

Unshaken:

Finding Peace in a World of Stress and Worry

**A BIBLE STUDY AND
REFLECTION GUIDE**



Faith, Hope and Love Ministries

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About Us

At FHLM, we are dedicated to nurturing faith, fostering hope, and spreading love. We provide both spiritual and practical guidance to Christians, students, and Christian leaders. We are not a church, and we do not offer financial support.

We are a small ministry with a simple hope: to put warm, thoughtful, Bible-centred resources into the hands of anyone who wants to grow closer to Jesus — whether you are gathering a group around a kitchen table or sitting quietly with a cup of tea and an open Bible. Everything we make is offered freely, in the hope that it will be a blessing and passed on.

Core Values

Our mission is grounded in the values of unconditional love and unity. We prioritise inclusion and diversity over dogmatism and division, reaching out to people right where they are, and trying our best to follow the example of Jesus.

Contents

This guide is organised into three main sections:

- Leaders Guide
- Bible Study Notes
- Worksheet

Note

This guide is formatted for double-sided printing, to save paper and make for a nicer reading experience.

Stay in Touch

We would love to keep walking alongside you. Explore our growing library of Bible study and reflection guides, and do get in touch to let us know how you are getting on.

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Leader's Guide

Unshaken:

Finding Peace in a World of Stress and Worry

Introduction for Leaders and Solo Readers

Dear Leaders and Solo Readers,

Welcome to “Unshaken: Finding Peace in a World of Stress and Worry,” from all of us at Faith, Hope, and Love Ministries. Whether you are leading a group or reflecting on your own, we are so glad you are here. Over ten sessions we will look honestly at the things that so often steal our peace — perfectionism, wealth, control, comparison, fear, and more — and at the deeper, steadier peace God holds out to us in Christ.

Each session takes up a different source of stress and the biblical antidote, and you should feel free to make this guide your own — rearrange the sessions, linger where one is landing, trim a discussion that isn’t. The material is a starting point, not a script. The suggested prayers, too, are simply there to help you begin; pray them as they stand, or from your own heart.

We have laid out the sessions to fit on a single, double-sided page — Scripture and notes on one side, discussion and reflection questions on the other — so they are easy to photocopy and hand round. You can find out more about us, or say hello, at <https://fhlm.org>, or on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

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A word on Scripture: the verses in this guide are taken from the Berean Standard Bible (BSB), used with kind permission. Please read along in whichever translation you love best — we are not endorsing any single one.

Our prayer is that, through this study, you would come to rest in a peace that does not depend on your circumstances — the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guarding your heart and mind in Christ Jesus.

In service to Christ,

Faith, Hope and Love Ministries

Session 1: Introduction

Opening Prayer:

"Dear Heavenly Father, as we begin this journey of self-discovery through Your Word, we humbly ask for Your guidance. Help us to release the burden of the world's expectations and find our true worth and purpose in You. Amen."

Key Scripture:

Jeremiah 1:5 (BSB) *"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I set you apart and appointed you as a prophet to the nations."*

Supplementary Scripture:

- Psalm 139:13-14 (BSB) *"For You formed my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Marvelous are Your works, and I know this very well."*

Discussion Points:

1. Our True Worth:

- What does Jeremiah 1:5 reveal about our identity and God's plan for us?
- How does the world's definition of worth differ from what God declares here?

2. Under Pressure:

- In what ways do the world's standards add to the stress and worry in our lives?
- Can you share a time you felt pressured to conform to the world's expectations?

Desired Outcomes:

By the end of this session, we hope everyone will begin to rest in the truth that our worth and purpose are rooted in God's knowledge and love — not in the world's expectations — and will start to see how those pressures fuel our stress.

Closing Prayer:

"Lord, we thank You for revealing our true worth and purpose through Your Word. As we continue this study, help us let go of worldly burdens and embrace the truth that we are fearfully and wonderfully made by You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Session 2: The Pursuit of Perfection

Opening Prayer:

"Heavenly Father, as we consider perfection, help us to understand the difference between the world's pursuit of flawlessness and the biblical call to maturity and wholeness in You. May Your grace be our guide. Amen."

Key Scripture:

Matthew 5:48 (BSB) "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Supplementary Scripture:

- Romans 3:23 (BSB) "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."
- 2 Corinthians 12:9 (BSB) "But He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness.' Therefore I will boast all the more gladly in my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest on me."

