

Seek Peace and Pursue It - Reflections for Lent 2018
Week 5 – 18th March
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Be still

In this stress filled, world of hurry, how can we find peace? Many of us find it easy to be peaceful when we are getting our own way, when the weather is how we like it, when nothing is going wrong and we are relaxed – it's not so easy though, when life's storms come our way. When the weather is horrid, when things keep breaking and going wrong, when the traffic is in a jam, when the queues in the shops are long and slow, when people are getting on our nerves, when we are anxious about something, when we lose a loved one, when our health fails and our lives fall apart.

When we lived in Guyana, we had to travel across the Essequibo River so that I could deliver some training to children and youth workers in a church on the far side. This is the largest river in Guyana and its estuary (where we crossed) is 20 miles wide. The photo shows the little wooden boat in which we had to travel. To say I was frightened is a huge understatement! As more and more people boarded the boat and it sank deeper into the water, I was aware that if we capsized, I was more likely to be eaten by crocodiles and piranha than drown! Despite the fear, I felt a sense of peace in my heart and I was able to entrust my life into God's hands and safe keeping whatever the outcome. Nevertheless I was mightily relieved when eventually we reached the other side!

True inner peace comes when we know Jesus, the Prince of Peace – he promised to give us peace not as the world gives – not just when all is going well, but in all circumstances and situations. I love Psalm 46 because it reminds me that we can put our complete trust in God even when things seem to be going wrong around us and we are encouraged to 'be still, and know that I am God.'



Our boat to cross the Essequibo River

To ponder:

- What things make you feel stressed and irritated and cause you to lose your inner peace? Write out the words from John 14 vs 27 – stick it on your dashboard, in your handbag, on your computer or fridge – wherever you will keep reading it this week and read it when you feel that you are about to lose your peace.
- Have you had a time in your life when you felt at peace despite difficult circumstances? In what circumstances do you need to know God's peace today?

Prayer: *Lord Jesus, help us to abide in the peace that you give. Help us to raise our eyes above the circumstances of our lives and keep our eyes fixed on you. We pray that you will help us to 'be still' and allow your peace to fill our hearts. Amen.*

Bible link: Psalm 46 and John 14 vs 27 *Jesus said, 'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.'*

Hymn: Singing the Faith 495 v 5 *'Drop thy still dews of quietness, till all our strivings cease; Take from our souls the strain and stress and let our ordered lives confess, the beauty of your peace.'*