

Christmas

at Saddleback

TALK IT OVER

The Gift of Peace

Pastor Andy Wood
Christmas 2025

If you would like to watch the weekend message, visit www.saddleback.com/watch.

Open your group in prayer and remember that this is only a guide. Feel free to discuss each of the provided questions or simply dive deeper into just one. Before you close with prayer, take a few minutes to look over the Three Essential Questions toward the end of the document.

Scriptures Used

Luke 12:51, John 16:33, Luke 2:10–14, Romans 5:1, Isaiah 9:6–7, Philippians 4:6–8, Romans 6:23, John 14:27

Questions:

1. Where do you search for peace when facing unexpected pain, problems, pressure, or difficult people?
2. Read John 16:33 and Luke 2:10–14. Romans 5:1 (NIV) says, *“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* What does peace look like in these passages, and what is the only path to receive this peace? Why is the path not found in circumstances or an outcome you can control? How is God's peace different from the world's peace?
3. Philippians 4:6–8 (NIV 84) says, *“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.”* Why do you think Paul encourages us to tell God what we're anxious about? Why does he mention thanksgiving with prayer and petition? How might focusing on these qualities (true, noble, right, pure, etc.) help us combat anxiety, fear, or stress?
4. Romans 6:23 (NIV) says, *“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Why is it important to understand that God's grace of forgiveness and peace is

a gift that cannot be earned? Where are you exhausting yourself trying to earn God's grace based on performance? How does this prevent you from receiving his peace?

5. John 14:27 (NIV) says, "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*" Why does Jesus mention fear and troubled hearts together? What is the correlation between these two things?
6. God's peace is a gift received only by trusting Jesus and doesn't come from having everything under control or a problem-free life. What problem or pain have you been trying to handle on your own? What next step will you take to place it in God's hands?

Three Essential Questions

The following questions are intended to be open-ended and encourage members to consider how they and what they, or the group, can do as a result of hearing the message.

1. **What did you hear?** *What point in this message was most impactful for you?*
2. **What do you think?** *How did this message challenge, change, or affirm your thinking?*
3. **What will you do?** *How will you or your group put into practice what you've learned today?*

Small Group Action Steps

1. Consider taking the Group Health Assessment in your small group. This assessment will help you see how your small group is balancing the five purposes and will give you suggested next steps for each purpose. Click here to take the Group Health Assessment:

<https://saddleback.com/connect/smallgroups#spiritualCheckup>

2. Did you know that Saddleback produces many new small group studies each year? Visit <https://saddleback.com/studies> to check out Saddleback's ever-growing library of small group