

North Texas Conference

Holy Spirit

Director Edition

Summer 2018 Conference Camp Curriculum

Tuesday – Morning

Peace

Supplies: Bibles, white beads

For the Leader...

Peace is a very easy concept to grasp but a very challenging way to live. Yet peace is exactly what we both need and want from God. Overall in this lesson we will be looking at what it means to become agents of peace.

Opening/Centering Prayer – led by Student

Supplies: none

Suggested Time - 5 min

Invite one student to lead the prayer below.

Dear God, amidst the storms, struggles, and chaos of the world, calm and focus us in this moment. Guide us and lead us toward a place of peace now and always. In Christ’s name we pray, Amen.

Psychologist

Supplies: none

Suggested Time - 10 min

Have the group sit in a circle. Send one person out of the room. Everyone else quietly picks a leader to lead some movements or a rhythm while the others mimic the leader’s movements. Bring the person who was sent out to come back into the middle of the circle. That person is striving to guess or diagnosis who the leader is. Ideally the leader tries to change the movements while the person in the middle has their back turned with everyone else quickly follows. The movements must change at some point. Once the person in the middle guesses who the leader is, the leader becomes the person who is sent out of the room. The circle picks another person to lead the movements and the game continues. After playing a few rounds ask the questions below.

- For those who were in the middle, how did it feel? How did it feel around the circle?
- What chaos was present in this game?
- What could have made this game more peaceful?

If you would like a more chaotic game, you could try “This Is a What?” found at <https://youtu.be/jDVr4DbLghs>.

For the Leader...

Jesus and his disciples are eating together at their Last Supper. Jesus tells the disciples that although he will no longer be with them physically, he will send the Advocate (Holy Spirit) to be with them forever. The Holy Spirit will teach and remind them of Jesus' words and actions and inspire each new generation with Jesus' teachings. Jesus leaves the disciples with the gift of peace; a peace that calms all fears and doubts.

Scripture Lesson & Discussion

Supplies: Bibles

Suggested Time - 20 min

The following scripture comes at a point where Jesus is seeking to reassure His disciples during the Last Supper before the chaotic events that would lead to His death.

John 14:25-28 (CEB)

²⁵"I have spoken these things to you while I am with you. ²⁶The Companion, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and will remind you of everything I told you.

²⁷"Peace I leave with you. My peace I give you. I give to you not as the world gives. Don't be troubled or afraid. ²⁸You have heard me tell you, 'I'm going away and returning to you.' If you loved me, you would be happy that I am going to the Father, because the Father is greater than me.

Children's Focus:

- What is peace? How do you feel when you are peaceful?
- What are different examples of peace? (*freedom from trouble or worry, a feeling of mental or emotional calm, a time when there is no war or a war has ended, when no conflict exists, fairness*)
- How can you show peace to others?
- Perhaps your church has a time of "Passing the Peace" with each other during worship. Often this is a time when people are supposed to get up and talk to those around them. What do you think this is about? How do you think this relates to peace?
- What can you do to bring peace into a situation or place? How can we practice peace?

Jr. High Focus:

- Reread verse 27. How does Jesus describe the peace He gives us?
- How do you think we see the peace of Christ in the world?
- Who are some people who seem to have or show the peace of Christ? How can you tell those people have the peace of Christ? What makes them different?

- If we have the peace of Christ how should it change our lives?
- How do we achieve peace within ourselves? How about within the world around us?
- How do you think having the peace of Christ changes or affects us? How do think the peace of Christ could affect our actions?

Sr. High Deep-End:

- How would you define peace?
- Jesus makes the distinction between peace that comes from God and the world’s peace. What do you think is the difference? How does this compare with your previous definition?
- As we strive to live as disciples who have been given the peace of Christ, what should this mean for us? What are implications of this gift? How should it change our thoughts, feelings or actions?
- What do you think it means to practice peace?
- Jesus sent the Holy Spirit as an advocate to the disciples and us to continually remind, teach and reveal new insights. How do you think the Holy Spirit helps us achieve peace? To what extent are we responsible for achieving peace?

Alternate Activity: Visualizing Peace

Supplies: none

Suggested Time - 10 min

In his letter from the Birmingham Jail, Martin Luther King Jr. said, “True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice.”

Ask the following questions after reading the quote above:

- What is tension? What is justice?

