

# Session 1

## JESUS IS OUR PEACE

*Isaiah 11:1-10*

### Memory Verse

*Then a shoot will grow from the stump of Jesse,  
and a branch from his roots will bear fruit.*

– ISAIAH 11:1, CSB




## Jesus is Our Peace

**THEOLOGICAL THEME:** Jesus was born to bring God’s perfect and everlasting peace over all creation. Christians should recognize and know that Jesus is “our banner” of everlasting peace.

Think back to your past holiday celebrations. Did you spend time thinking about what would happen over Christmas? Did you make lists of things you wanted as gifts and plan out how much fun you would have while celebrating Jesus’s birthday? Anticipating the details of the celebration can be as fun as Christmas itself because we look forward to it so much.

Have you ever thought about how much anticipation plays a role in the way we respond to different things? We can experience great joy in thinking about what is coming. Then, we can experience even more joy when the event takes place. We can also rejoice as we reflect on what we were anticipating. Consider how much the people of God looked forward to the coming Messiah. The prophecies about Jesus in Isaiah are some of the most pointed and brought much needed hope. Though it was still some time until Jesus arrived, every detail of the coming Messiah would happen just as predicted.

 What is something that you anticipated for a long time?

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**?** How did that anticipation affect your enjoyment of the event?

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## Session Summary

Chapter 10 of Isaiah paints a picture of the Lord's plans and includes a description of how the Lord, in His judgment, would cut down the nations much like cutting down the trees of Lebanon. He would wipe out the nations and leave the stumps behind like a forest that had been razed.

Then the Lord shared in chapter 11 about His plans to send a Messiah. He continued with the tree analogy and beautifully prophesied about Jesus Christ coming to earth through the line of Jesse. This reaffirmed God's promise to David that the Messiah would come from his line. No detail is ever overlooked with God. He fulfills His promises to the last letter. When Jesus returns, He will bring true and lasting peace.

### 1. The Person of the Messiah (Isaiah 11:1-2)

Using the illustration of chopping down trees in a forest and leaving stumps, the Lord described His plan. As only God can do, He was planning to bring life and victory out of something dead and lifeless. This prophecy was about Jesus Christ growing from the line of Jesse. It is interesting to note that God said Jesus would come from Jesse instead of King David, even though it is the same line. This may have been to stress the humble nature of Jesus.

**?** How do these verses point to the unexpected nature of the coming Messiah? Why was this important?

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The fact that Jesus would grow as a rod from a stump signified God's power to bring life from death. Nothing is impossible with God, and He is not limited by the condition of a nation or a people. The fact that a new shoot would grow from a dried out, withered, leftover piece of wood spoke to God's faithfulness to His promises, even when circumstances may not look favorable. The Davidic dynasty would continue as the Lord promised though it appeared impossible.

The Lord went on to describe exactly what the Messiah would be like. He made it clear that this rod from a dead stump wouldn't just barely survive but would be fully alive. These verses go on to name seven—the number of perfection and completion—characteristics of God that would be fully present in Jesus.

The seven aspects of the Spirit listed that Jesus would possess reflected His deity. They are characteristics that indicate His lordship and power. The wisdom of Jesus would be evident in His interactions on earth. Over and over in difficult and tricky situations, Jesus responded in wisdom. There is nothing we go through in this life that Jesus doesn't understand. He lived as a man and endured the same temptations that we do (see Hebrews 4:15). He is perfectly suited to be our High Priest, and we can trust Him in all things.



What are some ways you need the characteristics of Jesus listed in these verses?

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Other characteristics listed include counsel, might, knowledge and fear of the Lord. He is our perfect counselor, and we can go to Him in every situation. Jesus has the power to do anything. He knows everything about our situations and about us. Jesus has the knowledge that we don't have but we need, so we can trust Him even when we don't understand. The fear of the Lord is a vital characteristic as it reminds us that Jesus kept Himself in submission to God the Father and showed Him perfect honor in all things. Though this list is not comprehensive of all God's characteristics, they are grouped as a perfect set of seven to show the fullness and perfection of God as revealed in Jesus Christ.



Application: Where specifically do you need to turn to Jesus as Counselor and Helper today?

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## 2. The Character of the Messiah (Isaiah 11:3-5)

We are called to be like Christ in how we live our lives here on earth. Studying the specific aspects of His nature is a good measuring stick for us today. Naming the seven characteristics of the Spirit of God that are present in Jesus stresses the need for us to know even more about who Jesus is so that we can continue to grow more like Him daily. We will never reach perfection like Jesus, but we should continually aspire to grow more into His image.

