

PEACE

PROVING YOU CARE MORE ABOUT EACH OTHER
THAN WINNING AN ARGUMENT

LEADER and PARENT GUIDE

In the beginning, God made a magnificent paradise that existed in perfect peace. Adam and Eve changed everything when they decided that their way was better than God's way. What was once a peaceful paradise became a broken world where selfishness, pain, death, and sin separated people from their Creator. Because of His great love for us, God made peace with us by sending His Son, Jesus, to save us. Making peace means proving that we care more about each other than about winning an argument. Throughout the Bible, we can clearly understand peace through the stories of Isaac and Abigail, through Paul's letters, and of course, through Jesus.

Abraham's son, Isaac, gave us a great example of peace when he returned to reclaim the wells that once belonged to his father. For years no one had cared about the wells, but when Isaac reopened them, the Philistines claimed ownership. Instead of fighting, Isaac decided to give away the wells in order to make peace. Because Isaac walked away from the fight, the Philistines decided that Isaac was trustworthy, and they chose to live at peace with him. Just like Isaac, we all face situations where we can choose to fight or walk away. Sometimes keeping the peace means walking away, even if you're right. Of course, there are times when you should stand up for what is right, especially if you encounter bullying or repeated acts of unkindness. If that happens, tell an adult you trust. In all other situations, you can show you care about others by walking away and choosing peace when you want to argue and fight.

In the book of Samuel, King David met a woman named Abigail who truly understood the importance of making peace. King David was furious with Abigail's husband, Nabal, who mistreated David's soldiers. David planned to take revenge and take the lives of all of the men in Nabal's household, until Abigail intercepted him with gifts to humbly apologize and make peace. Her peacemaking skills stopped a potentially horrible event. Even though Abigail was not responsible for her husband's offense, she still chose to make peace. Through Abigail's example, we can see how God can use us to make peace between others. Abigail understood that you can show you care about others by being part of the solution, even if you didn't cause the problem. Acting as a peacemaker between others will take time and energy, but God can give you the strength to help others make peace.

Paul taught the Colossians about the peace of God and explained that God made us to be one body—one team. When God made peace with us through Jesus, God showed us that peace with others is possible. This doesn't mean that living in peace will be easy, but it does mean that making peace is worth the effort. You might face situations where you're tempted to tear someone down, push for your own way, or pick a fight. Instead, remember that God made peace with you, even though you were sinful, so you can choose to give that same love and grace to others and live in peace with them.

Ultimately, God gave us both external and internal peace with Him by sending Jesus. On the third day after Jesus died, Mary Magdalene was shocked to find His tomb empty, and she rushed to tell the disciples. Two of the disciples, Peter and John, followed Mary to the tomb and confirmed that Jesus' body was gone. Full of confusion, the disciples returned home, while Mary stayed at the tomb. Mary soon encountered a man whom she assumed was the gardener, and she asked him if he had carried Jesus' body away. But when the man said her name, Mary's eyes were opened, and she saw that it was Jesus! He was ALIVE! Mary ran back to the disciples to tell them about the incredibly good news. When God looked across humanity and saw the brokenness of our relationship with Him, He went to great lengths to repair it by sending His Son, Jesus. God sent Jesus to bring peace on earth by giving His life on a cross to pay for the sins of the world. Ultimately, we celebrate Easter because Jesus defeated sin and death by rising from the dead. Now Jesus is alive, and we can have a relationship with God that lasts forever. Through our relationship with Jesus, we can experience the kind of peace that allows us to walk away from a fight, repair relationships with those around us, and be a part of the solution. When we have God's everlasting peace within us, we can endure all hardships, persevere through every conflict, and share the good news of Jesus as we shine His light, love, and peace to the people around us.



So let us do all we can to live in peace. And let us work hard to
build up one another. - Romans 14:19

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Read 1 Samuel 25:9-15, 23-40:

1. What did Abigail do to make peace on behalf of her husband? Abigail met David and his men with gifts, and she apologized for her husband's offenses.
2. What would have happened if Abigail hadn't intervened, and what happened instead? If Abigail hadn't intervened, David would have avenged himself and would have ensured that all of the males of Nabal's household were killed. Instead, God took vengeance upon Nabal by taking Nabal's life, and David ended up marrying Abigail.

Read John 20:1-18:

3. When did Mary realize that Jesus had risen from the dead? Mary realized Jesus had risen from the dead when she recognized Him after He called her by name.
4. How does the fact that Jesus died for our sins and rose from the dead affect you and the peace that we have? Jesus died to make peace between us and God and to restore our personal relationship with Him. Jesus also sent his Holy Spirit, Who gives us inner peace as a fruit of the spirit.

Read Memory Verse

5. What are some ways that we can build one another up? We can build one another up by praying for each other, listening, encouraging one another, focusing on the positive parts of people instead of the negative, helping others solve conflicts, etc.
6. How can we help other people make peace, even if it's not our fight? We can help other people see the situation from a different point of view. We can work with both sides and try to help them find a solution.

Life Application Questions

7. When you choose to walk away from a fight, how does that help create peace? In a fight, everybody plays a part. When one person walks away, there's a much greater chance that the fight will not happen. When we choose to walk away instead of fighting, we choose to avoid a conflict, and we help create peace. Sometimes, time away calms down a situation.
8. How did God make peace with us? God made peace with us by sending His Son, Jesus, to die in our place for our sins. Jesus proved He was all powerful by rising from the dead, thereby defeating death and sin once and for all. Because of Jesus, our sin no longer stands between us and God, and we can have a relationship with Him.
9. How can we have peace at all times, even when life gets tough? We can have peace because our peace comes from Jesus. We know that Jesus saved us, that He loves us, that He works for our good, that He has a plan, that He's fighting for us, and that He will never leave us. Even in the toughest circumstances, we can talk to Jesus, trust in those truths, and experience God's peace.



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