Discussion Points:

1. Two Kinds of Perfection:

- How does society define perfection, and what pressure does that place on us?
- How does Matthew 5:48, held next to Romans 3:23, reframe what "perfect" really means?

2. Grace in Weakness:

- How can we apply 2 Corinthians 12:9 when we face our own weaknesses?
- Where have you seen God's grace at work precisely in your weakness?

Desired Outcomes:

By the end of this session, we hope everyone will let go of the world's impossible flawlessness and rest in a biblical wholeness — growing in maturity with God, and discovering His grace made perfect in our weakness.

Closing Prayer:

"Lord, thank You for reminding us that Your grace is sufficient, even in our weakness. Help us let go of the world's unrealistic standards and embrace the wholeness found in our relationship with You. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Session 3: The Weight of Wealth

Opening Prayer:

"Heavenly Father, as we consider wealth and its pull on our lives, guide us to see the true value of riches in the light of our relationship with You. Help us to find contentment in Your presence. Amen."

Key Scripture:

Hebrews 13:5 (BSB) "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, for God has said: 'Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.'"

Supplementary Scripture:

- 1 Timothy 6:10 (BSB) "For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. By craving it, some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows."
- Matthew 6:19–20 (BSB) "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal."

Discussion Points:

1. How We Measure Success:

- How does society often measure success and happiness by wealth and possessions?
- What does Hebrews 13:5 teach us about contentment and reliance on God?

2. Treasures That Last:

- How does Matthew 6:19–20 shift our focus from earthly treasure to heavenly?
- Where do you feel the "weight" of wealth — the pull to have more, or the worry of not having enough?

Desired Outcomes:

By the end of this session, we hope everyone will find rest in contentment with God's presence and in storing up heavenly treasure — recognising the quiet dangers of the love of money and the stress that chasing it brings.

Closing Prayer:

"Lord, thank You for reminding us of the true treasures we should seek. Help us to release the grip of worldly pursuits and find contentment in Your eternal presence. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Session 4: The Illusion of Control

Opening Prayer:

"Heavenly Father, as we consider control and trust in Your providence, help us to release our need to control and to lean on Your understanding. Grant us peace as we surrender to Your guidance. Amen."

Key Scripture:

Proverbs 3:5-6 (BSB) "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight."

Supplementary Scripture:

- Psalm 46:10 (BSB) "'Be still and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations, I will be exalted over the earth.'"
- Matthew 6:34 (BSB) "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Today has enough trouble of its own."

Discussion Points:

1. Loosening Our Grip:

- How does the desire for control show up in your work, relationships, and daily life?
- What does Proverbs 3:5-6 teach us about trusting and submitting to God?

2. One Day at a Time:

- How does Matthew 6:34 free us to focus on today and trust God with tomorrow?
- What would it look like to "be still and know" (Psalm 46:10) in an anxious moment?

Desired Outcomes:

By the end of this session, we hope everyone will taste the peace that comes from trusting God's providence rather than clinging to control — and will see how living in the present, one day at a time, quiets our anxiety.

Closing Prayer:

"Lord, we thank You for being the ultimate orchestrator of our lives. Help us to surrender our need for control and find serenity in Your wisdom and guidance. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Session 5: The Trap of Comparison

Opening Prayer:

"Heavenly Father, as we face the challenge of comparison, we ask for Your guidance. Help us to find contentment in who we are and to keep our eyes on our own unique journey. Amen."

Key Scripture:

Galatians 6:4 (BSB) "Each one should test his own work. Then he will have reason to boast in himself alone, and not in someone else."

Supplementary Scripture:

- Matthew 7:3 (BSB) "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye but fail to notice the beam in your own eye?"

Discussion Points:

1. The Comparison Trap:

- How does constant exposure to others' lives, especially online, breed a sense of inadequacy?
- Reflect on a time you felt the pull to compare yourself to someone else.

2. Eyes on Your Own Path:

- What does Galatians 6:4 teach about testing our own work, rather than measuring ourselves against others?
- How does Jesus' image of the speck and the beam (Matthew 7:3) call us to look inward first?

Desired Outcomes:

By the end of this session, we hope everyone will recognise how corrosive comparison can be — and will be freed to celebrate their own growth, keeping their eyes on the path God has set uniquely before them.

