

Your Coronavirus Survival Guide - March 22nd - Covid 19 and The Judgment of God - Troy Knight

TALK IT OVER

Key Scriptures from the Message:

John 15:1
Exodus 9:8
Revelation 16:1-2
Luke 13:1-5
John 1:11-13
John 14:27

Start reading

Luke 13:1-5 NLT

About this time Jesus was informed that Pilate had murdered some people from Galilee as they were offering sacrifices at the Temple. "Do you think those Galileans were worse sinners than all the other people from Galilee?" Jesus asked. "Is that why they suffered? Not at all! And you will perish, too, unless you repent of your sins and turn to God. And what about the eighteen people who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them? Were they the worst sinners in Jerusalem? No, and I tell you again that unless you repent, you will perish, too."

John 1:11-13

He came to his own people, and even they rejected him. But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God. They are reborn—not with a physical birth resulting from human passion or plan, but a birth that comes from God.

John 14:27

"I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give is a gift the world cannot give. So don't be troubled or afraid."

Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- What is something that you miss the most during this time of self quarantine?
- What is one thing for which you are most grateful?

Start thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Troy mentioned a couple of scenarios in his message when talking about the "why" when it comes to COVID-19. The first was that God is pruning the weak and the second was that God is judging the world. What do you think of these? Do these things make you uncomfortable? If God is sovereign, which He is, should we even be questioning Him?
- Read Luke 13:1-5. The truth is that God uses all tragedy, sin, and disease to draw us closer to Him. How is God using this to draw you closer to him? Are you resisting due to fear?
- Read John 1:11-13. If we have accepted Jesus as our Savior, we are His children. In fact this scripture says "to all who believed Him and accepted Him, He gave the right to become the children of God". Do you have any question in your heart that if you were to die today that you would go to heaven? Are you ready to meet your Maker?

Start sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- Read John 14:27. This verse specifically tells us not to be troubled or afraid and that Jesus has left us with peace of mind and heart. If we are living in a state of fear due to what is going on in our world, are we in direct disobedience to God? Fear starts in our thought life. How can we control our thoughts?
- Scripture is the best thing to combat fear and anxiety. A great scripture that talks about this is Philippians 4:4-7. It states, "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." If you practice what is called for in these verses, what will be the promised outcome? How can you harness the joy and peace talked about here and use it to encourage others to live without fear?

Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- List 5 people you think you could minister to during this time. What are realistic ways you can serve these people and others during this time? Commit to do these things.

Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

- Father, thank You for never leaving nor forsaking us. Thank You that we can count on You no matter how hard things get or how dark the world seems. Give us the courage we need to act as lights and guide others toward the hope only You can bring. In Jesus' name, amen

Start digging. For further study.

- Read the article on the back and discuss it.

Question: "What does the Bible say about finding peace of mind?"

Answer: Most people would define peace of mind as the absence of mental stress and anxiety. The expression "peace of mind" conjures up images of Buddha-like composure wherein calm, comfort, and composure are so prevalent that nothing can disturb the one who has peace of mind. An imperturbable, placid person is said to have peace of mind. The only time "peace of mind" is found in the Bible is the NIV translation of 2 Corinthians 2:13 where Paul says he found no "peace of mind" because he didn't find Titus in Troas. The literal translation of this phrase is "rest of my spirit."

The Bible uses the word peace in several different ways. Peace sometimes refers to a state of friendship between God and man. This peace between a holy God and sinful mankind has been effected by Christ's sacrificial death, "having made peace through the blood of his cross" (Colossians 1:20). In addition, as High Priest the Lord Jesus maintains that state of friendship on behalf of all who continue to "come to God by him, seeing he always lives to make intercession for them" (Hebrews 7:25). This state of friendship with God is a prerequisite for the second kind of peace, that which sometimes refers to a tranquil mind. It is only when "we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1) that we can experience the true peace of mind that is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, in other words, His fruit exhibited in us (Galatians 5:22).

Isaiah 26:3 tells us that God will keep us in "perfect peace" if our minds are "stayed" on Him, meaning our minds lean on Him, center on Him, and trust in Him. Our tranquility of mind is "perfect" or imperfect to the degree that the "mind is stayed on" God rather than ourselves or on our problems. Peace is experienced as we believe what the Bible says about God's nearness as in Psalm 139:1-12, and about His goodness and power, His mercy and love for His children, and His complete sovereignty over all of life's circumstances. But we can't trust someone we don't know, and it is crucial, therefore, to come to know intimately the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ.

Peace is experienced as a result of prayer. "Be anxious for 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 understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6-7).

A peaceful mind and heart are experienced as a result of recognizing that an all-wise and loving Father has a purpose in our trials. "We know that all things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose" (Romans 8:28).

God can bring a variety of good things, including peace, from the afflictions that we experience. Even the discipline and chastening of the Lord will "yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness" in our lives (Hebrews 12:11). They provide a fresh opportunity for "hoping in God" and eventually "praising Him" (Psalm 43:5). They help us "comfort" others when they undergo similar trials (2 Corinthians 1:4), and they "achieve for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all" (2 Corinthians 4:17).

Peace of mind and the tranquility of spirit that accompanies it are only available when we have true peace with God through the sacrifice of Christ on the cross in payment of our sins. Those who attempt to find peace in worldly pursuits will find themselves sadly deceived. For Christians, however, peace of mind is available through the intimate knowledge of, and complete trust in, the God who meets "all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).