

Weekly Devotional  
April 16, 2020

*Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Corinthians 13:11 ESV)*

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The transition from being engaged to getting married is a curious thing. Two individuals who've never lived together—and who genuinely love each other—are suddenly finding out the differences in their likes and dislikes. If they're not careful, the bitterness of conflict can creep into their relationship.

Perhaps you've experienced a similar challenge with your own family. Being quarantined during the current pandemic means you're probably spending *a lot* more time with siblings and parents, significantly more than you're used to. As you spend all those hours together in your own home, you might be finding out that your patience towards one another is wearing thin. An argument arises over the TV remote or a video game. A fight spews over who's supposed to take out the trash. Or maybe the way someone chews their food starts to irritate you!

This week take a moment to pause and analyze how your heart has been responding to your own family members. Have you felt irritated? Is there bitterness in your heart? Have your words been sharp? Has there been a break in fellowship? Look to today's verse: "Aim for restoration... live in peace" (2 Cor 13:11). Do whatever it takes to "live peaceably with all" (Rom 12:18). If you're struggling with this, remember that God sought to restore you to himself, and—*through faith*—Christ's death has brought peace between you and the Lord (Rom 5:1). Then, let this good news encourage you seek peace with your family members, trusting that "the God of love and peace will be with you" (2 Cor 13:11).

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Questions:

- Have you experienced any conflict with your family during this quarantine? Why did the conflict arise? Take a moment to think through the things that have tested the peace in your household. What have others done? What have *you* done? It's easy to see others' roles in conflict and cast blame. But if we're honest, we probably played a role too. As you figure out the role you played, confess your part of the conflict to the Lord.
- Spend some time meditating on the peace you enjoy with God. In what ways does Christ's death encourage you to live peaceably with your own family members?
- After some time in confession, meditation, and praise, take a moment to seek peace with a family member. With a soft heart, have a gentle one-on-one conversation with them. Be willing to humbly ask for forgiveness as you do your part in seeking restoration.