Closing Prayer:

"Lord, we thank You for reminding us of our unique worth and individual journeys. Help us to break free from the trap of comparison and embrace the path of growth You have set before us. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Session 6: The Fear of Failure

Opening Prayer:

"Dear Heavenly Father, as we consider the fear of failure, we ask for Your guidance and strength. Grant us the courage to face our fears and to trust in Your plan for our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Key Scripture:

2 Timothy 1:7 (BSB) "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control."

Supplementary Scripture:

- Matthew 16:18 (BSB) "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it."

Discussion Points:

1. When Fear Takes Hold:

- How does the fear of failure affect your decisions and actions?
- What does 2 Timothy 1:7 tell us about the source of fear, and what God gives instead?

2. Failure Is Not the End:

- Peter failed and denied Jesus, yet Jesus called him the rock (Matthew 16:18). How does Jesus meet our failures?
- How might your own failures become stepping-stones to growth?

Desired Outcomes:

By the end of this session, we hope everyone will hold onto the truth that fear is not from God — and will come to see failure not as a final verdict but as a stepping-stone to growth in His hands.

Closing Prayer:

"Lord, we thank You for empowering us with Your Spirit and for teaching us even through failure. Help us overcome the fear of failure and trust in Your love and plan for our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Session 7: The Quest for Approval

Opening Prayer:

"Heavenly Father, as we consider the pull to seek approval from others, guide our hearts and minds. Help us to understand the worth of Your approval above all else. In Your name, we pray. Amen."

Key Scripture:

Galatians 1:10 (BSB) "Am I now seeking the approval of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ."

Supplementary Scripture:

- Luke 6:26 (BSB) "Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for their fathers treated the false prophets in the same way."

Discussion Points:

1. Whose Approval?

- Share a time you sought approval or validation from others. How did it affect your sense of worth?
- What does Galatians 1:10 teach about the tension between pleasing people and serving Christ?

2. Free from People-Pleasing:

- Why does Jesus warn against everyone speaking well of us (Luke 6:26)?
- How can you tell whether an action is driven by seeking approval, or by a desire to please God?

Desired Outcomes:

By the end of this session, we hope everyone will see how draining and futile the endless quest for human approval can be — and will find rest and purpose in living, first of all, for the approval of God.

Closing Prayer:

"Lord, we thank You for Your unconditional love and approval. Help us shift our focus from seeking human validation to pleasing You in all that we do. May we find peace and purpose in living according to Your will. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Session 8: The Burden of Unforgiveness

Opening Prayer:

"Gracious Father, open our hearts to Your wisdom and grace. Help us to understand the place of forgiveness in our lives. In Your holy name, we pray. Amen."

Key Scripture:

Matthew 6:12 (BSB) "And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors."

Supplementary Scripture:

- Matthew 18:21-22 (BSB) "Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother who sins against me? Up to seven times?' Jesus answered, 'I tell you, not just seven times, but seventy-seven times!'"

Discussion Points:

1. Forgiven, and Forgiving:

- What does Matthew 6:12 teach about the link between our forgiveness and God's?
- How can harbouring unforgiveness weigh on our relationship with God – and on our own hearts?

2. Seventy-Seven Times:

- What does Jesus' answer to Peter (Matthew 18:21-22) show us about the scope of forgiveness?
- How does the parable of the unforgiving servant challenge you where forgiveness feels hard?

Desired Outcomes:

By the end of this session, we hope everyone will feel the weight of unforgiveness a little more honestly – and will find the freedom and peace that come from extending to others the mercy God has so richly shown to us.

Closing Prayer:

"Merciful God, we thank You for Your boundless forgiveness and grace. Give us the strength to forgive others, just as You have forgiven us. May the burden of unforgiveness be lifted from our hearts, and may we know the peace of walking in Your ways. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Session 9: The Struggle with Identity

Opening Prayer:

"Heavenly Father, as we explore the theme of identity, guide us in discovering the profound truth of who we are in Christ. May Your Word dispel the doubts and anxieties that arise from worldly labels. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Key Scripture:

1 Peter 2:9 (BSB) "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, to proclaim the virtues of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

Supplementary Scripture:

- 2 Corinthians 5:17 (BSB) "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come!"

Discussion Points:

1. Who God Says You Are:

- What does 1 Peter 2:9 reveal about your identity in Christ?
- How can knowing this transform the way you see yourself?

2. Free from Labels:

- What pressures do you feel to conform to the world's definitions of identity?
- How does being a "new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17) free you from worldly labels?

Desired Outcomes:

By the end of this session, we hope everyone will rest more deeply in their identity in Christ — chosen, holy, and dearly loved — and will feel a real freedom from the shifting labels the world tries to hang on us.

