



## Sermon Discussion Guide

Dec. 13 & 14, 2025

"How Can We Experience God's Peace?"

[Isaiah 9:6-7](#)

This Advent, we will dive into questions about this season that impact our everyday lives. Questions about the Christmas blues, prophecy, peace, and joy. Join Hope this Advent as we prepare our hearts and minds to celebrate the greatest gift we have ever received—Jesus.

### PRAY & CONNECT

Open in prayer and invite the Holy Spirit into your conversation. Ask God for wisdom and discernment and trust him to guide you. Take time to recap the message or view it on [hopeonline.tv](https://hopeonline.tv). Did you have any ah-ha moments where you felt convicted, compelled, or inspired during the sermon? What's been on your mind this week? Have you been able to apply the message to your everyday life?

### GROW

#### Read [Isaiah 9:1-7](#) – "Hope in the Messiah"

- Isaiah describes a people "walking in darkness" who suddenly see a great light. In the sermon, darkness was described as more than chaos but a lack of peace and order. Where do you most recognize that kind of darkness or disorder in your own life right now? What emotions or experiences make peace feel distant for you? What does it mean to hear that God sees people walking in darkness and acts on their behalf?
- The sermon emphasized that peace is not just the absence of conflict but the presence of God's restoring wholeness. How does this passage challenge the way you usually define peace? Where have you been tempted to settle for quiet or control instead of true restoration? What part of your life feels "fragmented" and in need of the kind of peace Isaiah is describing?
- Isaiah says peace comes because a child is born and a son is given, not because people finally get their act together. Why do you think it matters that peace enters through a person rather than a system? How does this connect to the sermon's claim that peace is found in Jesus' presence, not our performance? Where are you tempted to believe peace depends on you fixing things first?
- Jesus is named the "Prince of Peace," whose kingdom brings justice, wholeness, and restoration without end. In the sermon, peace was described as something we receive and then reflect to the world. Where might God be calling you to carry peace into a situation marked by tension, fear, or division? What would it look like to follow Jesus more closely as your source of peace this week? How could your response to chaos point others toward the presence of Christ rather than away from it?

#### Read [Philippians 4:6-7](#) – "Words of Encouragement"

- Paul says peace comes not by eliminating worry but by bringing everything to God in prayer. What kinds of worries tend to dominate your thoughts during this season? How do those worries affect your sense of peace emotionally or spiritually? What does it say about God that Paul invites us to bring everything to him rather than filtering what feels acceptable?
- The sermon emphasized prayer as honest communication, not a formula or performance. How does this passage challenge the idea that prayer has to sound polished or spiritual to "work"? Where do you find it hardest to be honest with God about your fears or needs? What might change if prayer became less about fixing things and more about staying connected to God's presence?
- Paul promises that God's peace will "guard" our hearts and minds, even when circumstances don't immediately change. How does that connect to the sermon's claim that peace is not the absence of chaos but the presence of Christ? Can you think of a time when peace showed up before your situation improved? What does it look like to trust God's peace to protect you when answers feel slow or unclear?
- The passage says this peace comes "through Christ Jesus," not through willpower or better planning. How does that challenge the way you usually try to manage stress or anxiety? Where might you be relying more on control than on Christ to find peace? What would it look like this week to intentionally turn a repeated worry into a repeated prayer?

#### Read [Matthew 5:14-16](#) – "Teaching about Salt and Light"

- Jesus calls his followers "the light of the world," not after the darkness is gone but while it still exists. In the sermon, peace was described as God entering chaos rather than waiting for things to calm down. Where do you currently feel surrounded by darkness, disorder, or anxiety in your life or in the world around you? How does this passage reframe your role in those places? What feelings come up when you realize Jesus doesn't say you should become light, but you are light?
- Jesus says a city on a hill cannot be hidden, which suggests visibility whether we intend it or not. How does this connect to the sermon's idea that peace is something we carry, not something we manufacture? In what ways do your reactions to stress, conflict, or fear reveal what you believe about peace? How might your everyday responses speak louder than your words about where your hope actually comes from?
- The sermon emphasized that peace is not just personal calm but restored relationships and active compassion. How do Jesus' words about good deeds giving glory to God expand the definition of peace beyond inner feelings? Where might God be

inviting you to let peace become visible through generosity, forgiveness, or presence rather than silence or withdrawal? What fears or hesitations make it tempting to keep your light hidden?

- Jesus warns against hiding the light, not because the light is weak, but because the world needs it. How does this challenge the idea that faith and peace should remain private? Where might you be tempted to dim your light to avoid discomfort, conflict, or vulnerability? What would it look like this week to trust that God can use even small acts of faithfulness to bring peace into dark places?

**Read [Numbers 6:24-26](#) – “The Priestly Blessing”**

- This blessing begins with God blessing and protecting his people, before anything is asked of them. How does that connect to the sermon’s emphasis that peace is a gift before it is a practice? Where in your life do you feel unprotected, vulnerable, or worn down right now? How does hearing God’s blessing spoken over you change the way you view your current circumstances?
- The blessing speaks of God’s face shining and God being gracious, which suggests presence rather than distance. In the sermon, peace was described as God entering the disorder instead of removing it instantly. Where do you struggle to believe that God is actually present with you in the middle of chaos? How might this blessing challenge the idea that peace only comes when circumstances improve?
- “May the Lord look upon you with favor” implies being fully seen and known by God. How does this connect to the sermon’s teaching that shalom means wholeness and restoration, not just quiet? Where do you feel fragmented or incomplete in your life right now? What would it mean to trust that God’s favor meets you exactly there rather than after you get things figured out?
- The blessing ends with peace, not as an emotion but as an outcome of God’s action. How does this deepen your understanding of peace compared to simply feeling calm or less stressed? In what ways does this passage invite you to receive peace rather than strive for it? How might living as someone who has already been blessed shape how you treat others this week?

## APPLY

Pick one of the applications below to put into practice this week.

- **Receive the blessing.** Each day this week, slowly read Numbers 6:24-26 out loud, inserting your own name into the blessing. Pay attention to where you resist receiving peace as a gift, and simply let the words be spoken over you without trying to fix anything.
- **Practice presence.** Set aside 10 uninterrupted minutes one day this week to bring your worries to God in prayer, naming them honestly and then thanking God for specific ways he has already been faithful. Resist the urge to rush the moment, and notice how peace grows not by solving problems but by resting in God’s presence.
- **Become a peacemaker.** Identify one concrete way you can bring wholeness into someone else’s life this week, whether through generosity, reconciliation, encouragement, or service. Take intentional action, trusting that God’s peace is meant to move through you into places of real need and darkness.