

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

STUDY FOUR

Don't Miss the Entrance to Peace!

Isaiah 26:3–4, Hebrews 4:1–3

If you really want inner peace, you'll have to take seriously these six words: "Worry about nothing; pray about everything."

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

THE enemy of peace is worry. When worry moves into our hearts, peace slips out the back door. It's impossible for the two to coexist, because worry takes all our attention. Our thoughts ruminate over terrible "what-ifs." Fear twists our emotions into knots. Our bodies tense up and refuse to relax.

Worry resides in a part of our self that author Robert Wise calls the "churning place."

You discover [the churning place] in the early years of your life. It seems to be located either near the pit of your stomach or at the base of your neck, where every muscle tightens. When it begins to turn and pump like an old washing machine, you find that every other area of your life marches to its lumbering, dull, paralyzing beat. . . .

And it is not a constructive place. Positive thoughts lead to action and results, but the churning place is a tank that fills with anxieties that just settle into a stagnant infection.¹

Only the Holy Spirit can drain the churning place of worry. When we yield to Him and ask Him, He sends Christ's peace into our hearts. "My peace I give to you," Jesus told His followers (John 14:27 NASB). Christ's peace is ours to claim, and the Spirit is the delivering agent.

"Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts," Paul wrote (Colossians 3:15 NASB). When the peace of Christ rules, the same peace that calmed our Savior chases away our worry, and, by the power of the Holy Spirit, our churning place transforms into a resting place.



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PREPARE YOUR HEART

Paul urged us not to “worry about anything; instead, pray about everything” (Philippians 4:6). Pray about what’s worrying you and invite the Lord to reveal His truth through this Bible study.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

The theme of peace flows through all the Scriptures. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for “peace” is *shalom*, which implies wholeness or completeness. When we panic, worry, and fear, we fall to pieces, and we can barely function. *Shalom*, however, makes us whole again. It reassures us that God is in control, settles our hearts, and helps us confidently take the next step in God’s will.

Christ modeled perfect *shalom*. He never fell apart under pressure but always remained calm and in control, even when He was unfairly attacked and mistreated. His peace can be ours, and two key passages from the Scriptures—one from the Old and one from the New Testament—show us how.



Observation: Peace in the Old and New Testament

Observation starts us on the path toward accurate interpretation. Look closely at what the biblical author is saying by examining key words, modifiers, metaphors, and the flow of thought.² Answering the questions under the following headings will help you observe the text.

Trust—Isaiah 26:1–4

The prophet Isaiah composed Isaiah 26 as a hymn of celebration for God’s people to sing on the day the Lord saves them. “In that day,” Isaiah wrote, “everyone in the land of Judah will sing this song” (Isaiah 26:1). What metaphor did Isaiah use to picture the Lord’s salvation in 26:1–2?

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Isaiah 26:3–4; Hebrews 4:1–3

The faithful must simply “enter” to be safe within the “walls of God’s salvation” (Isaiah 26:1–2). Similarly, we step into salvation through faith in Jesus Christ—who declared, “I am the gate. Those who come in through me will be saved” (John 10:9). What a promise!

To whom does “you” refer in *Isaiah 26:3*? What will God do for those who enter? What’s the central theme of the song?

To whom does “all” refer? What’s the implication?

God is the center. He is central to peace, and we are the recipients of it.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll

What’s the connection between “all who trust in you” and “all whose thoughts are fixed on you” (26:3)? How are these actions similar?

What exhortation did Isaiah give in 26:4? What characteristic of God makes Him trustworthy?

God has no cracks. He has no weak points. He never gives way. He never breaks under a load no matter how much it weighs. Or how often we come to Him. Or how troubled we may be. Or how checkered our past. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Rest—Hebrews 4:1–3, 9

The writer to the Hebrews echoed Isaiah's invitation to enter peace. What promise has God extended to His people, according to [Hebrews 4:1](#)?

