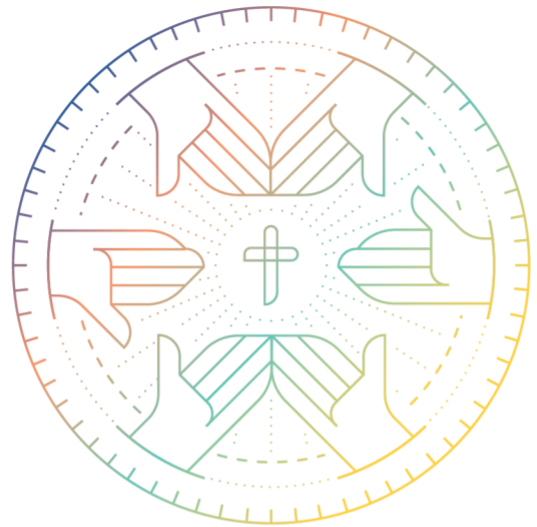


Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

Of the nine things David mentioned that Americans are searching for, which one on the list stands out to you and why?

- Inner peace 37%
- Hope 35%
- Healing and forgiveness 30%
- Truth 29%
- Purpose 29%
- Guidance 28%
- Growth 26%
- Meaning 25%
- Salvation 25%

○ (Source: Barna, 2023)

OR

Have you ever gone through a period in your life of deep inner searching? What were the circumstances and what was the outcome of that season?

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

Read John 14:25-28.

What most stood out to you from this week's sermon?

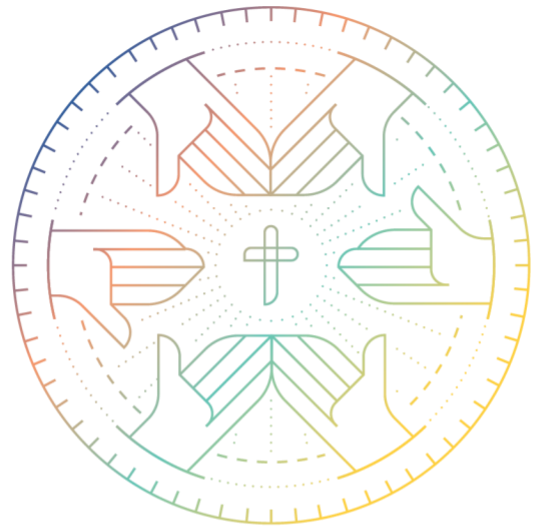
After listening to David's message, what is the most appealing benefit of having the "Shalom" (peace) of God in your life? Did you use the phrase, "God, I trust you" that David suggested?

INTO THE WORD (20 MINUTES)

Read Romans 12:18; 2 Corinthians 13:11; Hebrews 12:14. How do you understand the connectedness between having the peace of God in your heart and living in peace with those around you? Why is that connection so important?

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Host Guidance: These passages illustrate the importance of maintaining peaceful relationships with those around us. The inner condition of our heart, as peaceful, cannot coexist with horizontal relationships that are filled with strife or anxiety or conflict. We are called to be people of peace. We are called to act as peacemakers in the world. As with most spiritual virtues, the authenticity of our inner health will be reflected by the health of our outward behaviors toward others.

Read Matthew 6:25-34. Discuss this wonderful passage from the Sermon on the Mount. What stands out to you? How does it encourage you? How does it challenge you?

Read Eccl. 4:4; Psalm 37:1; 1 Cor. 3:3; Prov. 14:30. How do these verses speak to the effect of envy, comparison, and fretting? What is it in our hearts or our culture that make envy, jealousy, comparison and fretting so easy?

Host Guidance: These verses emphasize the negative consequences of comparison and envy, such as causing strife, disorder, and a focus on worldly values rather than spiritual growth. The Bible encourages believers to cultivate contentment, gratitude, and a heart that seeks after godly virtues rather than being consumed by jealousy and rivalry. We live in a world driven by consumption, which appeals to our selfish, me-oriented nature. So, both the culture and our own sin nature are conspiring against us. We need God's help!

APPLICATION (15 MINUTES)

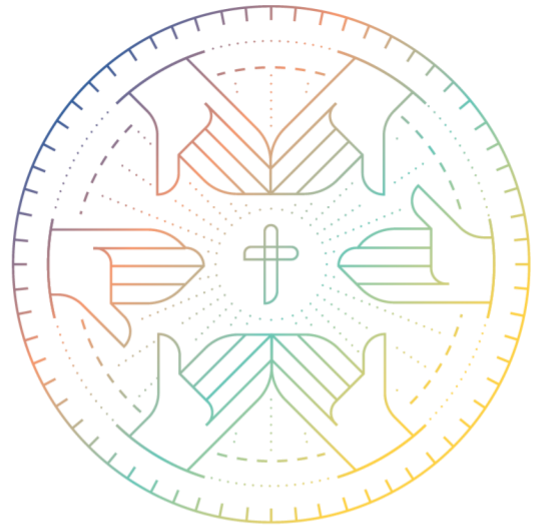
Below are several separate application questions for your group to consider and discuss. Choose as many questions as you have time to discuss, but don't feel pressure to cover them all.

As you reflect on the barriers to peace David listed, which one presents the greatest challenge in your life today?

1. Attachment to outcomes
2. Unresolved conflicts
3. Excessive worry
4. Comparison and envy
5. Human sinfulness

Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



Is there something in your life today that you would like to give to God as an act of trusting Him? Perhaps in a few moments of silence in your group, in your heart, express to God this prayer: "**Heavenly Father, I truly want to trust you with _____ . God, I trust you. I pray that in exchange you would give me your peace.**"

Close your time together reading aloud **Psalm 23.**

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

2 He makes me lie down in green pastures.

He leads me beside still waters.

3 He restores my soul.

He leads me in paths of righteousness

for his name's sake.

4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I will fear no evil,

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff,

they comfort me.

5 You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me

all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord

forever.

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Our Gracious Heavenly Father, thank you for sending your Son, Jesus, to bring us peace through forgiveness and reconciliation. Each day this week, help us to not only let the peace of God rule in our hearts, but to be people of peace toward everyone around us. Quiet our hearts when worry, fear or envy seek to disrupt us and steal our peace. Help us to remember the words, "God, I trust you." Thank you for being our shepherd and restoring our soul. We worship you. Amen.