

June 22/23, 2024

"God Is Peace"

Pastor Brad Holmes



SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2024 Challenge: Finding Jesus in the Old Testament

June: Read Psalms to see how situations and events point to Jesus

Day 1 [Judges 6:11-27](#) | God Is Peace

So Gideon built an altar to the Lord there and called it The Lord Is Peace. Judges 6:24a

The Bible depicts real life. It contains real stories of people in real places. Because of that, we find brokenness in the Bible. The time of the judges is chaotic and full of brokenness. The two great Israelite leaders who led the people out of Egypt and into the promised land, Moses and Joshua, are gone. There is no strong leader. One of the common descriptors is that people are doing evil, whatever they think is right. This way of living sets up a cycle: other nations raid Israel, God's people cry out for deliverance, God delivers them and then they are raided again. That's where Gideon comes in. God meets Gideon amid this chaos to bring deliverance through Gideon. God steps in and Gideon recognizes God as a God of peace.

Peace is something we all want. None of us want to live in chaos or anxiety. Throughout this series, we've been discussing God's attributes. This week, we see how God is *peace*. The more we understand who God is and rely on him, the more of his peace we'll experience. It can change the way we think, talk and act. Instead of seeking peace through our accomplishments or escapism, peace is found by running to our Heavenly Father.

TODAY: Ask God to help you run to him for peace. Ask him to reveal how to find peace in him this week. Thank him for being the God of peace. Thank him for sending Jesus to die on the cross so you can know him and his peace.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [Psalm 8](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Consider how this psalm points to Jesus as ruler over all.

Day 2 [Judges 6:1-12](#) | Peace in Our Fear

When the angel of the Lord appeared to Gideon, he said, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior."
Judges 6:12

Gideon's hiding. He's trying to finish the harvest, but he's afraid. He's worried the Midianites will spot him and steal his grain. Yet, God addresses Gideon as a mighty warrior. God doesn't see Gideon the way Gideon sees himself. God doesn't let Gideon's fear define him. God knows what he wants to do through Gideon. God sees him as a mighty warrior, hiding.

Fear can create a false narrative in our minds. It lies to us about who we are. Fear tells us we're not good enough, no one loves us or that we'll never amount to anything. That's not how God sees us. If we've given our life to God, we're his dearly loved children ([1 John 3:1](#)), a new creation ([2 Corinthians 5:17](#)), chosen ([Ephesians 1:4](#)), adopted ([Ephesians 1:5](#)), God's temple ([1 Corinthians 3:16](#)) and no longer condemned ([Romans 8:1](#)). And that's just a partial list of how God sees us. Fear lies. God steps into our fears and speaks the truth to us.

TODAY: Return to the worship of the weekend service through the song [“The Finished Work of Christ.”](#) The song reminds us that it’s through Jesus that we trade lies for the truth—the truth of who God is and what he says about us. It’s all through what Jesus did on the cross, and we don’t need to fear that his work will be taken away from us.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [Psalm 16](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Consider how this psalm points to Jesus’s resurrection.

Day 3 [Judges 6:13-16](#) | Peace in Our Weakness

The Lord turned to him and said, “Go in the strength you have and save Israel out of Midian’s hand. Am I not sending you?” Judges 6:14

God tells Gideon that he’s the guy to save Israel. Gideon doesn’t agree. Gideon focuses on his weakness. He’s from the weakest clan in the tribe, and he’s the least in his family. It’s like he’s saying, “Don’t you know who I am and where I come from?” Gideon is not focused on God’s strength. God isn’t concerned about Gideon’s weakness. He tells Gideon to use what strength he has, and God will be with him.

God was with Gideon, and God is with us. One repeated refrain throughout the Bible is God’s presence. As followers of Jesus, God is not only with us, but God’s Spirit lives in us ([Romans 8:11](#)). When we don’t want to face our problems, God is with us. We rely on God and bring whatever strength we have. When it feels like we don’t even know the words to pray, we rely on God and bring whatever strength we have to our prayer. When we feel like we don’t have the strength to even go to church, we rely on God and bring whatever strength we have to get moving. God is with us. When we rely on him, he brings peace in the midst of our weakness.

TODAY: Thank God for being present with you in the good and bad, when you feel strong and when you feel weak. Reflect on a time when God was with you in your weakness and say this simple prayer: “God, thank you for being with me even when _____. In that moment, I felt weak.”

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [Psalm 34](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Consider how this psalm points to Jesus’s bones remaining unbroken on the cross.

Day 4 [Philippians 4:5-7](#) | Peace of God

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:7

Over a thousand years after the time of Gideon, Paul also recognizes God’s peace. Paul writes to the young church in Philippi, instructing them about where to turn for peace. He tells them to remember God is near. God is with them. Paul knows God’s presence is a key element to peace. He tells them to take their anxieties to God in prayer. God wants to hear about them. There’s power in naming what’s happening and bringing it to God. He wants them to include an element of thanksgiving. Being thankful focuses one’s heart on who God is and what he has provided in the past. When they do this, Paul tells them God will bring them peace they can’t understand.

Paul’s instructions still resonate with many today. Anxiety and worry are prevalent in our world. We’re stressed out, and many of us can’t seem to find peace. That’s what makes today’s passage so relevant. Paul tells us how to find true peace. It’s with God because God is peace. These verses have served as a key tool to many who battle anxiety. We can memorize Paul’s instructions, meditate on them, paraphrase them and pray them when anxiety arises. Many have found God’s peace through Paul’s instructions. It doesn’t mean we’ll never face anxiety, but we can work through it and find a peace that passes all understanding. Paul’s instructions have the power to be life-changing because they point to the God of peace.

TODAY: Commit to memorizing [Philippians 4:5b-7](#). Slowly and intentionally work through Paul's instructions when you find yourself facing fear or anxiety.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [Psalm 40](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Consider how this psalm points to Jesus's delight in God's Word and doing his Father's will.

Day 5 [Judges 6:25-26](#) | Peace and Change

"Tear down your father's altar to Baal and cut down the Asherah pole beside it." Judges 6:25b

This summer, we've been discussing God's attributes. This week, we considered that God is Peace. Through the story of Gideon and Paul's instructions in Philippians, the Bible makes it clear that peace is found in God. So, what is the proper response to God's attribute of peace? One significant response is to try to find peace in the right place. Acknowledging God as the God of peace isn't a passive action or something only done in a person's mind. God as peace requires something more—an active response. It requires searching for peace in the God of peace. Gideon's family was looking for peace through Baal, Asherah and God. But God says that's not going to work.

It is easy to seek peace through not only God but also things our culture says will find peace. Our culture tells us peace is found through things like partying or binge-watching television. But those things won't bring real peace. Our culture also wants us to believe real peace can be found through therapy, working out or the right diet. While those things may help us become healthier, they aren't the true source of peace. Without God, they won't bring a lasting peace. Because God is peace, we find lasting peace in him alone.

TODAY: Open your journal and write "Peace" at the top of the page. Start a list of things you do when you are looking for peace. Your list may include things that are healthy and unhealthy. After you've written your list, write God is Peace underneath it. Write a second list of ways you can turn to God to find peace.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [Psalm 68](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Consider how this psalm points to Jesus's ascension to heaven.