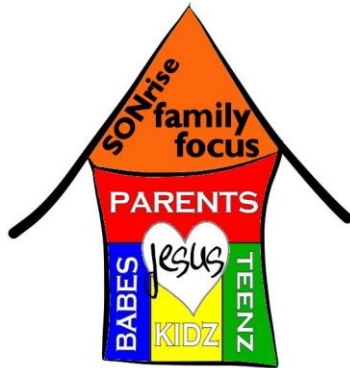


Family Focus

PEACE

April ~ 2015

Peace, Peace!



Dear SONrise Church Family,

We live in a world that knows almost nothing about peace. Millions of people will go throughout this month in fear. Fear of rebels, fear of insurgents, fear of governments, fear of enemies, fear of neighbors. Even in America, one of the safest places on earth to live, many live in constant fear. But, for the believer in Jesus Christ fear should not characterize our lives, but rather peace. This month we will be studying **PEACE**, which is the third fruit of the Spirit. Jesus is the **SOURCE** of this peace, and we can be at peace **WITH** God and have the peace **OF** God. Let's find out about this fruit together!

Tom and Janet Walker

Welcome to Family Focus. The purpose of Family Focus is to help train and equip parents to teach their children the Word of God. The Bible teaches through Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Psalm 78:4 and Proverbs 22:6 that parents are to be the primary spiritual leaders and teachers of their children. Therefore, instead of the "traditional" Sunday School model, we, at SONrise Church, have made the intentional shift in the way we minister to children, by equipping parents to be the primary spiritual leaders of their families. Family Focus is a Bible teaching model that helps families learn spiritual truths together. Our desire at SONrise is to see each family unit spend one hour each week in the Bible together. To help you with this adventure, we have provided materials for you. The materials will be available on the website or you can pick up a new packet each month at SONrise.

When you go through the Family Focus material, you are going to REAP - read, explore, apply and pray.

Read - In this section, you will read a short explanation about the passage of scripture we are reading and read the passage.

Explore - In this section you will be digging into the passage and exploring the meaning of the passage. This section includes questions and ideas for discussion.

Apply - This is where you will find activities to help your kids to make the passage real. Every week there is a different activity, there are games, snacks, movies and art activities.

Pray - It can be hard to take the time to pray as a family, but it is worth it and important to take ample time to pray together and for each other.

Our prayer for you is that as you REAP together you will reap a great harvest in your family.

We love you SONrise Church!

The SOURCE of Peace

Week 1

Read

Have you ever been disappointed? I mean, REALLY disappointed? Like having to cancel a trip because someone in your family got sick, having your best friend move away, or having your pet die?

Well, the disciples were very disappointed. In fact, they were so disappointed that they were wondering if anything Jesus had told them was even true. You see, they thought that Jesus was going to declare that he was the Messiah (Savior), and then he would defeat the Romans and begin his reign of peace right away! But that is not what happened. In fact, not even close. Instead, Judas betrayed Jesus and then the religious leaders pressured Pilate, the Roman Governor, to sentence Jesus to death. He was beaten, mocked and crucified on a Cross. They were heartbroken. Not only because Jesus was dead, but because in fear they had all forsaken him and run away.

They had followed him for three years. They had left their relatives and jobs to follow him, spend time with him, and learned from him. But now that he had been laid in the tomb, their hope was gone. Their peace was gone. What were they to do? Where were they to go?

Let's look together at how John the Apostle tells what happened next in his letter, called the Gospel of John. Turn to John 20:19-29. Have one person read it out loud or take turns reading it as a family, at least, those who can read. As you listen or read, watch for the word, "peace," since that is what we will be studying all month.

Explore

(suggested answers are in italics)

1. What were the disciples doing the Sunday evening after Jesus had been crucified? Why? (vs. 19)
They were hiding, with the doors locked because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders who had crucified Jesus.
2. Suddenly, Jesus appears in the room, even though the doors were still locked. Wow, how would you react if that happened tonight at your house?
You would probably be scared, just like they were!
3. What did Jesus say to them? (vs. 20) The greeting Jesus used was a common one among the Jewish people. The word is Shalom, it means "peace,."
"Peace be with you."
4. Then what did Jesus show them and why do you think he did that? (vs. 20)
So they would know it was REALLY Jesus. They had seen him nailed to the Cross, and pieced by the sword.
5. How did they respond, and what did he say a second time? (vs. 20,21)
They were overwhelmed with joy, and again he said to them, "Peace." Then Jesus reminded them that God the Father had sent him to earth and he was now sending them to tell the world He was risen! Eight days later he appears to them again. Thomas, who had not been there the first time was with them this second time.
6. Again Jesus greeted them the same way, "peace be with you." What did he say to Thomas? (vs. 27-29)
He told Thomas to examine his wounds to see if they were real. Then Thomas believed!
7. Why did Jesus keep saying "peace be with you" to them?
Because he knew they had been afraid, unbelieving, and worried. He had told them many times that he would be crucified, but this was the first time they had seen him after His resurrection.