Closing Prayer:

"Loving God, help us to embrace our identity in Christ and to find freedom from worldly labels. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Session 10: The Path to True Peace

Opening Prayer:

"Heavenly Father, as we come to the end of this study, we seek to understand the path to true peace through Your Word. Guide us, and grant us the peace that surpasses understanding. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Key Scripture:

John 14:27 (BSB) "Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled; do not be afraid."

Supplementary Scripture:

- Philippians 4:6-7 (BSB) "Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

Discussion Points:

1. A Different Kind of Peace:

- According to John 14:27, what is the source of true peace?
- How does the peace Jesus gives differ from the peace the world offers?

2. Peace in the Storm:

- How does Philippians 4:6-7 guide us to find peace in anxious times?
- Can you share a time you knew God's peace in the middle of a difficult situation?

Desired Outcomes:

By the end of this session — and of the whole study — we hope everyone will carry away a settled hope: that the peace of Christ, unlike the world's, does not depend on our circumstances, and is ours to seek through prayer and trust in His promises.

Closing Prayer:

"Loving God, we thank You for the peace that only You can give. May we continually seek and know this profound peace in our lives. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen."

Unshaken: Finding Peace in a World of Stress and Worry

In a world of endless stress and worry, discover the deep, unshakeable peace God offers — a peace the world can neither give nor take away.

Bible Study Notes

Unshaken: Finding Peace in a World of Stress and Worry

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Session 1 – Introduction

In today's fast-paced world, it is all too easy to be swept up in a whirlwind of stress and worry. The pressure to measure up — to be successful, admired, and secure — presses in from every side, and it quietly steals our peace. But God's Word offers a different foundation on which to stand.

Our journey begins with the most basic question of all: who are we, and where does our worth come from? God's answer to Jeremiah is breathtaking: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I set you apart" (Jeremiah 1:5). Before we had done a single thing to earn it, we were known, loved, and set apart by God.

The psalmist marvels at the same truth: "For You formed my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:13-14). Our worth is not something we manufacture or must anxiously defend; it is woven into us by our Maker.

So much of our stress flows from measuring ourselves by the world's shifting standards — its ideas of success, beauty, and belonging. Over the sessions ahead, we will look honestly at these pressures, one by one, and at the deeper peace God offers. But it begins here: you are known, you are wonderfully made, and your worth rests in the God who formed you.

Discussion and Reflection Questions

Introduction

Here are some questions to guide your discussion and quiet reflection. There's no need to rush through them all — linger wherever God seems to be at work.

- 1.** What does Jeremiah 1:5 reveal about your identity and God's plan for you?
- 2.** How does the world's definition of worth differ from what God declares here?
- 3.** In what ways do the world's standards add to the stress and worry in your life?
- 4.** Can you share a time you felt pressured to conform to the world's expectations?
- 5.** How does Psalm 139:13-14 change the way you see your own worth?
- 6.** Where do you most feel the pressure to "measure up"?
- 7.** What would it mean to root your sense of worth in God rather than in achievement?
- 8.** How does knowing you were "known" by God before birth bring comfort?
- 9.** Which source of stress in your life are you most hoping this study will address?
- 10.** What is one worldly burden you would like to begin laying down?

Session 2 – The Pursuit of Perfection

Few pressures weigh on us like the pursuit of perfection. The world holds up an image of flawlessness — in our work, our bodies, our families — and quietly whispers that we must attain it. It is an exhausting, unwinnable race, and it breeds no end of stress.

At first glance, Jesus seems to raise the bar even higher: “Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect” (Matthew 5:48). But the word points not to icy flawlessness but to wholeness and maturity — becoming, over time, complete in our relationship with God. And Scripture is honest about our starting point: “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). None of us begins from perfection.

Here the good news breaks in. Our completeness does not depend on our own faultless performance, but on God’s grace. When Paul pleaded with God over his own weakness, the answer he received was this: “My grace is sufficient for you, for My power is perfected in weakness” (2 Corinthians 12:9). God’s power shows up most clearly not where we are strong, but where we are weak and know it.

So we can lay down the impossible burden of flawlessness. Biblical perfection is not about never failing; it is about growing, by grace, into the people God is making us. Our weaknesses, far from disqualifying us, become the very places where His strength is displayed. That is a freeing, peace-giving truth — and it is worth boasting in.

