

Christmas Together (Peace of Christmas)

From the floor

- A. Let's go back a little over 2,000 years.
 1. Mary
 2. Joseph
 3. Betrothed to be married.
 - a. Kinda like engaged to be married but, this was legally binding.
 - b. For many of the practical purposes they were married except they did not live together as a married couple yet.
 4. **Caesar Augustus** had call for a census.
 - a. Everyone was supposed to go to the home town of their family to register for the census.
 - b. Mary and Joseph were on the way and had arrived in a city to register – **Bethlehem** – The city of David – Joseph was from the line of David- The King.
 - c. It was so crowded that as they entered into the town they could not find a room to rent for the night.
 5. In the middle of all of this Mary begins the pains of labor.
 - a. The baby was on the way and there was no room for them to rent to have the baby.
 - b. In the rush Joseph finds someone who was willing to let them stay in a stable.
 6. A place carved out of the side of a cliff or mountain.
 - a. A place for the animals to get out of the weather and seek shelter during cold or storms or sleep for the night.
 - b. During the night Mary gives birth to baby Jesus and they wrap him in the cloths that they had.
 - c. They lay little baby Jesus in a little feeding trough called a **manger**.
 7. Both Mary and Joseph must have been **in awe** of the whole event.
 8. A child is born, Word of God in flesh, The savior of the WORLD has come.

Luke 2:1-6

¹In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration when Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³And all went to be registered, each to his own town. ⁴And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, ⁵to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. ⁶And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

From the Platform

Transition

- So there he was. The incarnate Son of God. **Emmanuel – God with us.**
- Born in a shelter used for animals because there was no other room.
- Joseph and Mary had wrapped him up nice and tight and placed him in the manger.
- Same night Heaven is activated.
- God sent Angels to announce the birth of his Son.

Luke 2:8-14

⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, “Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³And 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 among those with whom he is pleased!”

I. Jesus offers me peace with God.

A. Unpack

1. Shepherds.
2. Angel appears to them.
3. I bring you good news of great joy
4. That will be for all the people.
5. For unto you is born... a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.
6. Here is the sign for you to know...
7. You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.
8. Suddenly with the angel there was a multitude of the heavenly host praising God...
9. And saying, Glory to God in the highest,
10. And on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased.

B. That night the announcement was made to shepherds out in the field.

1. God chose to announce the most significant birth in world history to shepherds in a field.
 - a. That’s stunning to think about.
 - b. The angel tells them when and where the savior has been born.

Shepherds – the same men who would raise the sacrificial lambs that were used on Passover.

2. Then something spectacular – something amazing happens...
 3. That single angel was joined by a heavenly host.
 4. Heavenly host means an **ARMY OF ANGELS.**
 5. Evidently to deliver the news of the messiah’s birth – one angel can do that.
 6. But to respond to the meaning of the news, the implication of the news, the effects of the news... requires an **ARMY OF ANGELS.** **Heavenly Host.**
 7. On a day in the perfection of God’s timing - in a city of God’s choosing - there came into the world the **Christ Child.**
 8. In every way **PERFECT!!!!** **Flawless** **Faultless.**
- C. The coming of this child will be the greatest revelation of the glory of God...
- even in the heights of heaven.
1. The coming of the Son of God into the world to do his work was the greatest display of the glory of God ever.
 2. And the coming of this child would bring peace to God’s people.
 3. “Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end”
 4. O God, hasten that day!
 5. First and foremost, the outcome is that **God is glorified,** because his child is born.
 6. And, second, **peace spreads** everywhere this child is received.
 7. These are the great purposes for the coming of Jesus.
 8. Glory ascending from man; peace descending from God.
 9. **Do you see that?**
- D. This child came, and an **army of angels** shows up to declare praise.
1. What is that about?
 2. It is about **glory continually ascending** from man to God and **peace endlessly descending** from God to man.
 3. That is what this is about — **God getting glory** - **us getting peace.**
 4. That is what it is. That is the **purpose** of the incarnation.
 5. It is the purpose of the universe being prepared for the incarnation that God would be seen as **infinitely glorious,** that we would get **never-ending peace.**
 6. That is breathtaking. “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”
- E. **The offer is PEACE...** The condition is with whom he is pleased.

“Peace on the earth among those with whom he is pleased”

1. The hope that Christmas brings is a **hope of peace.**

2. This peace is an offer from God himself announced by a multitude of heavenly hosts.
 - a.) Angelic Army Choir
 - b.) Choir of angels singing and announcing.
 3. Angels are messengers... God sent an Army-Choir of angels to make this declaration.
 4. They were praising God and saying this.
- F. Why would we need peace?
1. We need peace because you don't want to be at odds with God.
 2. That is someone you don't want to battle.
 3. We need peace **because** without Jesus we DO NOT have peace with God.

Romans 5:1

Our faith in Jesus transfers God's righteousness to us and he now declares us flawless in his eyes. This means we can now enjoy true and lasting peace with God, all because of what our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One, has done for us. (TPT)

Communion earlier in service was a reminder - a celebration of that.

Application

God is glorified when this child is born. Peace spreads everywhere this child is received.

- G. Great purposes for the coming of Jesus.
1. Glory **ascending** -- Peace **descending**.
 2. Glory **going up** -- Peace **coming down**.
 3. God getting **glory** -- Us getting **peace**.
 4. **God** would be **glorified forever** -- **We** would get **peace forever**.

