

**Title:** Advent Ascents: “Peace be within you” // **Scripture:** Psalm 122

**ARRIVAL / SOCIAL TIME** *15-20 minutes*

Spend the first 15 minutes or so of your time together catching up and socializing with one another. Also find time to catch up together on how the activity from last week turned out.

**SERMON REVIEW** *5-10 minutes*

This week we continue our Advent journey together; advent is a time of waiting for the arrival of Christmas. During these next few weeks we are going to move through several of the Psalms of Ascent (Psalms 120-134). These were songs that the people of God used to sing as they made their pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the Feasts and Celebrations of their own “Holy Days” or “holidays.” Just like we have Christmas music that readies our hearts for Christmas, the Psalms of Ascent readied the people of God’s hearts for their holidays. This week we look at Psalm 122 to ready our hearts with Peace. Peace is a place of wholeness, in the presence of God.

**THE MAIN THOUGHT** *keep this in mind as you facilitate discussion*

You exist, wrapped in God’s presence.

**SEE IT – Questions** *10-15 minutes*

**Picture** (What is the story saying?): What are some identifying characteristics of Jerusalem? (see verses 1, 3, 5, 9) In the New Testament how do we see Jesus as the answer to the prayer for peace?

**Mirror** (Where am I in the story?): What response do I have when I’m invited into the presence of God? What role does Jesus play in my worship? How does God’s presence (peace) influence your view of myself?

**Window** (How does the story change how I see those around me?): Even though peace is yet lacking, and we pray for it, how can we be instruments of God’s peace to those around us? How can the awareness of God’s presence (peace) in us affect the judgments that we make and the value we place on others?

**BE IT – Practice**

**Change UP** // Invitation *10 minutes*

If you are able to, play this song: <http://bit.ly/2eKwf1T> (“Christ Be All Around Me”) and let God awaken you to the invitations He is constantly sending you to be aware of His presence and to a new realm of possibilities that His presence brings.

**Change IN** // Expectation *10 minutes*

In Psalm 122 we see Jerusalem as a place where unity prevailed and as a picture to us of the Peace of Christ, which unifies our hearts. Talk together about how important it is to live everyday life with expectation that where heaven comes to earth and justice prevails, it fortifies us to reach out with Hope and Peace to those around us.

**Change OUT** // Transformation *5 minutes*

Pray for the peace of the Neighborhoods, Nations and Next Generation. Follow up on last week’s activity to demonstrate the goodness of God. Keep moving forward with that!

**CLOSING PRAYER** *5 minutes*

Play this song. <http://bit.ly/2h2tll1> (“Let Us Be Known By Our Love”) Take a few minutes to gather any prayer requests and pray for each other to SEE IT and BE IT this week.