Because Jesus rose from the dead he is able to say peace to us too. He is the source of peace. Even though the disciples had doubted him, he said "peace be with you," because He was risen from the dead, never to die again!

Apply

Drama/Game* Time-

When we try to visualize John 20:24-29 we will get a real picture in our minds of why Thomas is often called, "Doubting Thomas". Act it out once as a family as you re-read these verses. Then play the following game:

Have everyone sit in a circle facing outward and close their eyes. Choose a **Jesus** by tapping one person on the head. Then have everyone face inward, with their hands, palms up on their knees.

Choose a Thomas (who stands up in the middle) **all others will be the disciples.**

Have **disciples** say (2 times) with excitement, *"We have seen the Lord!"* (but Jesus doesn't say it out loud, he just mouths the words)

Thomas tries to guess who Jesus is by listening very close for who didn't say anything out loud. Thomas touches (who he thinks) is Jesus on their hands.

If Thomas guesses wrong, the disciple says, *"Peace be with you."* If Thomas guesses right, Jesus says, *"Don't be faithless any longer. Believe!"*

Play again, having everyone turn around facing outward with eyes closed and Thomas chooses a new Jesus. The person who was Jesus last game goes to the middle to be Thomas.

*If this game seems to complicated for little ones simply play, "Tag, your it!" by saying "Peace, be with you!"

Key verses to memorize:

John 20:21 & 29(NLT)

Again he said, "Peace be with you.

As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you."

Then Jesus told him,

"You believe because you have seen me.

Pray

Get out your family prayer journal and write down a doubt or fear that each one may struggle with. Pray and ask Jesus how He wants each person to know His peace over those specific doubts or fears. Record any verses, words from songs, or word pictures that come to your minds. Pray that next time you have that doubt, or face that fear, you will remember what Jesus said. Encourage each other this week by saying, **"Peace be with you,"** whenever you have the opportunity.

Peace WITH God

Week 2

Read

Last week we looked at the story of Jesus appearing to the disciples after he rose from the dead. They were shocked at first, but then their shock turned to joy. Jesus said to them three times “peace be with you.” He was saying “be at peace in your hearts because I conquered sin and death!”

The next two weeks we are going to have a little different study. It will not be based around a Bible story, but an amazing Bible truth. This week we will see what it means to have “Peace WITH God.” Next week we will study the “Peace OF God.”

It is important for us to understand that sin is a problem for all of us. It doesn't make any difference if we are 8 or 80, we all struggle with sin. Nobody understands that better than God does. And because God made man “in his image,” which means that we are like God, with the ability to think, feel, and decide, God had a plan to bring man back into fellowship with Him.

Help your children look up the following verses in Romans and underline them.

Explore

(suggested answers are in italics)

1. Turn in your Bibles to Romans 3:23. What does it say is true of everyone?
We ALL have sinned. We “fall short” of God’s standard of holiness. Holiness = sinlessness
2. The Apostle Paul also tells us what we deserve because of our sin in Romans 6:23a. Read the verse together. What does the first part say we deserve because of our sin?
Death. When someone has a job they get paid “wages.” The wages of our sin is death, we have earned it.
3. This is where God steps in. He loves all people and hates that sin separates us from Him. So, God had a plan to solve this problem.
4. Read Romans 5:8. What did God do when all of us were separated from Him by our sin?
He showed He loved us by sending Jesus to die, paying the wages or penalty for our sin.
5. Read Romans 5:1. There is a big, important word that describes what Jesus did by dying on the Cross for our sin. It is the word, JUSTIFIED. It means to be “made right.” Because of our sin we were God’s enemies, but through Jesus’ death he did everything necessary for us to be made right, or justified with God.
6. Read Romans 5:1 again. So, if Jesus did that for us, what do we need to do? Notice the two words “by faith?” That is our part. To believe or trust that when Jesus died on the Cross, He did that for you. You must believe this “by faith” to be “made right” with God.
7. Read Romans 5:1 ONE more time! What does it say is the result of what Jesus did for us AND our faith in him?

Wow! We have peace WITH God. We are no longer his enemies because of our sin, but we become his children when we put our faith in Him. Jesus did everything necessary for us to be made right with God.

We are at peace with Him and He with us.

One last question. Have you trusted what Jesus did so you can have Peace WITH God?

Dad and Mom, have you? This is a great time to help your children trust Christ if they have not.

Apply

Snack Time: Pop some Popcorn

Lay a flat sheet on your living room floor and put a small, clear glass cup in the center of the sheet. Everyone should set off the edges of the sheet, far enough, so that as they attempt to throw a piece of popcorn into the target they miss. While you eat the popcorn talk about the fact that because of our sin (the popcorn) we all miss the target of God's holiness, His requirement for heaven.