Nothing pleased Jesus more than doing the will of the Father. When He faced the temptation to seek glory for Himself or to give in under the pressure of the moment, He always chose to surrender His will to God's. How well do we do that? Do we also delight in doing the will of the Father, or are we more often pushing our own agenda and hoping the God will bless it? There is a big difference in the two. Jesus showed us what it meant to live life perfectly submitted to God and not to self.



How hard is it for you to submit to God instead of fulfilling selfish desires? What makes this difficult?

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Jesus did not make judgments based on circumstances or what people said. He focused on righteousness and truth in all things. It is easy for us to make snap judgments based on what we see in an instant, or based on what someone else says, without knowing all the facts. Jesus modeled seeking justice for all people. This mindset is countercultural in a society where people tend to be more focused on self than justice for all.

The “scepter from his mouth” referred to the power of Jesus’s spoken word. He only needs to announce judgment, and it happens. That is unmatched power. Jesus keeps righteousness and faithfulness wrapped around Him like a belt. All He does or says is wrapped in these two important aspects of His nature. Righteousness can be defined as right living, whereas faithfulness speaks to how true He stays to His own character. He never makes choices or decision to act against His nature as God.

**?** Why are righteousness and faithfulness important? How are we to display these characteristics in our lives?

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Jesus came to earth as the promised Messiah, and He lived perfectly. His display of the qualities and characteristics of God help us know God better and show us how we should strive to live. How concerned are we with living in a way that reflects the nature of Christ to those around us? It is far easier to do and say whatever we choose than to submit and surrender our will to the Father. Jesus showed us how to live, and we are called to know Him and to strive for righteousness as He did. If it matters to Jesus, then it should matter to us.


**?** Application: What action can you take to show care for someone else today instead of focusing only on your own needs or desires?

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### 3. The Peace of the Messiah (Isaiah 11:6-10)

When Jesus comes back to reign it will be a different world. He is the Prince of Peace, and all the earth will recognize this truth. Even nature will be different. The passage lists some of the changes that will be evident when Jesus reigns. Wild animals will no longer be predators and prey. Rather, they will be plant eaters and reside in peace with each other. Things as we know them will be turned upside down.

 What does the predator and prey being at peace with each other say to you about the peace Jesus will bring?

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Can you imagine a world where a little child will be safe around animals considered dangerous today? This kind of power is foreign to us and only accompanies the Messiah. In His reign, not only will animals be at peace with each other, but the way they relate to humans will also change. In the reign of Christ, knowledge of the Lord will cover the whole earth and it will be glorious.


Through Isaiah, God promised that when Jesus returned the glory of His reign will not be for the Jews only but also for the Gentiles. Referencing Jesus as a signal or banner to stand for the people is about gathering the people and drawing them together. Just as a leader might hold a banner or flag up in a huge crowd of people so that his group recognizes where to go and who to follow, Jesus is our banner. He calls us to Himself and unites both Jew and Gentile in peace.

 How does Jesus bring together people who might not naturally be at peace with one another?

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Thinking about when Jesus's return to earth recalls when He came the first time. As we celebrate Christmas, may we remember that Jesus was born to bring God's perfect and everlasting peace as King over all creation. No matter what we might get caught up in during the Christmas holiday, it is imperative that we remember who we serve and why we celebrate. When we stay focused on Jesus and how He lived, we will live under Jesus as "our banner" of everlasting peace. That peace makes all the difference, and the world needs to see it starting in God's people.

 Application: How might you reflect the peace Jesus brings to people around you this Christmas season?

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## Conclusion

God's plan for the world was to send Jesus. God promised to send the Messiah, who would come from a dead and useless stump. This reminds us of the unlimited power of God. The Messiah will come with humility and display the characteristics of God to the world. The seven qualities grouped together in the beginning of Isaiah 11 stress the fullness and perfection of Jesus Christ.

The description of Jesus in this passage also gives examples we can strive to emulate in our own lives. By recognizing the specific ways Jesus surrendered to the Father, we can be motivated to trust the Father's will as He did.


In this time of year that we celebrate and focus on Jesus's birth, it is vital that we remember and celebrate the peace He brought through His life, death, and resurrection. We also anticipate His return to earth and the fact that peace will reign over the earth when He comes again. Let's be people who spread His banner of peace to those around us as much as possible.



 How have you experienced the peace of Jesus?


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 Is there anything in your life that is keeping you from experiencing His peace? How might you turn that over to Him?

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 Are you an instrument of peace to those around you? How can you be an instrument of God's peace where you work, live, and play this Christmas season?

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# FOR NEXT WEEK

## Jesus is Our Hope

### Main Passages

- Isaiah 35:1-10

### Session Outline

1. Restoration Will Come (Isaiah 35:1-2)
2. The People Will Flourish (Isaiah 35:3-7)
3. Highway of Hope (Isaiah 35:8-10)

### Memorize

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