

Christmas Message :What The Incarnate Christ Brings To Us
Teague Bible Church December 17, 2023

Focus on Luke 2: 7-14 today

The word "PEACE" means, to most people, the simple condition of not being in open conflict with others. Getting along at the most basic level.

Ex. Nation to nation - Even if there is seething anger between them, they can have cessation of aggression. It is not ideal, but better than war, some would say.

In **Isaiah** we see something more than cessation of hostilities. Something much deeper. Something not possible to have from this world's system. **Isaiah 9:1-7, 26:3-4, 53:5**

Define the word:

Jerusalem = Place (foundation) of "peace."

Shalom= Peace. Root word in Hebrew == "familiar"

Eirene = Greek "unity" (ah rain knee)

For believers, a new relationship with God where we are at peace with God; "familiar" with God (**I Cor. 2:10-12, Romans 5:1-10**), and have "unity" with God.

Some Christians feel that God may have forgiven them, but that God is now simply tolerating them. That is wrong.

Real peace: of the kind Jesus can give, must work in any circumstance.

How many times have you thought, " If I could just get this situation fixed, then I would be at peace, but till then I guess I will have to live with this ambiguity, this less-than – ideal situation; I suppose I must live in perpetual unrest till the end of this life!"

John 14: 27 " Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you ; not as the world gives, do I give to you, let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful." (A clear distinction from anything the world has to offer)

MAIN TEXT TODAY:

Lk. 2:8-14 (from K.J.V.)

**Luke 2:14 “GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST AND ON EARTH PEACE,
GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN.”** (King James Version 1611 A.D.)

(**Two problems** with the verse above when reading this from K.J.V.)
We will discussion later

Most read this and think it means a world peace through which **everybody** will be able to get along and all will be happy by some worldwide, non-exclusive turn of events. Some overwhelming philosophy, or government system, or science breakthrough will cause this to happen they think. Perhaps a blessing for all people like the providential blessing of the sun and rain falling on the evil and good alike. (Matthew 5:45.) Peace for most people is just a word, or a good idea, but not anything vital, and real, and **of daily consequence.**

Example: Jewish Rabbi in Olympia / I ask, “Why do you not believe Jesus is the Messiah?” Answer, “HE DID NOT BRING PEACE” (A national restoration of Jews, and world peace with no war, “ Lion lay down with the lamb,” things from **second** coming, but the rabbi thought this happened at the first coming of messiah.)

The “comings” of Christ are clearly in two parts.

1. The first coming is for salvation
2. The second coming for judgement of unbelievers, and rewards for believers.

First, the citizens who are to be a part of this future kingdom must be transformed to enabled to live in that kingdom, but while in this present life.

Adam had peace; but chose war. We have war ; but can choose peace.

Ex. I Heard The Bells On Christmas Day. This song assumes that the peace Christ talks about is FUTURE. Verse 1,3,4

*****Now back to the two problems with K.J.V., referred to earlier *****

Lk. 2:8-14 in GREEK, From the accurate N.A.S (also NIV, NRSV, NLT have this right.)

New American Standard- Luke 2:14 "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace among men with whom He is pleased."

New International Version- Luke 2:14 " Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom His favor rest."

GREEK:

Problem 1: "peace" is present tense (Not something waiting out in the future)

Problem 2: Possessive Genitive in Gk. meaning "peace" comes only to a particular group – those who belong to Him = "his men"

"his men" = anthropois

"favor, good will, or pleasure" = eudokias-

„, "to his men in whom He takes pleasure." (not to everybody)

If it meant a general, non-conditional peace, kind of smeared over everybody, then what about the verses below?

Ex. What about Lk. 2:25-35 Simeon? Peace or Division?

Ex. What about Mt. 10: 34-37 ? When you change sides you are considered a traitor. Not all will be peaceful for you from the **outside**, but **inside** you will be at peace. Not because you just know information about the future, (that is, the fullness of the Kingdom to come / that there shall be future peace,) but rather real supernatural power in you now because the Holy Spirit dwells in you!

Your greatest apologetic ? THEY NEED TO SEE THAT THE CORE OF YOUR LIFE IS LIVING WITHIN THE REAL PEACE OF GOD , AS A "PRESENT- TENSE" REALITY.

A deep, abiding peace: It is what the world will believe about you, when they will not believe anything else about you.

FINAL: The song WONDERFUL PEACE vs. 2,5

A Few Fun Facts:

Matthew 2- The wise men narrative- happened at least 3 months and up to two years later. They traveled 900 miles - Ezra 7:9/ 8:31. When I set the Nativity scene I put the wise men as far away from the manger scene as possible and let the kids know that the wise men visited Jesus when He was a toddler, and not at the manger when Jesus was born, but later, at a house. I still get that look that says, "Really; this is life-shaking information?"

Nowhere does it say there were 3 wise men; it could have been 50. Unlikely only three took such a dangerous trip. We assume three because there were three gifts. Are we bored yet?

Nowhere does it say they were kings. Nowhere does it say they were from the far east (Orient.) The "East" would be Persia , (Iraq and Afghanistan.) Daniel's prophecies, given when he lived in this area, in the 600's B.C., would be well noted by the wise men. They were religiously trained men, not kings.

Were they named Casper, Melchior, and Balthazar? NO. Although I assume they were friendly.

Was one a black man? NO.

Did they follow a comet or a star to the location in Bethlehem? No. It was the supernatural light called the Shekinah Glory. No natural star could lead to such an exact, small location. Bethlehem had only about 1000 people at this time.

Best thing we can do for our family this Christmas? **Be at peace!** Spend some time alone with the Lord, after you have done all the preparations and **before** they step into your house or you step into their house. How often have you exhausted yourself in preparations for Christmas only to then be grumpy the whole event. Men need to help more until it is done and women need to stop being so picky and irritable while it is being done. Hum; not an "Amen" from either quarter?

Question: Do we walk in the peace the angels were talking about? Best gift you can give your family this year is something they will "catch" from you and from me. Be contagious! God bless you my dear brothers and sisters in Christ. JWP

THE CHRISTMAS NARRATIVE IN CHRONICAL ORDER

The long version in the proper order :

Luke 1: 5-80 then Matthew 1:18-25 then Luke 2: 1-39 then Matthew 2: 1-23.

The short version in the proper order : (If you have kids; do this one.)

Luke 1: 26-38, then Matthew 1: 18-25, then Luke 2: 1-20, then Matthew 2: 1-23.