

ICE BREAKER: Describe a family tradition or activity you really appreciate.

GROUP QUESTIONS:

Luke opens his gospel with a great company of angels praising God for the birth of Jesus Christ proclaiming, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth **peace to men** on whom his favor rests” (Luke 2:14). One of Jesus’ final prayers to the Father was for his disciples to be in **unity**, ‘so that **they may be one** as we are one’ (John 17:12).

Yet, we find Jesus here not declaring the blessings of peace and unity, but of the importance and preference for **‘division’**. Here, Jesus talks of peace not as positive or life-giving, but as **negative** and **life-stealing**.

1. When have you ever witnessed **peace** and **unity** as **negative** and **destructive**?

(Read verses 51-53) In this passage, **Jesus** proclaims Himself as the **reason** for **judgment** and **division in homes**. It is common to hear and easy to accept Jesus as the Lord of love, forgiveness, truth and life. But how often have you heard Jesus proclaimed and preached as the reason for division in homes?

Yet, Jesus Himself warns His disciples His coming to earth would bring division in homes, setting parents and children against each other and in-laws against one another.

2. How could **Jesus** be the **reason** for **division in families**?

(Read verses 49-51) Jesus declared in John 14:27, “**Peace I leave with you** and **my peace** I give you.” Paul reminds us in Philippians 4:7, “The **peace of God**, which **transcends all understanding**, will **guard your hearts** and your **minds in Christ Jesus**.”

Yet in this passage, Jesus says His coming to earth will **not bring “peace on earth”**. Rather, His coming and His Gospel will bring division, especially in homes.

Therefore the peace Jesus gives us cannot be thought of as worldly peace. **Jesus’ peace** is **not the absence of conflict**. Jesus’ peace is **not peace** at the **cost of truth**. Neither can Jesus’ peace be **silence** in the **face of sin** because of **fear of conflict** or **division**.

3. How have you seen someone’s **silence** in the face of sin **hurt** or **ruin relationships** in your life?

(Read verse 51) Without apology, Jesus declares Himself as the source of division in the most treasured relationships in our lives—our marriages and our families. Jesus knows His Gospel will offend, and judge sin and unbelief in others, especially those dearest to us.

**Jesus’ Gospel offends** for all the right reasons. It comes against sin, unbelief, and pride. Since the **Gospel is offensive enough**, the challenge for Christians is to share the Gospel to others without being **the offense themselves**.

4. How can **Christians share** the **Gospel**, which often offends, **without** themselves **being the offense**?

CUT ALONG DOTTED LINE & USE PRAYER LIST AS BIBLE BOOK MARKER

PRAYER GROUP TIME

(Make a list of people whom those in your group plan to share Christ with this week.)

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