

“God’s Gift Of Peace” Delivered by E A Terry 12/10/17

Isaiah 57:14 – 21; Colossians 1: 15 - 23; John 14: 15 – 27; Luke 2: 8 – 20 (**Sermon**)

During Advent we are looking at the gifts God has given to us.

We looked at God’s gift of hope last week and today we will be looking at God’s gift of peace.

Advent is a time when we prepare for the coming of Jesus the Prince of Peace.

We know that Jesus, the Prince of Peace, came to Bethlehem 2,000 years ago, but there is no peace on earth.

There are wars, there is violence, and there is hatred all around us.

Unfortunately there is bickering and posturing in churches and sadly many Christians are bitter and do not have peace in their lives.

So if Jesus, the Prince of Peace, came was Jesus a failure?

Or is the failure with our understanding of the angels’ message of peace?

The angel’s message of peace is clear; “Glory to God in the highest heaven and peace among those whom God favors.” (Luke 2:14)

But people tend to pick and choose what we want to hear.

A lot of Christmas cards simply say, "Peace on Earth."

And other Christmas cards read "Peace To All Mankind."

But the angel did not promising universal peace on the earth.

God's gift of peace is only promised to those people on whom God's favor rests.

Also please note, the angel's message starts with giving God glory.

God's peace is offered to all mankind but God's peace is only realized by those people who give glory to God by living a life that is pleasing to Almighty God.

That leads us to ask how do we please Almighty God.

The Bible answers this question.

In Micah 6:8 we read these words, "And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God."

In other words, we are to be in a right relationship with God and our fellowman.

Jesus said, "If you love me, keep my commandments." (John 14:6)

God's peace is not a reward we earn, but rather God's peace is a precious gift given to all those who truly love The Lord and to people who make a sincere effort to live a life pleasing to Almighty God.

Jesus came to earth to pay the price of our sins.

Jesus came to mend our broken relationship with God.

But Jesus also came to change our attitudes and our actions.

The angel's message tells us it is possible for us to have peace with God our Creator.

Most people think of peace as the absence of strife, stress, and violence.

But Jesus talked about a kind of peace that was much more than the absence of stress, strife, and violence.

Jesus offers an inner peace.

The peace Jesus offers will sustain us even in the midst of adversity because Jesus' peace comes from Almighty God and Jesus' peace surpasses all understanding.

But we have to accept God's gift of peace.

We have peace with God when we accept God's gift of Jesus as our Savior.

In John 3:16 we read, "For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him."

In John 14:27 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".

There are several aspects of God's gift of peace in verse 27 that we do not want to miss.

Peace comes from "The God of Peace". (Romans 16:20)

And Jesus The Messiah is referred to as "The Prince of Peace". (Isaiah 9:6)

Real Peace is a gift from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus said; "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you." (John14:27)

Then in John 16:33 Jesus tells us, "In Me you will have peace; in this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Jesus gives His peace to help and comfort His disciples in this life.

This gift of Jesus' peace is for the present moment.

We don't have to wait until we get to heaven to possess the Peace of Christ.

The Peace of Christ is ours right now. It is for this very moment.

We also see God's peace is not the same kind of peace that the world thinks of:

The ultimate kind of peace Jesus is promising is a spiritual peace, an inward peace; "the peace of God which surpasses all understanding." (Philippians 4:7)

God's gift of peace is beyond our comprehension.

God's gift of peace can not be explained, but when you have God's peace you know it is real.

God's gift of peace is not temporary nor is God's peace a fragile peace.

Jesus will not withdraw His peace even though we might reject it or withdraw from it.

Finally God's peace drives away worries and fears. "do not let not your heart be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27)

The word trouble used here literally means; trepidation, feeling fear over something that may or may not happen.

We might name this kind of fear as "worry."

Then Jesus goes on to say, "do not be afraid."

This second type of fear is an anxiety felt in the presence of current danger, evil, or pain.

In effect Jesus is saying; “trust me!

It is useless to worry about something you have no control over, don't worry over something that may or may not happen, and don't be anxious and fearful even in the presence of current danger.

And the reason is given in John 16:33 Jesus tells us, “In Me you will have peace; in this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.”

Jesus has overcome the world; Jesus has overcome Satan who is the source of all evil and all pain!

So the question is how can you and I experience God's Gift Of Peace?

Throughout the Old and New Testaments God promises His “peace that surpasses all understanding” to His people.

But God's promise of peace was always tied to obedience, forgiveness, and righteousness.

If we are not enjoying God's gift of peace every day in every situation we need to examine our relationship with Jesus Christ!

You see the closer our personal relationship is with Jesus the more peaceful our lives will be!

When your relation with Jesus is strained you will not experience peace in your life.

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago He offered peace to all people who would accept Him and His way of life.

But as you know, all the people did not accept Jesus as their King then and today all people have not accepted Jesus as their personal Savior and made Jesus The Lord of their life.

But when Jesus comes again Jesus will establish His earthly kingdom and at time every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord.

Jesus will establish world peace because Jesus will put down all rebellion and unrighteousness.

Jesus will rule with a rod of iron.

Jesus will punish Satan and cast him into the lake of burning sulfur so that Satan will no longer be able to deceive the people.

Sadly there will never be world peace until Jesus comes again and sadly there will be never be peace in people's lives until they choose to accept Jesus and Jesus' way of life.

But the Good News of Jesus Christ is that Christian's can experience peace with Almighty God, we can experience God's inner peace in spite of our outward troubles, and we have the privilege of sharing the peace of Jesus Christ with the people around us.

Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." (John 14:27)

AMEN