

Small Group Discussion Guide

Calm in the Christmas Chaos – December 8, 2024

Luke 2:14

Opening Discussion (10–15 minutes)

1. Icebreaker:

- Share a memory of a time you felt at peace. What made it so meaningful?

2. Check-In:

- How has the idea of peace been on your mind lately, either personally, relationally, or in the world?
-

Scripture Study and Reflection (30–40 minutes)

Read Together:

1. Old Testament Foundation of Shalom

- Read **Isaiah 9:6–7** and **Zechariah 9:9–10**.
- Discuss: What does "shalom" mean in these passages? How does the promise of a "Prince of Peace" shape our understanding of God's mission for the world?

2. New Testament Fulfillment in Christ

- Read **Luke 2:13–14** and **Ephesians 2:14–18**.
- Discuss:
 - What does it mean that Jesus is our peace?
 - How does His work restore broken relationships—with God, others, and ourselves?

3. Personal Application

- Read **Philippians 4:6–7** and **Matthew 5:9**.
- Discuss:

- How can we experience God's peace in our circumstances?
 - What does it look like to live as a peacemaker in our daily lives?
-

Key Themes to Discuss

1. Shalom as Wholeness:

- Reflect on how shalom involves completeness and restoration, not just the absence of conflict.
- Where do you see brokenness in your life or relationships that needs restoration?

2. Now and Not Yet:

- Explore the “now” and “not yet” tension of peace in the Bible.
- How does the promise of ultimate peace in Christ's second coming bring hope in present struggles?

3. The Call to Be Peacemakers:

- Discuss practical ways to actively work toward reconciliation and peace in your family, community, or workplace.
-

Practical Application (15–20 minutes)

1. Reflect:

- Are there areas in your life where you feel a lack of peace?
- Spend a few moments silently identifying one step you could take to address this—through prayer, action, or seeking help.

2. Action Steps:

- Is there someone with whom you need to reconcile? What can you do this week to begin restoring peace in that relationship?
- Consider how you might be a peacemaker in a situation of conflict, whether at work, in your neighborhood, or globally (e.g., through prayer or service).

3. Christmas and Peace:

- As the holiday season often highlights relational tensions, how can you bring shalom to your family gatherings or community this Christmas?
-

Closing (10–15 minutes)

1. Prayer Time:

- Share prayer requests related to peace—personal, relational, or global.
- Pray together for God’s shalom to be evident in your lives and in the world.

2. Encouragement:

- Reflect on Jesus’ words from **John 14:27**:
 - *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”*
 - Encourage one another to hold on to this promise throughout the week.
-

Optional Next Step:

- As a group, consider a service project that spreads peace, such as supporting a local shelter, visiting a lonely neighbor, or giving to a cause that promotes reconciliation and justice.
-

Facilitator Note:

Encourage openness and vulnerability while being mindful of time. Create a welcoming space where participants can share freely without feeling rushed.