



## FOREWORD

Peace in the Bible is not merely the absence of war, but the presence of wholeness. When we see the word *shalom*, it connotes a robust, wholehearted fullness of body, mind, and spirit. It's what God provides for a mother in the trenches, whether she's an exasperated chef to many, an exhausted caregiver, or up to her ears in dirty laundry. God is the source of this *shalom*, and He readily grants it to those in need.

To ask for peace like that is to pray. I can think of no other person to best pen a book about prayer and peace and parenthood than Brooke McGlothlin. She has walked the journey from joy to heartache back to fullness again. She's a companion alongside the roadway of motherhood, encouraging from a position of empathy.

I have not always parented with peace. Having grown up in a home I didn't want to duplicate, I feared I would not do parenting right because I had so little to draw from. My motherhood sprang from desperation and a longing to love my kids well despite my inadequacies. So often, in the midst of the chaos of a home full of children, I would give in to exasperation.

In the evening, I would recount all my parental failures, berating myself for not measuring up to an artificial standard I had created. This, my friend, was not peace.

The one thing I did do well, though, was cry. And often those tears were directed heavenward in a sort of desperate prayer for help. I knew my lack. I knew my insecurities. I knew my inabilities. This knowledge became a gift for me.

Why? Because my lack propelled me into the arms of Jesus, who was utterly capable of helping me thrive as a mom. Eventually, I realized that He wasn't tasking me with the impossible (creating peace in our home), but He was equipping me to be a person of peace in the midst of the mess. In short, He steadied me. He gave me hope. Through the Holy Spirit within, He granted me long-suffering patience and a quieter voice. He helped me see my children as fellow strugglers along the pathway of life, giving me empathy for them.

If I could summarize my favorite parenting verse, it would be an odd one:

*So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me. That's why I take pleasure in my weaknesses, and in the insults, hardships, persecutions, and troubles that I suffer for Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*  
—2 Corinthians 12:9–10 NLT

I learned peace didn't emanate from me in my own strength; it was created on the stage of my weakness and insecurity. True *shalom* in my home came when I understood my deep need for Jesus, and I asked Him to help me love my children.

There is joy in knowing we don't have to manufacture the very peace Jesus wants to give us when we cry out from our knees in weakness.

—Mary E. Demuth  
Author, *The Beautiful Word for Christmas*  
Podcaster, *Pray Every Day*



# INTRODUCTION

## ON PEACE

One of the hardest parts of parenting in an all-boy home, at least for me, is the noise. I'm an introvert mom to a mix of personalities (introvert and extrovert boys), and wife to a husband who is probably best described as living somewhere in between. What this means, in a very real way for me, is that home can be *hard*. The noise simply never stops...unless they're asleep. It's been this way for years. My sons are now teenagers, so I have to assume this might not be something that goes away. Sometimes, when I hear my youngest beatboxing absent-mindedly while walking through the house, I think I'll miss it one day, but the truth is that one of the things I value most in life is simple peace and quiet. I just don't get enough of it.

It took me years to realize that introverts aren't being selfish when they say they need time alone, time to just be quiet. Our personalities demand it. Actually, I think it's safe to say our bodies themselves demand it. If I go too long in "on" mode, I'll start to develop a headache. It's like my body—my very physical, biological, and spiritual makeup—starts to shut down and force me to get away.

Moms of girls, I know your homes can be just as loud as the boy homes are—the noises are just different, right? Even empty nesters and those without children can struggle with feeling overwhelmed by the noises of their lives. I can't tell you how many times I've pleaded

with my family over the years to just give me a few minutes of peace. But I've come to realize that my peace doesn't have to depend on what's happening around me. Peace is not just quiet, although it can be that. Peace is an internal state that belongs to me as a child of God—a Jesus follower—that was sealed and called indestructible the day I gave my life to Christ. Literally nothing can take it away!

Why? Because the Scriptures say Jesus Himself is our peace.

Ephesians 2:14 (NLT) says, *"For Christ himself has brought peace to us. He united Jews and Gentiles into one people when, in his own body on the cross, he broke down the wall of hostility that separated us."* This verse is part of a passage where Paul is helping the church at Ephesus understand that they are no longer divided into camps. Jesus, by the shedding of His blood, literally made them *"into one people."* This is important to us because most people reading this right now, myself included, fall into the gentile camp. We were not God's original chosen people—the Jews were—but because of Jesus, we who *"were far away from God [not the chosen race]...have been brought near to him through the blood of Christ"* (verse 13 NLT).

We now have access to the blessings of being God's children just like the Jewish people did in the Old Testament. Once we didn't. Now we do. Praise God!

But there's more! Jesus's death on the cross didn't only serve to bring peace between Jews and gentiles. Jesus Himself is the reason *anyone* can have peace with God.

