

Kinds of Peace

Monday, 7/12/10 – Read Romans 5:1-4

My Observations _____

A Question to Answer: Peace is one of the fruits of the Spirit. Peace, of course, is one of those words that’s used in many different ways and sometimes means different things. This week let’s explore some of the ways the Spirit produces peace. ... At the heart of it all is peace with God. Notice that today’s passage says we have peace with God by faith (verse 1); but maybe that peace comes alive when the Spirit pours love into our hearts. Do you trust that you are at peace with God? Why or why not? ... Has the Spirit poured God’s love into your heart so that you know it, sense it, feel it? ... What’s your experience of “peace with God”?

Tuesday, 7/13/10 – Read Ephesians 2:13-19

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Christ brings peace among humans as well as peace with God. Today’s reading speaks of traditional enemies coming into harmony with each other because Christ has broken down the dividing wall between them. Christ is our peace! ... When have you experienced Christ bringing you into harmonious relationship with someone. Have you ever experienced Christ breaking down the dividing wall of hostility? When did that happen? What was it like for you?

Wednesday, 7/14/10 – Read Romans 12:15-18

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: In our human relationships we have to choose peace. We can choose peace even when others don’t. Look at verses 16 and 18. Notice the statement: “so far as it depends on you.” We can’t control others, but we can do our part -- the part that depends on us. ... Is there a difficult relationship in your life? What’s “your part”? What do you need to do in that relationship to live harmoniously and peaceably?

Thursday, 7/15/10 – Read John 14:25-27

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: This is a really important statement of Jesus regarding peace. Notice that he promises HIS peace which is a peace different from the peace the world gives. We are so shaped by our experience in our culture that our understanding is inescapably shaped by what we have learned from others, from the media, from the culture. How does our culture think of peace? How does the culture define it? ... Jesus does not promise us that kind of peace -- but something different. How might Jesus’ peace be different from peace as understood by our culture?

Friday, 7/16/10 – Read John 16:33

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Jesus’ intention for you is that you will have peace -- peace with God, harmonious relationships with others, peace in your heart and mind. But Jesus never suggests that his peace means that our lives will always be placid and tranquil and serene. To paraphrase today’s reading: “In the world you will have trouble. But cheer up! I have overcome the world.” ... Have you ever experienced anything like that? A peace that comes in the midst of trouble, a peace

that overcomes trouble? ... In your prayer today, ask the Spirit of God to awaken and strengthen that peace within you.

Saturday, 7/17/10 – Read **Philippians 4:4-7**

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The “peace theme” is repeated again in today’s reading. This peace is not a typical or expected kind of peace. This is a peace that “surpasses all understanding.” ... We do have a part to play in the Spirit’s development of peace in our hearts. When we find ourselves worrying, we’re asked to redirect our thinking into prayer, supplication (asking), and thanksgiving. When you find yourself worrying, refocus your thoughts into prayer! Try that through the day today. Catch yourself when you begin to worry, and redirect your thoughts into prayer. Maybe even jot down your experience today with redirecting your thoughts into prayer.

Sunday, 7/18/10 – Read **Psalms 32:1-11**

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Another way we assist the Holy Spirit to produce peace in our hearts is by telling the truth -- to God and to ourselves. Is there something in your life that you haven’t been willing to face -- or face up to? Relax! God knows all about it already. But our resistance keeps our spirits all dammed up. (Look at verses 2-4.) ... Being direct and forthright with God about everything in our lives, opens us up so God’s Spirit can work within us. (Read again verses 5-7.) ... Take some time in your prayer today, some time to talk openly and honestly with your God about just one thing that you haven’t yet been willing to bring to God.

My Faith Journal, July 11, 2010

Outcomes #5

Peace for Troubled Hearts

What do I hear God saying to me today?

John 14:25-27

John 16:33

Philippians 4:4-7

What action do I intend to take this week?

Each day this week, take a few minutes. Begin with PRAYER. Then READ through the Bible passage indicated on the inside of this guide. WRITE down your own thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.