

Christmas Eve ~ Sunday, December 24, 2017

“The Songs of Christmas ~ Gloria in Excelsus Deo: The Song of the Angels”

Luke 2:1-20 and Isaiah 11:1-10

The tradition of _____ at Christmas is as old as Christmas itself. The gospel of Luke describes several of the characters in the Christmas story responding instantly to their part in God’s plan with expressions of _____ and _____.

“In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified...” (Luke 2:8-9)

Into the darkness of a silent night—into the midst of the mundane—an angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a huge display of _____ and _____.

Glory = *doxa* =

Terrified = *phobeo* =

“But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord...’” (Luke 2:10-12)

This wasn’t an announcement of _____ or a warning of impending doom. Something _____ was happening—something that was going to _____ their lives forever.

Those of us on this side of the Christmas story miss the _____ this message would have had on the shepherds. The people of Israel had been waiting for almost 1000 years for the promised _____ who would come and rescue them from their enemies.

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” (Isaiah 7:14)

THE ANGEL’S MESSAGE

- **Good News.** At its heart, Christmas is good news that must be _____ with others.
- **Great Joy.** This was no _____ news—it was meant to bring exceedingly great joy.
- **For all the people.** This good news wasn’t just for God’s people, but for all

people—the _____ world.

- **Today.** This important event happened that day, at a _____ time and place in _____.
- **Town of David.** In order to fulfill the _____ of salvation, Jesus had to be a direct descendant of _____.
- **Saviour.** The name ‘Jesus’ means Saviour or _____. He came to save us from our _____.
- **Born to you.** Christmas must always be _____ and this message was not only for the shepherds, but also for you and me.
- **Christ.** This is the Greek word for ‘Messiah,’ or ‘Anointed One’—the one the people had been _____ for.
- **Lord.** This baby is God _____—in the flesh—and as such, He deserves our total submission, _____, and allegiance.

While the shepherds were trying to _____ this message, we’re told that the angel’s proclamation was punctuated with an explosion of _____.

“Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God...” (Luke 2:13-14)

The central message in the Song of the Angels is clear: In the Babe of Bethlehem, God has brought _____ to the world.

Peace (OT) = *shalom* =

Peace (NT) = *eirene* =

THE 3 DIMENSIONS OF PEACE

#1. The _____ Dimension: Peace _____ God.

“All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God’s paths to follow our own.” (Isaiah 53:6)

“For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God’s glorious standard.” (Rom 3:23)

Apart from Christ we are at _____—or war—with God.

We’ve tried to address this reality—we’ve tried to _____ ourselves—in all kinds of ways:

But to no avail. Why? Because we don’t go _____ enough! Although these approaches may have a role to play in addressing the world’s problems, they fail to get at the _____ cause.

“Above all else guard your heart for it is the wellspring of life.” (Proverbs 4:23)

There’s only one solution to the problems of the world: _____ solution; and this involves changing people’s _____.

God’s salvation work reached its climax in _____.

“For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people’s sins against them. This is the wonderful message he has given us to tell others.” (2 Corinthians 5:19)

Jesus is the _____ between our broken nature and God’s perfect nature; between our sinfulness and His holiness.

“Now that we have been put right with God through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:1)

Do you have peace with God today or are you far away from Him?

Do you see that Jesus is the only way to have peace with God?

#2. The _____ Dimension: Peace _____ God within ourselves.

Despite all of the stimulation and craziness of today’s world, God wants to give us _____ peace—a sense of _____ within ourselves.

“You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in you, whose thoughts are fixed on you!” (Isaiah 26:3)

“I am leaving you with a gift—peace of mind and heart. And the peace I give isn’t like the peace the world gives. So don’t be troubled or afraid.” (John 14:27)

TO EXPERIENCE JESUS’ PEACE WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND

- Jesus’ peace is different from the _____ peace. The world’s understanding of peace is that it’s the _____ of something.

The peace that Jesus offers is different—it’s a _____ and confidence—that comes in spite of, and in the _____ difficult times, because we’ve _____ ourselves to Him.

The peace that Jesus offers isn’t the absence of something, but the _____ of something. The presence of the _____.

- This peace comes from _____ God rather than our own ability to _____.

“Don’t worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank him for all He’s done. If you do this, you will experience God’s peace, which is far more wonderful than the human mind can understand. His peace will guard your hearts and minds as you live in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6)

What trials or challenges are you experiencing today? Do you have a sense of inner peace and calm in the midst of them or are you drowning? Do you see that Jesus is the only way to have peace within yourself?

#3. The _____ Dimension: Peace _____ others.

Through Jesus we experience peace with each other because we all find the solution to our problem in the _____ way.

It’s in seeing each other through _____ eyes and seeking to walk in God’s ways—in lives of submission, _____, and obedience—that we’re able to be truly honest and _____ in our relationships and have peace with each other.

In your relationships, are you planting seeds of peace or strife? Is there anyone that you need to make things right with? Do you see that Jesus is the only way to have peace with each other.

†

If Isaiah tells us anything, it’s that although world peace isn’t our current reality—the day is _____ coming when it will be.

“The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder’s den. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the lord as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.”

(Isaiah 11:6-10)

The day **is** coming when God’s peace will _____ the earth. This peace will not only bring people together, it will bring all of _____ together. When Jesus returns and takes His rightful place as King of the _____, we’ll see the _____ of His peace come to pass. (P) Until that day comes, we have a job to do—to _____ the Gospel of Peace in our daily lives.

Which manifestation of God’s peace do you desire the most this Christmas?