**Opening Scripture**

*Psalm 34:17-20 NLT*

*The LORD hears his people when they call to him for help. He rescues them from all their troubles. [18] The LORD is close to the brokenhearted; he rescues those whose spirits are crushed. [19] The righteous person faces many troubles, but the LORD comes to the rescue each time. [20] For the LORD protects the bones of the righteous; not one of them is broken!*

**Pandemic Proof Peace**

Intro: Peace is something that many people desperately want in our world today. When we hear the word peace different things may come to mind; a warm summer day at the beach with a cool breeze, a tall glass of lemonade lying on a hammock under a palm tree, or maybe just a comfortable recliner and big screen TV. Although all these scenes can represent pleasure and calm, they do not paint a complete picture of what real peace is, at least not the peace that we are looking for in times like this. My goal tonight is to share with you the Good News that our Lord Jesus has given us a Peace that is not contingent on natural circumstances, but a Peace that endures. I also want to share some keys to enjoying this Peace that can keep you in the midst of a pandemic or any other storm that you may be facing.

Main Text

*Philippians 4:6-8 NKJV*

*Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;* ***[7] and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*** *[8] Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy— meditate on these things.*

**Key One To Enjoying God’s Peace: Biblical Meditation**

Secular research has demonstrated that meditation in various forms has been found to reduce stress. Specifically there are studies that show people who meditated regularly for six weeks showed less activation of their immune systems and less emotional distress when they were put in a stressful situation. More studies have shown improvement for fibromyalgia and psoriasis in patients who meditate.

The scientific world is just now catching up on what God has already outlined for us in His Word.

**(Explain that Unlike some forms of meditation that teach you to either clear your mind or repeat a mantra, Biblical Meditation is concentrated focus on The True and Living God. Expound on verses including connection between verse 8 being the solution as to how to fulfill verse 6)**

*Isaiah 26:3-4 NLT*

*You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you! [4] Trust in the LORD always, for the LORD GOD is the eternal Rock.*

**Second Key For Enjoying God’s Peace: Look At Life Through Spiritual Eyes**

*2 Kings 6:8-17 NLT*

*[8] When the king of Aram was at war with Israel, he would confer with his officers and say, "We will mobilize our forces at such and such a place."*

*[9] But immediately Elisha, the man of God, would warn the king of Israel, "Do not go near that place, for the Arameans are planning to mobilize their troops there."*

*[10] So the king of Israel would send word to the place indicated by the man of God. Time and again Elisha warned the king, so that he would be on the alert there. [11] The king of Aram became very upset over this. He called his officers together and demanded, "Which of you is the traitor? Who has been informing the king of Israel of my plans?" [12] "It's not us, my lord the king," one of the officers replied. "Elisha, the prophet in Israel, tells the king of Israel even the words you speak in the privacy of your bedroom!" [13] "Go and find out where he is," the king commanded, "so I can send troops to seize him." And the report came back: "Elisha is at Dothan." [14] So one night the king of Aram sent a great army with many chariots and horses to surround the city.* ***[15] When the servant of the man of God got up early the next morning and went outside, there were troops, horses, and chariots everywhere. "Oh, sir, what will we do now?" the young man cried to Elisha. [16] "Don't be afraid!" Elisha told him. "For there are more on our side than on theirs!" [17] Then Elisha prayed, "O LORD, open his eyes and let him see!" The LORD opened the young man's eyes, and when he looked up, he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire.***

(Expound on how meditation-focus on natural circumstances can lead us into anxiety and frustration, well the opposite is true for those who rest in God’s Word).

*Mark 4:24-25 NLT*

*Then he added, “Pay close attention to what you hear. The closer you listen, the more understanding you will be given— and you will receive even more. [25] To those who listen to my teaching, more understanding will be given. But for those who are not listening, even what little understanding they have will be taken away from them.”*

**Third Key For Enjoying God’s Peace: Read The End of The Story**

*Revelation 22:1-5 NKJV*

*And he showed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding from the throne of God and of the Lamb. [2] In the middle of its street, and on either side of the river, was the tree of life, which bore twelve fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. [3] And there shall be no more curse, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants shall serve Him. [4] They shall see His face, and His name shall be on their foreheads. [5] There shall be no night there: They need no lamp nor light of the sun, for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign forever and ever.*

Whenever you read a story or watch a movie you haven’t seen, you don’t want them to tell you the ending because you want to stay at the edge of your seat. There is no suspense if you know the end of the story.

(Example: Watching a game of your favorite team win a big game...regardless of how bad your team may be losing, your heart rate isn’t going to go up but so much because you already know the outcome...And So it shall be for each of us as we live our lives, no matter how many twists or turns our lives may take, when we reflect on what is waiting for us at the finish line, it allows us to enjoy the peace that God promises us)

Summary: When it comes to our security and our destination, it is vital for us to remember what our final destination is. It is vital for us to remember that we have an expected end as God told the prophet Jeremiah. It is vital for us to remember that God sees the end from the beginning and that we can ask Him to, by way of His Holy Spirit show us those things to come, go along in our journey in this life. Knowing the end from the beginning will allow us the opportunity to enjoy the Peace that passes all understanding.