

## INTRODUCTION

In Numbers 6:24-26, God gave the priests this blessing to say over the people of Israel: “*The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you; the Lord turn His face toward you and give you peace.*” Peace is a fleeting commodity in today’s world – not just in the world at large, but even in the world of the church. Aaron stated on Sunday that *peace* in Colossians 3:15 refers not just to individual peace, but to corporate peace as well. How do we, as Christ-followers, live at peace among each other when we have such different backgrounds, personalities, and opinions?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Have you experienced a lack of peace in your home, at work, or at church...? How did that affect you and the people around you?
2. Read Colossians 3:15. The Greek word for peace is ‘*eirēnē*’, meaning “one”, “quietness”, “rest”. It’s from the verb *eiro* meaning “to join or bind together that which has been separated”. Does this definition add to your understanding of this verse?
3. Paul calls for us to “*let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts*”. Aaron shared that the Greek word for *rule* is *brabeuō*, meaning to be an umpire, to arbitrate, to govern. How can the peace of Christ be an “umpire” of your heart?
4. Read Ephesians 4:1-6. Paul indicates that God places a high value on the unity of believers. How does Ephesians 4 amplify the concept of unity in Colossians 3:15?
5. The KJV Study Bible notes that “*If we have peace, we will certainly be more likely to experience peace in the church. If we are not experiencing peace individually, we are more likely to contribute to discord and disharmony in the church.*” Do you agree with this statement? Why or why not?
6. Paul ends this verse with an exhortation – “*And be thankful.*” Adam Clarke’s commentary on Colossians 3:15 notes that “*A spirit of thankfulness, also, would tend much to promote harmony and peace. An ungrateful people is commonly a tumultuous, agitated, restless, and dissatisfied people.*” Those words brought to mind the Israelites during the Exodus. Read Exodus 14:10-11, Exodus 15:23-24, Exodus 16:2-3, and Numbers 14:1-4. What was Israel’s first response to problems? What is your first response when difficulties arise?

## Study Questions for Community Groups

7. Has ingratitude influenced your behavior towards other believers? If so, what will you do to change?
8. Read the following verses about gratitude and discuss how you can strengthen the spiritual discipline of gratitude in your life.
  - Psalm 100:1-2
  - Ephesians 5:19-20
  - Colossians 2:6-7
  - Colossians 4:2
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:18
  - Hebrews 13:15
  - 1 Peter 5:5

### SCRIPTURE

*<sup>15</sup>Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.* Colossians 3:15

### APPLICATION

- Discuss with your group some ideas of personal practices or spiritual disciplines that would help to remind you to maintain peace, unity, and thankfulness in your life, group, family, and church.
- A peacemaker builds others up rather than tearing them down. Who is it that you need to forgive and pursue peace with?
- Write at least two “thank you” notes this week – one to Jesus, and one to someone who has blessed you.