Now, write the name "Jesus" on a piece of paper. Roll and tape the paper into a funnel shape. Set the funnel in the top of the glass. Once again, take turns throwing pieces of popcorn toward the target. Did anyone hit the target this time? Get even closer and allow your children to drop their popcorn into the funnel. This helps us understand that Jesus took all our sin on the Cross with him so that we could be forgiven. We have peace with God when we trust what Jesus did for us.

Key verses to memorize:

John 20:21 & 29(NLT)

Again he said, "Peace be with you.

As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you."

Then Jesus told him,

"You believe because you have seen me.

Pray

During your prayer time take turns thanking God for the peace that He gave you when you trusted Jesus as Savior. If anyone in your family has not yet trusted Christ as Savior this would be the time to ask, "Is there anything keeping you from trusting Christ right now? If they are ready lead them in a prayer similar to this:

"Lord Jesus, I know I have sinned. I believe that you died on the Cross and rose again for me. I trust you now to forgive my sin and be my Savior. Thank you. Amen."

The Peace Of God

Week 3

Read

Have you ever heard of “Worry Warthog?” He is a fun, imaginary character in a, ‘Patch the Pirate’ children’s musical. He would worry about everything! And every time he chose to worry, a new “worry-wart” would pop up somewhere on his body. He was a worried, anxious, whining mess!

You know, worry can become a problem for any of us. We can worry about our families, our health, our friends, our money, almost anything and everything. Did you know that worry ‘causes’ a lot of problems? It does! Some people can’t sleep because of worry. Others get physically sick from worrying. They get headaches, their stomachs get upset, and they can even have ‘panic attacks.’

Almost everything we think or do has consequences. Some are bad, but some are good. This week in our study on **peace** we are going to learn about God’s remedy for worry.

Get your Bibles and turn as a family to the book of Philippians. The Apostle Paul wrote this short book about Joy, and in it he talks about worry and peace. Read together two short, but very important verses, Philippians 4:6,7.

Explore

(suggested answers are in italics)

1. What is the first statement in verse 6? Did you know this is a command? It is, so it is something God wants us to obey. Another way of saying this is “Stop worrying!”

Don’t worry about anything

2. What does the word “instead” mean? (vs. 6) Think of other words that might mean the same thing. The idea that Paul is communicating here is that we have a choice to make. We get to decide whether we will be worriers or not!

“in place of,” “rather than”.

3. Next, Paul gives us a second command. What is it? Think of some things you worry about and ask the question, “could I pray about them instead?” What do you think?

“pray about everything.”

4. The last part of verse 6 tells us how to pray about everything. There are two things that this praying involves. What are they?

1. Telling God what we need. 2. Thanking Him for all He has done. (now that doesn’t sound so hard, does it?)

5. What happens when we are prayerful and thankful rather than worried? (vs. 7)

God’s peace will guard (protect) our hearts and minds.

6. The picture that Paul has in his mind here is of a Roman fortress, with high walls and strong gates, to keep the enemy out. He says this is the way God protects us when we choose to be prayerful and thankful, rather than worried. Worry is our enemy!

7. Can this kind of peace be experienced? How? (vs. 7)

Yes, it can be experienced by praying and thanking. Try it!.

Apply

Family Action plan - (you can enjoy a favorite treat as you do this)

1. Give each person 4 sticky notes (or small pieces of paper and tape.)
2. Write a big **W** for Worry on each note (let younger children draw a sad or worried face).
3. Think and talk about where each of you can put the sticky notes up in your rooms to remind you to stop worrying and start praying (telling God what you need and thanking God).

Examples: 1) by the head of your bed for when you lie down or get up

2) by your dresser or mirror– where you get dressed and think about how you look

3) by where you put your shoes on– to remind you as you go to school or to play

4) by the bathroom– especially for young children who are still potty training

(Children can even learn to thank God for bathroom responsibilities)

5) as a family place other sticky notes on the fridge, desk where you pay bills, the computer, and even the dash of your car.

6. Pray together as a family and then go put the sticky notes up in your house.
7. As you each see these reminders throughout the week remember to “Stop **W**orrying and Start Praying” . As you do this draw a circle around the **W** and a slash line (/) through the **W**. This is the universal symbol for NOT or stop .

Key Verses this month to memorize as a family:

John 20:21 & 29(NLT)

Again he said, “Peace be with you.

As the Father has sent me, so I am sending you.”

Then Jesus told him,

“You believe because you have seen me.”

Pray

Worship and songs of thanksgiving can turn situations where we want to worry into opportunities to experience God’s Peace. Do you remember last month learning about how Paul and Silas chose to pray and sing in prison. They experienced both God’s Joy and Peace. Pray and journal specifically about the worrisome situations you have talked about as a family. Sing a worship song together as a family. Or as a family listen on youtube.com to Kari Jobe sing the Hymn “Be Still My Soul.”