Application

- God offers peace to everyone but only those who receive him receive his peace.
- If you receive Jesus... when you receive Jesus... you receive his peace.
- If you receive the **peace maker** you receive **the peace**.
- If you **stiff arm** the **peace maker** you **stiff arm the peace**.
- Can't have peace without the peace maker.

I want that peace for you.

- You can't separate the **peace** from the **peace maker**
- In other words you cannot separate the **peace of God** from the **God of peace**.
- When he comes... so does his peace.

- If you **don't** let him in you **can't** have his peace.

Isaiah 9:6-7

⁶ For to us a child is born.... And he will be called.... **Prince of Peace**.

⁷ Of the greatness of his government and **peace**... there will be no end.

He will be our peace by being our God.

- Angels have it right.
- ***Glory to God in the highest and peace on earth.***
- The key to peace... glory to God and peace to man kept together.
- What holds these two together?

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace **as you trust in him**

Application

1. The key is in bold letters.
2. As you trust him.

Are you there?

1. Do you trust Him?
2. Like really trust Him?
3. His peace comes at light speed when you do that.
4. When you trust him?
5. Who – God.
6. When you trust God by surrendering your life to Jesus Christ.

II. Jesus demands I pursue peace with others.

- A. Jesus came to bring peace.
 1. He offers peace with God.
 2. He demands I pursue peace with others.

Ephesians 2:14

For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility (NIV)

- A. Unpack
 1. He is our peace.

2. Two groups - **Jew** and **Gentile**
3. The barrier of I'm better than you.
4. The barrier of I was born into a better family than you.
5. The barrier of my family's history is better than yours.
6. Jesus came to destroy every barrier and every dividing wall of hostility.

B. When I follow Jesus he **DEMANDS** that I pursue peace with others.

Romans 12:14-18

If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. (ESV)

- C. If possible.
1. Do everything possible.
 2. Do everything that you can.
 3. Work as hard as you can on this...

Romans 14:19

Let us therefore **make every effort** to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. (NIV)

- D. Unpack
1. There it is again.
 2. Once – important This is twice.
 3. Make every effort –
 - a. I'm going to look for way.
 - b. I'm going to look for common ground to build on.
 - c. This statement has FORCE – PUSH – EFFORT
 - d. This is ACTIVE.
 4. "**Strive**" or "**pursue**" – to go after something with the intention of catching.
 - a. This will cause some discomfort at times.
 - b. This will cause you to do some things that you don't NATURALLY desire to do.
 - c. This is move you to "**GO AFTER**"
- E. Family, Neighbors, Co-workers, School.
- a. This tells me that there will be forces and situations and events and happenings that cause conflict.
 - b. When this happens "**Make Every Effort to do what leads to peace**"

F. How do we know how far to go?

1. Where do I draw the line?
2. I think we can take our cues from Jesus himself.
3. How far was he willing to go to bring peace?

Question

- What are you willing to do?
- What kind of effort are you willing to make?
- **What kind of effort did Jesus make in order for you to have peace with God?**

Romans 14:19

Let us therefore **make every effort** to do what leads to peace and to **mutual edification**. (NIV)

G. Mutual edification

H. **Mutual** – means it benefits both.

1. Something that both benefit from.
 2. Not just something that I can benefit from.
 3. Something that both can benefit from.
- The idea of building or constructing.
 - This takes away my right to say "**IN YOUR FACE!**"
 - Social Media.

I. It is **words** and **actions** that **build both up**.

- a. Words of affirmation.
- b. Actions that build the other person up.
- c. One of my love language is – “acts of service”
- d. It is **words**... it is **actions**.... It is building the other person up.
- e. **PROACTIVE**... Jumps ahead...

Application

1. I am going to make every effort to show love to you.
2. I am going to I am going to beat you to the punch with **words** and **actions** that **lead to peace**.
3. That is who I will become.

III. Jesus provides a way to have peace with Myself.

- A. When we have peace with God then I have set the foundation for peace with myself.

1. This includes any sense of **guilt** or **anxiety** that tends to paralyze us or make us hopeless.

Key is believing the promises of God with the purpose of glorifying God in our lives.

2. There will be times when your **fear** and **anxiety** will be **completely reasonable**.
3. As far as your mind can tell you will be completely justified with your emotions.
4. What will you do then?

Philippians 4:6-7

⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

- B. God set up this guard.
1. This guard passes all understanding.
 2. Roll it **off of you** and **on to him**.
 3. I cannot go on if I don't find some measure of peace.
 4. If I know it is good between you and I then I can know it is good everywhere else.
- C. The picture here is that our hearts and our minds are **under assault**.
1. Guilt, worries, threats, confusions, uncertainties — they all threaten our peace.
 2. Philippians says that God wants to **“guard”** your **hearts and minds**.
 3. He guards them with his peace.
 4. He guards them in a way that goes beyond what human understanding can fathom.
 5. Don't limit the peace of God by what your understanding can see.
 6. He gives us **inexplicable** peace, **non-rational**, **supernatural** peace.
 7. And he does it when we take our anxieties to him in prayer and trust him, that he will carry them for us and protect us.

1 Peter 5:7

Cast all your anxiety on him because he cares for you.

Application

- When we do this, when we come to him — and remember we **already** have peace with him.

- We trust him as our loving and almighty heavenly Father to help us.
- His peace comes to us and steadies us, and protects us from the **disabling effects** of **fear** and **anxiety** and **guilt**.
- And then we are able to carry on and our God gets the glory for what we do, because we trusted him.

Jesus offers me peace with God.

Jesus demands I pursue peace with others

Jesus provides a way to have peace with Myself.