There was a time when the blessing of salvation wasn't mine. During that time, I lived at odds with God. Actually, Scripture says I lived in direct opposition to Him and deserved eternal punishment for it. But all that changed when I was about nine years old. One evening, at our church's revival service, I gave my life to Jesus and asked Him to save me from my sins. Now, because of what Jesus did for me, I have peace with God. The wrath of God in response to my sin no longer lies on my own head. Jesus took it for me. When I placed my

faith in what Jesus did on the cross to pay the punishment for my sin, I gained forgiveness, an eternal home in heaven, and peace with God.

In a very real sense, we experience both momentary peace and eternal peace throughout our lives. Of course, the feelings of peace we experience in those moments when everything is going our way really are fleeting, dependent on circumstances. But eternal peace? This is the thing God seals in our heart when we come to know His Son. If we know Him, we have peace not even the worst of circumstances (or the loudest of families) can take away.

And perhaps one of the most important things about this eternal peace we have because of salvation is that it leads to mastery over the lack of momentary peace. When we see the true value of peace with God, it overshadows every other kind of noise the world might throw our way. When we recognize that our greatest need is *peace with God through the forgiveness of our sins* and know in our hearts that no circumstance, good or bad, can take that peace away, every other noise that would try to steal it fades. We can then live in the calm assurance that if our greatest need has already been met through Jesus, every other need will be met according to the riches of God at the right time.

I've chosen the verses in this prayer journal in hopes that they will help you put into practice the art of allowing your eternal peace to trump momentary attacks against it. All it takes is some effort to replace negative thoughts and emotions with trust, ask the right questions, and keep the value of your salvation the lens through which you see everything else.

To your peace,  
Brooke McGlothlin



Day 1

## WHERE DO WE REALLY GET PEACE?

### READ JOHN 16

*I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace.*

*In the world you will have tribulation.*

*But take heart; I have overcome the world.*

—John 16:33

I have a friend who doesn't speak plainly. He talks fast, laughs while he talks, and to top it off, he whispers. Several years ago, I had an ear issue that left me with some hearing loss, so you can imagine how hard it is for me when I'm talking to this friend. Many times, I have wanted to put my hand up and say, "Could you please just speak plainly?" It's not like he's speaking in riddles, although his sense of humor is sometimes lost on me. He's just hard for me to understand, especially in a crowd. I would never hurt his feelings by bringing it up. Instead, when we're together, I just lean in, watch his lips closely, and, sometimes, discreetly cup my ear so I can hear him better.

The Gospels paint a picture in which the twelve apostles were constantly leaning in, watching Jesus closely, and trying to hear Him better so they could understand. I imagine them sitting as close as possible, hands cupped to their ears, minds trying to absorb the true meaning of His words, which, to be honest, were a little difficult to comprehend. Leading up to His arrest, Jesus had often spoken to the

people in parables and figures of speech that the disciples struggled to understand, but at the end of John 16, His meaning starts to become clear. In fact, in verse 29, the disciples say, “*Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech!*” It’s like they’re finally able to understand Jesus for the first time, and it feels so good! Ironically, they *hear* Him, but they still don’t quite understand. (And they didn’t until His resurrection.)

Christ’s message wasn’t exactly good news, at least not from their perspective. In John 16: 31–33, Jesus says:

*Do you now believe? Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*

## SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

Jesus made it clear to the disciples that *He* was going to be their peace. He never told them peace was going to come from their circumstances, how nice their homes were, how many of their prayers He answered exactly the way they wanted, or whether they were physically and emotionally safe. No, after breaking the news that He was leaving and they would be scattered, He told them He would be their peace *in spite of* their circumstances—which would be troubled while they were living this side of heaven. Not exactly a peace-filled message.

When I was in my twenties, a friend of mine shared the details of his anger toward God, asking, “What has He ever done for me?” I’d only been walking closely with the Lord for a short time when we had that conversation, and I didn’t know what to say then to help him. Now, twenty plus years later, I know he was looking for peace from the God he believed should want to give him a trouble-free life, not the God who gave up His only Son to give us eternal peace through

salvation. My friend didn't understand that Jesus never promised to give us peace the way the world defines it. Instead, He promised His own arms to be a respite, a refuge in the storm, a place where we could run to get strength, comfort, and truth to see us through whatever troubled circumstances came our way. Jesus doesn't just give us peace; He is our peace. So if we want it, we have to run to Him.

## EXTRA VERSES FOR STUDY OR PRAYER

John 14:27; Hebrews 12:14

### VERSE OF THE DAY

*I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.*

—John 16:33

### PRAYER

Father, thank You for making a way for us to have peace. When the world seeks to trouble us as it always will, we can find peace in who You are and what You did for us through Your Son. Help us learn to run to You. In Jesus's name, amen.

### THINK

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### PRAY

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## PRAISE

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## TO-DO

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## PRAYER LIST

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## QUESTIONS FOR DEEPER REFLECTION

1. Think about a recent time when your world felt out of control. What were your actual feelings or emotions during this time?

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2. How did you fight through the fog of feeling overwhelmed to get back to some kind of normalcy? Did it work? Does anything need to change about your response?

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