Discussion and Reflection Questions

The Pursuit of Perfection

Here are some questions to guide your discussion and quiet reflection. There's no need to rush through them all — linger wherever God seems to be at work.

1. How does society define perfection, and what pressure does that place on you?
2. How does Matthew 5:48, held next to Romans 3:23, reframe what “perfect” really means?
3. Where does the pursuit of flawlessness cause you the most stress?
4. How can we apply 2 Corinthians 12:9 when we face our own weaknesses?
5. Where have you seen God's grace at work precisely in your weakness?
6. What is the difference between striving for flawlessness and growing in maturity?
7. How might embracing your weaknesses actually free you?
8. What “unrealistic standard” do you most need to let go of?
9. How does resting in grace change the way you approach mistakes?
10. What is one area where you sense God inviting you to grow rather than to be perfect?

Session 3 – The Weight of Wealth

Money makes a curious promise: that if we just have enough, we will finally feel secure. Yet for many of us, the pursuit of wealth brings not peace but a heavier load — more to chase, more to protect, more to worry about losing. Scripture speaks tenderly and honestly into this.

The writer to the Hebrews sets the antidote plainly: “Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, for God has said: ‘Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you’” (Hebrews 13:5). Notice the ground of our contentment — not a full bank account, but the unfailing presence of God Himself.

Paul warns of the trap, too: “For the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil. By craving it, some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many sorrows” (1 Timothy 6:10). It is not money itself, but the love of it — the craving — that so easily leads us astray and steals our peace.

Jesus lifts our eyes higher still: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy... but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven” (Matthew 6:19–20). Earthly wealth is fragile; heavenly treasure is secure. True riches are found in contentment with God’s presence and in a life invested in what lasts. To grasp this is to feel the weight of wealth begin to lift.

Discussion and Reflection Questions

The Weight of Wealth

Here are some questions to guide your discussion and quiet reflection. There's no need to rush through them all — linger wherever God seems to be at work.

1. How does society often measure success and happiness by wealth and possessions?
2. What does Hebrews 13:5 teach about contentment and reliance on God?
3. Where do you feel the “weight” of wealth — the pull to have more, or the worry of not enough?
4. How does the love of money quietly lead people astray (1 Timothy 6:10)?
5. What does it mean to “store up treasures in heaven” (Matthew 6:19–20)?
6. Where do you find contentment hardest, and what helps you there?
7. How does God’s promise “never will I leave you” free you from anxiety about provision?
8. What might it look like to invest more in what lasts?
9. How can gratitude reshape your relationship with money and possessions?
10. What is one step towards greater contentment you could take this week?

Session 4 – The Illusion of Control

So much of our anxiety comes from a longing to control what we cannot — the future, other people, the outcome of our plans. We grip tightly, and the tighter we hold, the more anxious we become. Scripture invites us to a better way: trust.

The proverb puts it beautifully: “Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make your paths straight” (Proverbs 3:5-6). Peace is found not in figuring everything out ourselves, but in leaning on the God who sees the whole road.

God’s own invitation is to stop striving: “Be still and know that I am God” (Psalm 46:10). In the middle of our restless efforts to manage everything, He calls us to be still — to remember who is actually in control, and to rest there.

And Jesus gently draws our attention back to the present: “Do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Today has enough trouble of its own” (Matthew 6:34). We are not asked to carry tomorrow’s weight today. As we loosen our grip on control and trust God one day at a time, the illusion loses its hold, and a real peace takes its place.

Discussion and Reflection Questions

The Illusion of Control

Here are some questions to guide your discussion and quiet reflection. There's no need to rush through them all — linger wherever God seems to be at work.

- 1.** How does the desire for control show up in your work, relationships, and daily life?
- 2.** What does Proverbs 3:5-6 teach about trusting and submitting to God?
- 3.** Where do you find it hardest to loosen your grip and trust God?
- 4.** How does Matthew 6:34 free you to focus on today?
- 5.** What would it look like to “be still and know” (Psalm 46:10) in an anxious moment?
- 6.** What tends to happen in you when your plans don't go as hoped?
- 7.** How does trusting God's providence bring peace rather than passivity?
- 8.** Where is God inviting you to surrender control right now?
- 9.** How can living “one day at a time” ease your stress?
- 10.** What is one worry you could deliberately hand to God today?

Session 5 – The Trap of Comparison

Few things steal our joy as quietly as comparison. In an age of curated feeds and highlight reels, we are forever measuring our ordinary lives against everyone else's best moments — and coming up short. It is a trap that breeds discontent and stress.

