

Three Gifts of Christmas (Part 1) – Peace - Dec. 9, 2020

Certain words trigger Christmas images. Peace, Joy, & Love. 3 part series. Each concept comes from the Christmas story. Tonight - Peace.

Luke 2 – story of The Birth of Jesus

And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be taxed. ² (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) ³ And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) ⁵ To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. ⁶ And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. ⁷ And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸ And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹ And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. ¹⁰ And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. ¹¹ For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ¹⁴ **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.**

New International Version - "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those **on whom his favor rests.**"

New Living Translation - "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those **with whom God is pleased.**"

English Standard Version - "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

Berean Study Bible - "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rests!"

- Luke wrote in Greek. Difference in 1 letter.
Peace of all – or peace for God’s people?

Isaiah 9:6 – Jesus is the "Prince of Peace."

John 16:33 "I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."

Psalms 29:11 "The LORD gives strength to his people; the LORD blesses his people with peace."

Isaiah 54:10 "Though the mountains be shaken and the hills be removed, yet my unfailing love for you will not be shaken nor my covenant of peace be removed," says the LORD, who has compassion on you."

Romans 15:13 "May the God of hope fill you with all joy & peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Galatians 5:22-23 "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, , kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. . . ."

- **God’s Peace is available to all, but not all will have it. Believe.**

Is. 26:3 – “You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, all whose thoughts are fixed on you!” **Peace is Gift to those who believe, trust.**

Peace is internal, not external. Still have problems.

- Travel 90 miles. No room - Inn. **Peace in spite of problems.**

- God’s destiny for us is sometimes tied w/ **discomfort/inconvenience**.

Mary & Joseph were preparing for a baby. Trip not convenient.

Given a choice, Mary & Joseph wouldn’t have traveled.

- ❖ God directs us, moves us. Purpose. **“Divine Interruption”**

We’ll also have unwanted “Interruptions” in our lives...

God also works through **Discomfort**.

Inn would’ve been more comfortable.

God had prepared a place – a manger. Purposeful.

God makes us uncomfortable to move us where we need to be; there we find His comfort and joy.

Shepherds arrive, and you know you’re in the right place!

- **God’s peace is a gift we need.** This world offers chaos. Change.
You don’t crave peace until you live without it.

- ❖ Can't look to gov't or environment for peace. Temporary.
 - It's human nature to question things that happen; But too often we are looking for things to be easy.
 - **God's ways aren't our ways. Jesus didn't take an "easy way"**
 - Stop looking for life to be smooth sailing & problem free.
 - Problems don't mean that God doesn't love you.
 - "No room" means God has another place for you. God was still orchestrating those events.

Phil. 4:7 – “And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

- Peace guards our hearts, not our lives.
- To know this peace, you must know Jesus.
- To know Jesus, do like the Shepherds – go to the manger.

Micah 2:2 - “But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times.” 4 He will stand and shepherd his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they will live securely, for then his greatness will reach to the ends of the earth. 5 And he will be our peace....

Jesus was prophesied to be our peace. Micah – 750 yrs before.

God knows what you need before you do. He has a plan.

Let this story remind you:

- God creates divine interruptions in life, but we can still have peace . . . one that transcends inconveniences.
 - Would life be different if you saw each “interruption” as God’s divine intervention? Still have Peace.
- God creates discomfort, but we can still have joy
 - Would life be different if you saw God’s hand behind each experience that moved you out of comfort zone?
- Pray for awareness of Divine Interventions; God directing our steps, orchestrating our day.
- Pray for eyes of faith to see God guiding our course, making a way when there seems to be no way, & providing a manger when the Inn is closed.

SONG OF THE WEEK - “Peace has Come” – Hillsong

16 days til Christmas. 23 days till 2021