Every day, we have the choice to experience the rest “that God has prepared” (4:2). God's rest, however, won't do us much good if we don't enter. “For only we who believe can enter his rest” (4:3). The writer equated God's rest with the seventh day of creation, when “God rested from all his work” (4:4). What did the writer call God's rest in [4:9](#)?

Every day is the Sabbath day. Every moment is a Sabbath moment. There remains a rest for the people of God. It's not limited to a day. When are you to rest? Every moment of your life. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Perfect Peace

In Hebrew poetry, a word is repeated to emphasize it and elevate the concept to the highest level. The Hebrew word for “peace,” *shalom*, is repeated in [Isaiah 26:3](#). Literally, the text is “You will keep in *shalom*, *shalom* all who trust in you.” By repeating *shalom*, what was Isaiah saying about the *kind of peace* that God keeps us in?

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In addition, Isaiah repeated the name of God in *Isaiah 26:4*. When the personal name for God, *Yahweh*, appears in the Hebrew text, English versions identify it as LORD—with upper case “L” and small caps “ORD.” You can see more clearly from The New International Version how many times *Yahweh* appears in 26:4:

*Trust in the LORD forever,
for the LORD, the LORD himself, is the eternal Rock.*

What do you think is the significance of repeating the Lord’s personal name? What truth about God and our trust in Him was Isaiah driving home?

Let peace rule your life. It’s up to you. This is real peace. This is shalom, shalom peace. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Jesus’ Peace

People search for peace of mind by accumulating wealth so they can afford things that give them feelings of comfort and safety. How fleeting is worldly peace! Here one moment . . . gone the next.

The only person to truly rest and consistently experience perfect peace—*shalom-shalom* peace—was Jesus. What hopeful promise did Jesus give regarding peace in *John 14:27*?

Jesus said that His peace was not of this world. What did He mean?

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So many people seek peace in places where it can't be found. Where did Jesus say peace can be found, according to *John 16:33*? What did He mean?

Draw together the concepts about peace from the verses you've examined in this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study. Put into your own words the principles you've gleaned.



Application: The Way to Peace

God created us to live in peace, so we know when it's not there. Our bodies tell us something is wrong. Acid builds up in our stomach. Our neck and shoulder muscles constrict. Our head pounds. We toss and turn in bed because we can't sleep.

Numerous remedies, some wholesome and others unwholesome, can help calm the stress, but only God can give the deep peace for which we're made. Can you recall a time when you experienced God's *shalom-shalom* peace? If so, how was it different from all other kinds of peace this world affords?

Only by trusting in the Lord can you have His peace. Trust, like spiritual rest, isn't passive. It's something we do. Isaiah explained it as fixing our thoughts on the Lord, "the eternal Rock" (Isaiah 26:3–4). There's no better way to fix our thoughts . . . indeed, our whole being . . . on God than through daily prayer.

Before your feet ever hit the floor, sit on the side of your bed and fix your mind on Him. Pray this prayer: "Today, Lord, I'm facing something I've been dreading. But I've got to face it, and I can't face it in my own strength. I need You. I rely on You. I want to fix my thoughts on You, and I want to leave it with You. I am not going to ruin my day by worrying over what I've been dreading. I'm going to stop the dread, and I'm going to leave it with You. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Write your own trust prayer.

Don't leave this prayer by your nightstand. Carry it with you through the day and use it as a balm to soothe your churning. As Paul urged, “pray about everything” (Philippians 4:6). Focus your mind on the strength and goodness of the Eternal Rock. Stop ruminating over “what-ifs.” Let thoughts of Him occupy your heart, and His peace will send your worries to the wind.



A FINAL PRAYER

Father, when my churning place is active with worries, I lose my focus on You. Forgive me for forgetting Your goodness and help me fix my eyes on Your strength in the storm. You are my Eternal Rock, and I rest myself in You alone. In Jesus' name, amen.

ENDNOTES

1. Robert L. Wise, *Your Churning Place: Your Emotions—Turning Stress into Strength* (Glendale, CA: Regal Books, 1977), 9–10.
2. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, “*How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?*”

For the 2024 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 2023, 2024 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

