**Peace**

Text: Isaiah 43:1-7

1. What words and phrases indicate God’s special relationship with Israel?

2. Twice God tells his people not to be afraid (vv. 1, 5). What dangers might they face (v. 2)?

3. How do you deal with the fears you face?

4. If the peace of God does not depend on freedom from adversity (v. 2), what does it depend on?

5. What role can adversity play in developing peace?

6. How do verses 3-4 foreshadow what God eventually does for his people?

7. Look at verses 5-7. What would it be like to have God act on your behalf in this way?

8. If you knew nothing about God except what you learned from this passage, what would you find him to be like?

9. What relation do you see between knowing who God is and being able to receive the peace he offers?

10. Think of the most significant human being in your life, someone you love, trust and understand (and who understands you). How did you get to know this person so intimately? In what similar ways can you get to know God?

11. Consider the things you are anxious about currently. How can knowing God intimately produce his Spirit’s peace in you?

*Thank God for the aspects of his character you have seen revealed in this passage. Ask him to bring you peace in the parts of your life where you feel anxiety.*

26

*Fruit of the Spirit* is a biblical term that sums up the nine visible attributes of Christians who walk by faith. These attributes are: **love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness** and **self-control** (New International Version). The KJV has **love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness,** and **temperance.** We learn from scripture that these are not individual "fruits" from which we may choose our favorites. Rather, the fruit of the Spirit is one nine-fold "fruit" that characterizes all who walk in the Holy Spirit. Collectively, this is the fruit that all Christians should be producing in their walk with Jesus Christ.

Since fruit is the "visible expression of power working inwardly and invisibly," we should allow the Holy Spirit to work within us. If we do that, the fruit of the Spirit will appear. If we "live by the Spirit" (Galatians 5:16) we will produce and show the fruit of the Spirit.

**The Fruit of the Spirit**

The following notes are taken largely from James L. Morrisson’s article at [*www.scriptureinsights.com*](http://www.scriptureinsights.com).

**A. LOVE.**

**1. Definition.** The Greek language has several words for "love." The one used here is *agape*, a selfless love that desires what is best for the other person without any thought of a reward. Love is the opposite of selfishness.

Vine's Dictionary says of it, "Christian love, whether exercised toward the brethren or toward men generally, is not an impulse from the feelings, it does not always run with the natural inclinations, nor does it spend itself on those for whom some affinity is discovered. Love seeks the welfare of all (Rom. 15:2) and works no ill to any (Rom. 13:8-10). Love seeks opportunity to “do good to all men, and especially towards them that are of the household of the faith” (Gal 6:10).

**2. The two dimensions of love.** Love has two dimensions:

* Vertical - the love of the Father for us and our love for Him, and
* Horizontal - our love for each other.

Jesus said that the two greatest commandments are to love our Father with all our heart, soul, mind and strength (vertical), and to love our neighbor as ourselves (horizontal) (Mark 12:30-31). "All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments" (Matthew 22:40).

John emphasizes that these two commandments go together. "We love because he first loved us. If anyone says, 'I love God' yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And he has given us this command, “Whoever loves God must also love his brother" (1 John 4:19-21). Again he says, "This is how we know that we love the children of God: by loving God and carrying out his commands" (1 John 5:2).

7