Paul offers a wiser way: "Each one should test his own work. Then he will have reason to boast in himself alone, and not in someone else" (Galatians 6:4). Our calling is not to measure ourselves against our neighbour, but to look honestly at our own walk with God, and to grow there.

Jesus warns against the outward-looking, fault-finding eye: "Why do you look at the speck in your brother's eye but fail to notice the beam in your own eye?" (Matthew 7:3). Comparison so often makes us critics of others and blind to ourselves. The healthier path turns the gaze inward first — not to condemn ourselves, but to grow.

You are on a journey God has shaped uniquely for you. Comparison measures you against a race you were never meant to run. As we lift our eyes from others and fix them on our own God-given path — and above all on God Himself — the trap loosens, and contentment has room to grow.

Discussion and Reflection Questions

The Trap of Comparison

Here are some questions to guide your discussion and quiet reflection. There's no need to rush through them all — linger wherever God seems to be at work.

1. How does constant exposure to others' lives, especially online, breed a sense of inadequacy?
2. Reflect on a time you felt the pull to compare yourself to someone else.
3. What does Galatians 6:4 teach about testing our own work rather than comparing?
4. How does Jesus' image of the speck and the beam (Matthew 7:3) call us to look inward first?
5. What do you tend to compare — appearance, success, family, faith?
6. How does comparison rob you of contentment and joy?
7. What helps you celebrate others' good without measuring yourself against them?
8. How might focusing on your own God-given path change your outlook?
9. Where do you need to look honestly at your own "beam" first?
10. What is one way you could step back from comparison this week?

Session 6 – The Fear of Failure

The fear of failure can be paralyzing. It whispers that if we try and fall short, we will be exposed and diminished — so we play it safe, or we drive ourselves anxiously to avoid any mistake at all. Scripture speaks directly to this fear.

Paul reminds Timothy — and us — of the truth: “For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control” (2 Timothy 1:7). The fear that shrinks and paralyzes does not come from God. What He gives is quite the opposite: strength, love, and a sound, steady mind.

And the Bible is full of people who failed and were not finished. Think of Peter, who denied Jesus three times — and yet to Peter Jesus said, “you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church” (Matthew 16:18). Peter’s failure was real, but it was not the last word; grace was.

So failure, for the follower of Jesus, is never a final verdict. It is, in God’s hands, a stepping-stone — a place where we learn, grow, and discover His grace anew. As we trade the spirit of fear for the power, love, and self-control God gives, we can face the possibility of failure without being ruled by it.

Discussion and Reflection Questions

The Fear of Failure

Here are some questions to guide your discussion and quiet reflection. There's no need to rush through them all — linger wherever God seems to be at work.

- 1.** How does the fear of failure affect your decisions and actions?
- 2.** What does 2 Timothy 1:7 tell us about the source of fear and what God gives instead?
- 3.** Share a time fear held you back. What might have changed if you'd trusted God?
- 4.** How did Jesus meet Peter's failure (Matthew 16:18), and what does that teach us?
- 5.** How might your own failures become stepping-stones to growth?
- 6.** What "power, love, and self-control" from God do you most need just now?
- 7.** Where is fear keeping you from something God may be calling you to?
- 8.** How does knowing failure isn't final change the way you take risks for good?
- 9.** What helps you get back up after you've fallen short?
- 10.** What is one fear you would like to bring to God this week?

Session 7 – The Quest for Approval

There is a quiet tyranny in needing everyone to approve of us. We shape our words and choices to win a nod, a like, a word of praise — and the approval we chase is never quite enough. It is a draining, anxious way to live, and Scripture offers a better foundation.

Paul asks the searching question: “Am I now seeking the approval of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ” (Galatians 1:10). We cannot serve two audiences at once; at some point the desire to please people and the desire to please God will pull in different directions.

Jesus even warns against universal approval: “Woe to you when all men speak well of you, for their fathers treated the false prophets in the same way” (Luke 6:26). If everyone approves of us, it may be a sign that we have quietly stopped standing for anything at all.

The freedom here is enormous. When our deepest need for approval is already met in God — who loves and accepts us in Christ — we no longer have to earn it from a crowd that can never be fully satisfied. We can live to please the One whose opinion truly matters, and find, in that, a settled and unshakeable peace.

