

Group discussion *Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for “the big question.”*

Read Galatians 5:22-23 aloud.

1. If the fruit of the Spirit is peace, what robs us of peace? What keeps us from enjoying the Spirit's peace?
*Everything revolves around me and my rights.
Appetites and interests that pull us in too many directions.
Lack of genuine community.*
2. How would you define peace? How is it more than the absence of conflict?

How much does peace depend on your surroundings? Could you enjoy peace in the midst of trials? Could you lack peace in a beautiful setting?

*Bring in “worst vacation” stories from the previous section.
Prov. 17:1 – “Leftovers with love are better than a banquet with bitterness.”*

Read I Corinthians 12:12-21 aloud.

I Corinthians was written to a church that enjoyed little peace. Even their “communion” service created strife.

3. What do we learn by comparing the church to a body?

How does loneliness affect your sense of peace?

If Christians saw ourselves as part of a body rather than as independent individuals, how might it deepen our sense of peace and wholeness?

What helps you feel connected to other Christians?

How might our view of baptism affect our sense of community connection? What is missing if we say baptism is “my decision to make Jesus my personal Lord and savior”?

4. In verses 14 & 16, what is the situation with the foot and the ear?
Inferiority – not as good as others.

When have you felt this way?

In verse 21, what is the problem with the eye and the head?
Thinks too much of itself.

How does it affect our peace when we compare ourselves to others?
No matter how we score it, we lose anytime we compare to anyone but Jesus. The ear and the eye were wrong in opposite ways, but they were both wrong.

5. According to verse 18, what role does God play in bringing the body together?

What are some situations where you sense that God brought you to this place for a reason?

How does it affect your sense of peace to connect your life to the plan of God?

Why do you believe God brought you to our congregation?

Cultivating peace *Practical suggestions and reflections to help participants connect the discussion to their lives. Challenge each person to try at least one of these this week.*

Give out paper and ask members to list 10 groups you see on a regular basis. How are you different in the different networks? In which groups is your faith challenged? Where do you feel the deepest sense of peace?

What is a relationship that is strained because of past mistakes? What steps can you take to encourage reconciliation?

Pray for the unity of the church – in our community and worldwide.

Sing “It is well” and ask how that song connects with this discussion.

Other resources

The point – The peace of God brings wholeness to our fragmented lives and relationships. This peace is a gift of the Spirit that grows as we walk with God and with other believers

Prayer. *Creative suggestions for group prayer.*

Offer a prayer of filling and emptying...

Make a list of things that increase our peace and a list of things that rob us of peace.

Ask everyone to hold out both hands face down.

Pray about things that we release to God (peace-robbers).

Ask everyone to hold out both hands face up.

Pray about things that we ask God to give (peace-bringers).

You can alternate emptying and filling.

If your group is comfortable, you might invite people say items to release and items to receive.

Kid-friendly activity

An activity designed to help kids and adults connect the scripture to their lives.

Works best when adults participate in the activity with the kids.

Offer a prayer of praise for the good things God is doing.

Give each person paper and crayons. Ask them to draw a picture of peace. If this is too challenging for the adults, pair them with a child who can help them imagine how to draw peace.

Share your drawings with the group.

Read Philippians 4:7 aloud.

What does this verse say about the peace of God?

It is beyond our understanding.

It can guard our hearts and minds.

Galatians 5 says the fruit of the Spirit is peace. How can we allow the Spirit to grow peace in our lives?



February 21, 2010

LIFE Group Guide

I Cor. 12 – Peace

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme for this meeting: **developing peace.**

To tie in with our 2010 theme, “A Home for Every Heart,” we are studying characteristics that are present in godly homes and hearts. Our starting point for this series is the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-25).

This guide is part of a SG series that discusses Philip Kenneson’s book on the fruit of the Spirit, *Life on the Vine* (IVP, 1999). The entire series is posted on the LG webpage.

Peace is not merely the absence of fighting. You could experience turmoil when circumstances are pleasant, or peace during a trial. Peace is a gift of the Spirit that comes from aligning your life with God’s will. You will never know abundant peace until you rest in God’s love.

FYI, Youthreach LIFE group will not meet since 150 from that group will be returning from Winterfest that afternoon.

Leadership tip: Serving together is a great way to enrich your group. Watch the church bulletin for events to join as a group (Habitat build?), support people on your prayer list, or find projects in the community.

I. Relate *Use a few of these to introduce the theme and “break the ice.” No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage individuals through these questions.*

- ❖ Gimme five...times you feel at peace.
- ❖ How many strangers cross your path in a typical day? How many of the people that you see on a daily basis would you count as “close”?
- ❖ What was your worst vacation?