Tension – (noun) the act or state of being stretched or strained; mental or emotional strain; intense, suppressed suspense, anxiety, or excitement; a strained relationship between individuals, groups, nations, etc. [*examples: a rubber band being stretched; a parent’s patience being tested*]

Justice – (noun) the quality of being just; righteousness, equitableness, or moral rightness; rightfulness or lawfulness, as of a claim or title; justness of ground or reason; the moral principle determining just conduct. [*examples: a superhero seeking justice for someone hurt; having the right thing happen all the time for someone*]

- How does it feel to be tense?
- How do we achieve peace in a world filled with chaos, injustice, and suffering?
- What do you think it takes to accomplish peace?
- What do you think about this statement of peace given that MLK was both in jail and in the middle of fighting for the civil rights of African-American people?

After the discussion, invite the students to close their eyes and visualize what peace might look like – for instance a classic image of a lion sitting with a lamb. As they have their eyes closed ask questions such as what follows. Is it colorful? Who’s there? How are the relationships between people different? What do the relationships between people and animals or plants look like? Where do people live? Who lives next to who? Then invite them to open their eyes and if they are comfortable, share their vision of peace with the group.

Activity for Introductions & Reintroductions: Agree or Disagree

Supplies: none

Suggested Time - 15 min

The objective of this activity is to get to know more about the members of our group. I will read a statement and if you agree with that statement, you will stand up. If you disagree with the statement, you will remain seated. You may also remain seated if you don’t want to answer the question. After I read each statement and each person has had a chance to express their opinion, I will ask everyone to sit back down again for the next statement.”

Read each of the statements below. After each member has expressed themselves for each statement, remind standing participants to sit back down.

Statements for Children’s & Jr. High Focus

- Stand up if your favorite color is blue.
- Stand up if you like spaghetti.
- Stand up if you have a brother or sister.
- Stand up if you were born somewhere outside of Texas.
- Stand up if you speak more than one language.
- Stand up if you are left-handed.
- Stand up if you have to share a room with someone.
- Stand up if you have ever been somewhere you didn’t feel safe.
- Stand up if you have ever gotten stitches.

Statements for Jr. High Focus & Sr. High Deep-End

- Stand up if you have ever had to move because a parent lost a job or got a new job.
- Stand up if you want to go to college.
- Stand up if you have ever been followed or harassed.
- Stand up if you ever wanted something and could not afford it.

Ask the following questions after reading the statements

- What happened during this activity?
- How did this activity make you feel? Uncomfortable? Surprised? Compassionate? Why?
- Did you have something in common with someone you did not expect? How did that feel?
- What did this activity show you about members of our group?
- What kind of (peacemaking) skills did you have to use during this activity? Ex. Cooperation, communication, listening, patience, appreciation of difference, etc...
- Why is it important for us to think about what it is like to experience another person's life?

Jr. High Focus & Sr. High Deep-End

- How could an activity such as this help us to better understand what peace might look like?
- How does knowing about others experiences inform or enlighten us on how to accomplish peace?

Hands-on Activity: Bracelets

Supplies: white beads

Suggested Time - 5 min

Each session, we will add a small colored bead to represent the Fruit of the Spirit that is studied. For this session add a small white bead to represent PEACE.

Quote/Life Example or Testimony/Relatable Story

Supplies: none

Suggested Time - 15 min

Desmond Tutu on Peace and Justice on December 11, 1984

“There is no peace in Southern Africa. There is no peace because there is no justice. There can be no real peace and security until there be first justice enjoyed by all the inhabitants of that beautiful land. The Bible knows nothing about peace without justice, for that would be crying ‘peace, peace, where there is no peace.’ God’s Shalom, peace, involves inevitably righteousness, justice, wholeness, fullness of life, participation in decision-making, goodness, laughter, joy, compassion, sharing and reconciliation...[W]hen there is injustice, invariably peace becomes a casualty...Let us work to be peacemakers, those given a wonderful share in Our Lord’s ministry of reconciliation. If we want peace, so we have been told, let us work for justice. Let us beat our swords into ploughshares.”

After reading the above quote ask the following questions:

- What do you think about this quote?
- How do you think this relates to the scripture we read?
- How do you think this relates to living out our faith?

How is peace evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit?

Let there be peace on earth. Let it begin with me.

Closing Prayer/Benediction – led by Adult

Supplies: none

Suggested Time - 5 min

Invite the whole group to read the Adapted Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi below. You might read a line and then have them repeat it back after you.

Lord, make us instruments of your peace:

Where there is hatred, let us sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

Where there is sadness, joy.

O divine Master, grant that we may not so much seek

To be consoled as to console,

To be understood as to understand,

To be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

Amen.