Discussion and Reflection Questions

The Quest for Approval

Here are some questions to guide your discussion and quiet reflection. There's no need to rush through them all — linger wherever God seems to be at work.

- 1.** Share a time you sought approval from others. How did it affect your sense of worth?
- 2.** What does Galatians 1:10 teach about pleasing people versus serving Christ?
- 3.** Whose approval do you find yourself chasing most?
- 4.** Why does Jesus warn against everyone speaking well of us (Luke 6:26)?
- 5.** How can you tell whether an action is driven by seeking approval or by pleasing God?
- 6.** What are the dangers of trying to please everyone?
- 7.** How does resting in God's approval free you from people-pleasing?
- 8.** Where do you sense God inviting you to care less about others' opinions?
- 9.** How might your choices change if God's approval were enough?
- 10.** What is one way you could live for God's "well done" this week?

Session 8 – The Burden of Unforgiveness

Unforgiveness is a heavy thing to carry. Nursing a hurt, replaying an offence, holding onto resentment — it weighs on our hearts and quietly poisons our peace. Jesus, who knows us well, keeps returning us to the freeing work of forgiveness.

In the very prayer He taught us, forgiveness sits at the centre: “And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors” (Matthew 6:12). Our own experience of God’s mercy and our willingness to extend mercy to others are woven together. To hold a grudge is, in a sense, to hold ourselves apart from the grace we long to receive.

When Peter asked how often he must forgive — “Up to seven times?” — Jesus answered, “not just seven times, but seventy-seven times” (Matthew 18:21-22). Forgiveness, in the kingdom, is not a limited allowance we ration out; it is a way of life, offered again and again.

In the parable that follows, a servant forgiven an enormous debt refuses to forgive a small one — and the master’s question lands on us all: “Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant, just as I had on you?” (Matthew 18:32-33). We forgive because we have been so freely forgiven. And as we release others, we ourselves are set free — the burden lifts, and peace returns.

Discussion and Reflection Questions

The Burden of Unforgiveness

Here are some questions to guide your discussion and quiet reflection. There's no need to rush through them all — linger wherever God seems to be at work.

- 1.** What does Matthew 6:12 teach about the link between our forgiveness and God's?
- 2.** How can harbouring unforgiveness weigh on our hearts and our walk with God?
- 3.** Is there a hurt you are finding hard to release? What makes it difficult?
- 4.** What does Jesus' answer to Peter (Matthew 18:21-22) show about the scope of forgiveness?
- 5.** How does the parable of the unforgiving servant challenge you?
- 6.** Why do you think our forgiving and being forgiven are so closely tied?
- 7.** What is the difference between forgiving and pretending a wrong didn't happen?
- 8.** How have you experienced the freedom that comes from forgiving someone?
- 9.** How does remembering God's mercy to you help you extend mercy?
- 10.** Who might God be inviting you to forgive — and what could a first step look like?

Session 9 – The Struggle with Identity

Who am I? It is one of the deepest questions we carry, and the world offers a hundred restless answers — your job, your achievements, your appearance, your following. Built on such shifting ground, our sense of self is fragile, and easily shaken. Scripture offers something far more secure.

Peter's words to struggling believers are stunning: "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, to proclaim the virtues of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9). Chosen. Royal. Holy. God's own. This is who you are in Christ — not because you earned it, but because He calls you His.

And this identity is a genuinely new thing: "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away. Behold, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). In Christ we are not merely improved; we are made new, given a fresh and unshakeable identity.

This is deeply freeing. When our identity is anchored in God's unchanging love rather than the world's shifting labels, we no longer have to earn our worth or fear its loss. We can let go of the anxious striving to be someone, and simply rest in who we already are: beloved children of God.

Discussion and Reflection Questions

The Struggle with Identity

Here are some questions to guide your discussion and quiet reflection. There's no need to rush through them all — linger wherever God seems to be at work.

- 1.** What does 1 Peter 2:9 reveal about your identity in Christ?
- 2.** How can knowing this transform the way you see yourself?
- 3.** What pressures do you feel to conform to the world's definitions of identity?
- 4.** How does being a "new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17) free you from worldly labels?
- 5.** Which label — from others or from yourself — do you most need to let go of?
- 6.** Where do you tend to look for your sense of identity, and how secure is it?
- 7.** How does God's love give you a more stable foundation than achievement or approval?
- 8.** What does it mean to you to be "chosen" and God's "own possession"?
- 9.** How might resting in your identity in Christ ease your anxiety?
- 10.** What is one truth about who you are in Christ you want to hold onto?

