

# Peace, Joy, and Reconciliation

Romans 5:1-11

**July Memory Verse:** Psalm 34:14 "Turn from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it."

NOTE: What a simple, yet powerful reminder to kids *and* to us! As believers, we are to turn from evil and do good. We are to seek and pursue peace. Try to weave this verse into your everyday life this month.

**Opening Activity:** Choose one or two that seem most appropriate for your children to start the lesson. Feel free to work them into the lesson if you kids start to get antsy and lose their attention span... like ours do!

- Practice saying Psalm 34:14 together, along with other verses you have memorized. Say it in funny voices, say it as loudly or as quietly as you can, say it while standing on one foot. If your kids are writers, have them write it down on a pretty or cool piece of paper to hand in their bedroom.
- Pray together as a family for any needs you or others have. Remember to thank Him for His blessings and what He is doing in your lives, too.
- Make posters of the lesson's key words. Include a definition and some pictures that represent each concept. Kids could look through magazines and cut or tear out photos.
  - *Peace*: Free from disturbance or frenzy; calm. Photos could include a beach, stars, music, a sunset, or anything else that feels peaceful and calm.
  - *Joy*: great pleasure or happiness that comes from God. Photos could include someone smiling or laughing or something that brings joy, like a hug.
  - *Reconciliation*: Fitting together again. Photos could include an arm in a cast, a band-aid, or a puzzle.

As you make the posters or pictures, talk about each word with your children. Where does peace come from? How do we have joy? What is an example of reconciliation? Invite your children to share what they know about each concept. If they're struggling, give an example of things that are *not* peaceful, joyful, or reconciled. Sometimes thinking about the opposite helps us all understand things better.

*Today's lesson focuses on peace, joy, and reconciliation. We learn in Romans 5 that we have peace with God and are reconciled to Him because of Jesus Christ. Our joy comes from knowing God and knowing He is working in our lives. This is good stuff! Don't rush the lesson, but take your time so that your kids can learn about peace and joy coming from God, even in this crazy world.*

**Lesson:** The word of God never returns void (Isaiah 55:11), so rest assured that regardless of how well you think the lesson goes, God will accomplish His purposes in it. Our job is to teach His word regularly and faithfully, trusting that He will take care of the rest.

- Provide a quick recap to your kids: "We are still learning from the book of Romans about how to live in a way that pleases God. Romans was written by a missionary named Paul who loved Jesus and wanted others to love Him, too. We have learned that we are called to obey, to belong to Jesus, and to be holy. We've talked a lot about making righteous (or good) choices instead of sinful (or bad) choices. God rewards righteous choices and punishes sinful choices. Obeying in our hearts matters more than obeying with our hands. It is our faith in God that makes us righteous, not the things we do, just like Abraham's faith made him righteous."
- Introduce the passage: "Today, we are reading Romans 5:1-11. We're listening for these words: peace, joy/rejoice, and reconciliation." Have your kids repeat each word and practice saying them so that they hear them better when you read.
- Read Romans 5:1-11, stopping to repeat verses, explain words, and ask questions, as appropriate for your kiddos.
  - *Key concept: We have peace with God and are reconciled to Him because of what Jesus did on the cross. We can rejoice in that!*

Consider reading the passage in The Message or NIV, which are often the easiest to understand. Countless versions of the Bible can be found online at [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com).

- Review the passage:
  - Vs. 1-2: We are justified by faith, not by what we do. This reminds us that it's through Jesus' death and resurrection that we can stand before God, not through something we've done. We can have peace with God because of our faith in Him and what Christ did on the cross.

- Vs. 2-5: Because we can have peace with God, we should rejoice! Let's rejoice (have joy / be joyful) in the hope we have in God. And let's rejoice that even when things are hard, God is working in our lives to make us more like Him.
- Vs. 6-8: Even when we were sinners and did not make good choices, God sent His Son Jesus to die on the cross for our sins.
- Vs. 9-11: Jesus made a way for us to be reconciled to (or made right with) God. We can be saved from our sins and rejoice that we are one with God.
- Connect the Gospel: "Let's talk about that some more. God created everything, including people. But the first people God made, Adam and Eve, chose to disobey God. Now, everyone in the world is born with a sin nature. That means we all sin. The punishment of sin is death and separation from God forever. But God sent His Son, Jesus, to earth so that we don't have to be punished forever for our sins. Jesus lived a sinless life. He was put to death on a cross, taking the punishment for our sin and guilt. He rose to life three days later, showing that He won over sin and death. If we ask Jesus to forgive our sins, He will. Then we can know Him, be part of His family, serve Him, and spend eternity with Him in heaven. Eternal life with Jesus is our best reward for following and obeying Him. If we have faith in Jesus, we are declared righteous."
- "What a great truth that we have peace with God. This should bring us joy! We are reconciled to God because of what Jesus did on the cross!"
- Pray, then do some of the activities below, as appropriate for your family.

**Activity Ideas:** These are designed for use at the end of the lesson or throughout it to break up the "sitting still" times.

- Find a small puzzle (less than 20 pieces, if possible). Ask your kids to put it together. As they do, keep intentionally putting wrong pieces together, matching them up upside-down, backwards, etc. Explain that sin keeps us from fitting together the right way with God. Sin makes it so that we do not match up with Him. But because Jesus died on the cross, we can ask Him to forgive our sins. When Jesus forgives our sins, we can be reconciled to God – that means we match up with Him! Show them how two puzzle pieces go together. Reconciliation is just like a puzzle going together the right way. Everything fits and looks the way it should. God wants us to fit with Him the way two puzzle pieces go together.  
SUPPLIES NEEDED: Puzzle
- Write the three key words (Peace, Joy, Reconciliation) on slips of paper and put them in a hat (write out multiples, if necessary). Have each child pull a slip of paper. Their job is to draw a picture that represents their word. For example, for peace, they could draw a peace sign, a place that feels peaceful to them, etc. After drawing time is complete, have each child explain their picture to the family.  
SUPPLIES NEEDED: Paper, Markers/crayons/colored pencils
- Play "Peace, Joy, or Reconciliation." Describe a place, thing, or situation and have your kids guess if you're describing peace, joy, or reconciliation. For example, you could say, "When bones break, we put them in a cast to heal. When you get an oowie on your finger, we give you a band-aid. When you have a fight with someone, you apologize so that your friendship is better. What am I describing?"  
Answer: Reconciliation. If your kids are interested, have them try, too.  
SUPPLIES NEEDED: None

# WORD FIND

A W H E F J K J O Y  
I R O M A N S O K M  
P N U H I K F C R E  
L A P T T J N A P E  
A S U S H I Y T E R  
I U E L O V E O A L  
K J E M B G H X C V  
R E C O N C I L E D

Look for and circle these words in the word find table above.  
How does each word relate to our study of Romans?

- FAITH
- LOVE
- RECONCILED
- PAUL
- ROMANS
- JOY
- PEACE