because we are members of one Body, Jesus' Church, and are called to peace. There are and will be problems. There are people who frustrate and irritate us, who think differently than we do. Some people have personalities we do not understand and don't like. And Christ's peace is to rule in our hearts. Christ's peace is to rule over those emotions and thoughts of ours. "*A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another*" (John 13:34). "*Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace*" (Eph. 4:2-3). We let Christ's peace rule in our heart by bringing those emotions and thoughts of conflict to Him. We ask Jesus to show us anything in our own attitudes and speech that He wants to change. Then we listen and submit to Him. We talk with Him about our concern. Daily, not once, but over and over; we pray for our brother or sister in Christ, praying with humility and kindness for their closeness to Jesus, praying for the unity of the Body. And we take initiative to demonstrate love for that person, just as Jesus took initiative to show us His love.

Application Peace is more than just the absence of conflict, but a consistent spiritual posture of trust and submission to Christ's work in your life. It can be easy to feel as though the Christian life is hectic and fraught with spiritual battles, but as Colossians 3:12-15 shows us peace is offered us in the midst of life's trials! Take time today to consider when you are most tempted to be stressed, or rushed, or feel pressured by the world. Take this concern to God in prayer right now, and then set a reminder for yourself to pray for God's peace before entering into this situation today!

Prayer Jesus, may Your peace rule in my heart. I submit my feelings and thoughts to You, to be guided by You. Please use me to serve, build, and love Your Church. Thank You for my being alive in You. Please help me to live my life in a way that honors and pleases You. Thank You. Amen.

Silence (2 minutes) Talk to God about what you are learning. What are your fears? Where are your hangups? Pray for direction.

Scripture memory for the week: *You will keep in perfect peace him whose mind is steadfast, because he trusts in You. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord, is the Rock eternal.* Isaiah 26:3-4