Session 10 – The Path to True Peace

We come, at last, to the heart of it all: true peace. Throughout this study we have named the many things that steal our peace — perfectionism, wealth, control, comparison, fear, approval, unforgiveness, and the search for identity. Now we turn to the peace God gives, which is unlike anything the world can offer.

Jesus makes a promise on the night before He died: “Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled; do not be afraid” (John 14:27). The world’s peace depends on everything going well; the peace of Jesus is His own, given to us, and it holds even when circumstances do not.

How do we lay hold of it? Paul shows us the way: “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:6-7). We bring our worries to God — honestly, and with thanks — and He gives, in return, a peace beyond our understanding.

This peace does not mean the absence of storms; it means the presence of God within them. It is the quiet, steady confidence of a heart that trusts its Father. So may you go from this study unshaken — not because life is easy, but because your peace rests in the One who holds you, and who will never let you go.

Discussion and Reflection Questions

The Path to True Peace

Here are some questions to guide your discussion and quiet reflection. There's no need to rush through them all — linger wherever God seems to be at work.

1. According to John 14:27, what is the source of true peace?
2. How does the peace Jesus gives differ from the peace the world offers?
3. How does Philippians 4:6-7 guide us to find peace in anxious times?
4. Can you share a time you knew God's peace in a difficult situation?
5. Which "peace-stealer" from this study has troubled you most, and how has the study helped?
6. What does it mean that God's peace can be present even in the storm?
7. How does bringing your worries to God "with thanksgiving" change your praying?
8. What practices help you receive God's peace day to day?
9. Looking back over the study, what has most challenged or encouraged you?
10. As this study closes, what is one way you will seek God's peace going forward?

Worksheet

This worksheet is a companion to the study — a set of practical, Scripture-based steps to help you find, and hold onto, an unshakeable peace in a world of stress and worry.

In a group

If you are leading a group, do give a copy of this worksheet to each person to take home. Explain that it is for personal reflection and practical application. In your meetings, or in quiet times of reflection, you might invite people to share their insights, their struggles, and their experiences — while making clear that completing the worksheet is never required, only offered as a help.

On your own

If you are reading on your own, use this worksheet as a personal guide to reinforce and apply what the study has stirred in you.

The worksheet sets out ten simple, doable steps for the journey towards lasting peace. As you take them up, our prayer is that you would come to rest more and more in the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding.

Ten Steps to Find Unshakeable Peace

By taking up these practical, Scripture-based steps, our prayer is that you will find, and grow in, the lasting peace that comes from a deep relationship with God.

1. Make Time for Daily Prayer and Reflection:

Set aside specific slots each day for prayer and time in God's Word. This steady habit will anchor your day in peace (Psalm 5:3).

2. Create a Quiet Prayer Space:

Set apart a peaceful place where you can retreat for prayer and reflection — comfortable and free from distraction (Matthew 6:6).

3. Read a Daily Devotion:

Commit to a simple daily reading of Scripture, focusing on finding peace in God's presence (Psalm 119:105).

4. Let Scripture Be Your Guide:

Choose a few verses that bring assurance in times of stress, memorise them, and dwell on their meaning (Isaiah 26:3).

5. Journal Your Journey:

Keep a journal of your reflections, prayers, and experiences. Looking back over it can strengthen your faith (Psalm 77:11-12).

6. Practise Daily Gratitude:

Cultivate a thankful heart, giving thanks for God's blessings even in hard seasons. Gratitude shifts our focus to His goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

7. Meet God in Nature:

Spend time outdoors, letting the beauty of creation calm your soul and remind you of God's presence (Psalm 19:1).

8. Breathe, and Trust God:

Take slow, mindful breaths to steady yourself, and pair it with trusting that God is in control (Psalm 46:10).

9. Seek Support and Prayer Partners:

Don't carry your struggles alone. Share them with trusted friends or fellow believers, and pray together (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10).

10. Celebrate God's Faithfulness:

Notice and celebrate the milestones on your journey to peace, giving glory to God for His faithfulness (Psalm 34:3).

May these steps lead you to the deep and unshakeable peace that flows from knowing God. Embrace them with a willing heart, remembering that your journey to peace rests in His grace and love.

Stay Connected with Faith, Hope, and Love Ministries

Thank you for spending this time with us. We'd love to keep walking alongside you — so do stay in touch, and let us know how the study went.

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