

Teen Devotion

Year A – Advent 1

Come, Lord Jesus



One truth shared: Our King Jesus brings a divine peace.

“This is what Isaiah son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem: In the last days the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as the highest of the mountains; it will be exalted above the hills, and all nations will stream to it. Many peoples will come and say, “Come, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the temple of the God of Jacob. He will teach us his ways, so that we may walk in his paths.” The law will go out from Zion, the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore. Come, descendants of Jacob, let us walk in the light of the Lord.”

Isaiah 2:1-5

Picture of Peace

From the on-going war in the Ukraine to the struggles in our own living rooms, this world is full of conflict. Even during the holiday season, when families get together and times are supposed to be festive and joyful, we still experience conflict—arguments, hurt feelings, broken relationships, worry. And conflict robs us of a peace that we all yearn for.

The prophet Isaiah experienced conflict in his life too. His home nation of Israel was being threatened by foreign powers. Unfaithful kings were leading God’s people astray. Most people were unwilling to listen to Isaiah’s call to repentance and refused to turn back to the God who saved them. Isaiah too yearned for peace.

God came to Isaiah and gave him a picture of what was to come. He saw the “mountain of the Lord’s temple.” He saw God settling disputes between people so they would stop fighting. He saw a picture of peace for him, for his people, and for us too.

God’s picture centers around a person—a Messiah—Jesus. Jesus was born into our world of conflict. He experienced conflict his entire life—conflict between his own Jewish people and the oppressive Romans, conflict among the people he disciples, and even conflict from his own family.

Thankfully Jesus came not just to live in conflict, but to put an end to conflict. He knew the source of all conflict—sin—sin that started thousands of years before his birth when our first parents fell to the temptations of the devil. Sadly, you and I inherited that sin, and it infects the core of our being. It finds its way into every aspect of our lives, creating conflict at every turn. Every day.

Are you tired of living in conflict? Then listen to this: Jesus came on a mission to end conflict—to bring forgiveness for your sins and my sins and for all sins. Through his perfect life, innocent death on a cross, and resurrection from the grave, he completed his mission and brought peace between us and God, and between us and others.

At Christmas we celebrate the first coming of Jesus. We’ll sing “Silent Night” with the line, “sleep in heavenly peace” because Jesus is the Prince of Peace who comes into our world of conflict. We see the same picture Isaiah saw—a Messiah who will someday come again to bring a final and eternal peace—to put an end to any and every conflict once and for all.

Prayer: Prince of Peace, thank you for coming into our world of conflict and bringing everlasting peace. This Christmas season may your peace reign in our hearts and flow over into the lives of others. Amen.

Foundation Teen Facilitators Guide

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Starting the Discussion: *This first section is intended to be light and easy, to engage and get the conversation going. Have a little fun with these questions.*

What are you looking forward to this Christmas season? Do you have a gift you're hoping to get?

Connecting: *This section serves as a bridge between the opening conversation and the body of the study/discussion. It should get the group thinking about the topic/text even before they've looked at it.*

- Take a few moments to picture in your mind what peace looks like for you. Share your picture with others as you feel comfortable.
- What types of things tend to disturb your peace? In other words, what are some things you tend to worry about? Are there specific things during the holiday/Christmas season that tend to disturb your peace?

Digging In: *Here we want to dig into some texts or the text for the day and see what Scripture says. The questions are meant to be open ended to give a beginning of a scriptural conversation. These are a guide for a spiritual and scriptural conversation.*

- Isaiah tells us that people will stream to the Christian church, the "mountain of the Lord". What does Christianity have to offer that would make people stream to it?
- Describe the unique peace that Jesus gives. How is it different from the peace the world tries to offer?
- In the verses from Philippians what does Paul say is the "medicine" for an anxious heart? How is prayer the answer for a worrisome heart?
- God promises to give you his peace when you bring your requests to him in prayer. What if you still feel anxious even after you pray?

Conclusion: *Here we want to wrap up the discussion, perhaps circling back to the "connecting question" above.*

- Do you feel like you experience God's divine peace? Why or why not?
- How could you better experience God's divine peace?