



Intro

Whether a small-group or one-on-one setting, this exercise will give you gobs of mileage in applying the peace of Jesus' resurrection to daily life.

Materials

Each student will need a Bible and a copy of the student page. If you're leading the group digitally, students will need an e-Bible version and a notes document.

Open

After your students have gathered, begin your session by discussing these questions:

Describe a time when you let someone down. How did it go when you saw the person after the incident?

If you were Jesus, what would you have wanted to say to your disciples when you saw them after your resurrection?

Possible answers:

-I told you so!

-I thought you guys would be stronger than that?

If you were one of Jesus' disciples, what would have been your honest reaction when you saw that Jesus was resurrected?

-I wish I had believed.

-I wish I hadn't denied knowing Him.

-I should have been more _____.

Share in your own words:

Yes, the trial and crucifixion of Jesus was not the finest hour for His disciples. There was much trepidation, doubt, fear and even outright denial. So when Jesus and the disciples met for the first time after the resurrection, there was reason for apprehension.

Ask for a volunteer to read Jesus' first post-resurrection words to His disciples in John 20:19-28. This passage records two instances of Jesus meeting disciples for the first time, first the group, and then Thomas.

After reading the passage, discuss these questions:

What was Jesus' first resurrected word to each disciple?

-peace

Why do you think Jesus' chose this word?

Digging In

We hear a good deal about peace with regard to Jesus, but Jesus' use of this word as the first word with His disciples shows that peace might be a bigger deal than we think. In fact, in Colossians 1 we see that peace is one of the biggest byproducts of Jesus' death and resurrection..



Choose one of these exercises to experience Colossians 1:19-23:

1. Print a student page for each student. Give students time to explore the passage in solitude (looking for answers to the questions you'll see below) and then process the questions as a group.
2. Print a student page for each student. Project the Scripture onto a sheet of poster board or a whiteboard and work as a group to find the answers to the questions noted below ("Things to look for"). Ask for volunteers to mark the information as your group finds it.

Colossians 1:19–23 (NIV)

¹⁹ For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, ²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross. ²¹ Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. ²² But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation— ²³ if you continue in your faith, established and firm, and do not move from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

Things to look for:

What did Jesus do? (Draw a cross over anything that answers this question.)

How did He do it? (Underline anything that answers this question.)

How are we described BEFORE Jesus is in our lives? (Draw a frowney face over this information.)

How are we described AFTER Jesus is in our lives? (Draw a smiley face over this information.)

What do you want to do in response?

Taking It Inward

Share in your own words:

Many things in life can make us nervous: pressure to perform or accomplish, money, workload, family situations, friendship situations, etc. Jesus is saying to us: I can give you life that's above all that.

Whether we know it or not, our biggest stressor is this: when we are born, we are born separated from God. Whether we feel it or not, that gap puts more stress on our souls than family hardships, money problems, school pressure or relationship pain. When we accept Christ's work on the cross we allow for that gap to be closed. This creates a peace in our souls that can pacify all those other stressor situations.

Use these questions to linger with the passage a little longer:

Look at how we're described BEFORE Christ. Think about the phrase "enemies in your mind." How does this play out in your life? What battles between good and bad do you fight in your mind?

Look at how we're described AFTER Christ, particularly "holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation." Do you think of yourself this way? How can you be more at peace if you embrace these descriptions?

Putting Into Practice

Close your time by praying for peace. Ask students to share about their personal gap between them and God. Pray that the peace God can bring to their souls will spill over to the other stressor situations in their lives.



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