

God's Glory and Our Peace

"And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host [army!] praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" (Luke 2:13–14) And when the angel had announced this news to the shepherds (verse 11), and pointed them to the very animal shed where the baby lay, suddenly an army of angels appeared in the sky. Evidently, one angel can bring the news, but it does not suffice for one angel to respond to the news. The meaning of this news, the ultimate outcome of this news — that demands an army of angels.. The joyful news that on a day, at the



perfect fullness of time, in the perfect prophesied city, a Savior was born, Who was Christ, the Lord — that news has two great outcomes. The coming of this Child will be the greatest revelation of the Glory of God even among the heights of heaven, and the coming of this Child will bring peace to God's people — Who will one day fill the whole earth with righteousness and peace. "Of the increase of His government and of Peace there will be no end (Isaiah 9:7)." First and foremost, God is Glorified because this Child is born. And second, peace is to spread everywhere this Child is received. These are the great purposes for the coming of Jesus: **Glory ever-ascending from man to God. Peace ever-descending from God to man.** God's glory sung out among men for the sake of His Name. God's peace lived out among men for the sake of His Name. There is hardly a better way to sum up what God was about when He created the world, or when He came to reclaim the world in Jesus Christ — **His Glory, our Peace. His greatness, our joy. His beauty, our pleasure. God's peace in Christ is offered to the world. But only the "sons of peace" receive it. How do you know if you are a "son of peace"? How do you know if you are part of the angels' promise, "Peace among those with whom He is pleased!"? Answer: You welcome the Peacemaker, you receive Jesus.** My great desire for you this Christmas is that you enjoy this Peace. We know that there are global aspects to this peace that lie in the future when "**The earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea**" (Habakkuk 2:14) But for the present time Jesus has come to inaugurate that Peace among God's people. And there are three relationships in which He wants you to pursue this peace and enjoy this peace. **Peace with God. Peace with your own soul. And peace with other people, as much as it lies in you.** May you experience the Peace that surpasses all understanding through the Prince of Peace Himself Jesus.

"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled; do not be afraid." John 14:27



"But now in Christ Jesus you Gentiles who once were far off have been brought near in the Blood of Christ. **For He is our Peace, Who has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in His flesh the law of commandments and ordinances, that He might create in Himself One new man in place of the two, so**

making Peace, and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the Cross, thereby bringing the hostility to an end. And He came and Preached Peace to you who were far off and Peace to those who were near; for through Him we both have access in One Spirit to the Father." (Ephesians 2:13-18)

There are three mentions of the word peace in that passage: "**He is our Peace,**" Paul says, speaking of Christ, and He has made peace (Verse 15: "**so making peace**"), and, "**He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near.**" In those three occurrences of the word peace, you have the apostle's outline of how Christ makes peace, the way he goes about it. So it is very important that we note these. **He is our peace -- that is the origin of peace.** Then there is the process of peace, how it is actually brought about — **He came and made peace.** Finally there is the means of laying hold or possessing that peace -- **He preached peace.**

True Peace is Oneness

Paul starts with a definition of what true peace really is. **True peace is oneness.** It is not merely the termination of hostility, the absence of conflict; it means being one. This is very important to know. Otherwise, when you talk about peace, you are only being superficial. Is it peace when you get two armies to lay down their weapons and stop fighting each other? Well, we call it that. And certainly it is to be preferred over armed conflict. But it is not really peace -- not according to God's definition. Is it peace when two friends who haven't spoken to each other for some time finally decide to agree to disagree, to speak civilly to each other, but they don't seek each other's company any more? Not according to God's definition. Anything else is superficial and temporary and highly unsatisfactory. You know this to be true, don't you? You have made peace on superficial terms, and have found it only external. If you merely agree not to fight, it is not peace. And invariably it results, sooner or later, in a new outbreak, with all the previous animosity surging to the surface once again. It is only temporary, and never very satisfying.

True Peace Is Our Restoration With God



In a world filled with war and violence, it's difficult to see how Jesus could be the all-powerful God who acts in human history and be the embodiment of peace. But physical safety and political harmony don't necessarily reflect the kind of peace He's talking about. Peace is not the absence of war and tragedy in one's life; it is the

presence of Jesus in one's life. In Isaiah's prophecy about the coming Messiah, he says: **"For a child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace"** (Isaiah 9:6). The Hebrew word for "peace," shalom, is often used in reference to an appearance of calm and tranquility of individuals, groups, and nations. The Greek word eirene means **"unity and accord"**; Paul uses eirene to describe the objective of the New Testament church. But the deeper, more foundational meaning of peace is **"The spiritual harmony brought about by an individual's restoration with God."** If one wishes peace with God, one can only find this peace in and through Jesus Christ.

Christ's Work As "Prince Of Peace."

The Cross Remains
The Sign Of This
Peace.



In our sinful state, we are enemies with God (Romans 5:8-10). **"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we**

shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life." **Because of Christ's sacrifice, we are restored to a relationship of peace with God** (Romans 5:1) **"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ..."** This is the deep, abiding peace between our hearts and our Creator that cannot be taken away and the ultimate fulfillment of Christ's work as **"Prince of Peace."** (John 10:27-28) **"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand."** This is probably one of the most reassuring passages of scripture to the believer. In it is found an unconditional statement by our Lord that those who are His are His for all eternity, because they are in His hand, under His care, and are in the Father's hand, under His care. The strength of the Father is that which guarantees this condition of safety.

He Is Our Peace

The secret of oneness is a Person: **"He Is Our Peace."** And when Christ Jesus makes peace -- between individuals or between nations -- that peace will be a satisfying, permanent, and genuine peace. It will be a real peace that will last and last. And it will be a totally satisfying experience. What Paul is saying is that in order to live at peace, you must have peace. The problem with most of us is that we want to start by clearing up only the results of conflict. God never starts there; He starts with the person. **He says peace is a Person, and in order for you to live at peace with someone else, you must be at peace with the Person of Christ.** If you have His peace, then you can start solving the conflict around you. But you never can do it on any other basis. **So the place to start, the origin of peace, is the settling of any problems between you and Jesus Christ. That is always the place to start.**



We Mirror His Peace To Others



The gospel is the good news that the King has come, as promised in the Holy Scriptures, in the Person and loving work of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Prince of Peace, Savior of the world, Lord of all; Who died on the Cross for our sins and was resurrected from the dead, sending forth His Spirit and Word to give us life through a new heart and spirit, forgiving all who will believe in Him crediting to us His perfect righteousness, reconciling and uniting us to the Father and adopting us as dearly loved children, and giving to us the supreme gift of knowing and enjoying God in Christ forever. **Having given us peace with God, Jesus enables us to mirror His peace to others by: inspiring us to love, worship, glorify, obey, and serve God with all our hearts, uniting us in spirit and purpose with other believers in His body, the Church, empowering us to lovingly restore and forgive others, even our enemies, enabling us to put off sinful ways and be renewed in His likeness, and making us Ambassadors of His life-giving, reconciling power.** **"You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, telling the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, Who is Lord of all"** (Acts 10:36). **"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace"** (Colossians 3:12-15). **"Blessed are the peacemakers for the will be called the Sons of God"** (Matthew 5:9) **"But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy. Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace."** (James 3:17-18)