

December 2020

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" Luke 2:14

Peace?... in America?... on earth? It certainly doesn't look like it! The world is **full** of conflict and even more so in our country it seems. Since the angels' announcement that first Christmas we have seen an endless string of wars, conflicts and hatred for our fellow man. The peace announced by the angels and brought by Jesus was very different because the wars and conflicts and hatred have gone on and on since the time of Jesus' first advent.

The peace Jesus brought was between us and God because sin has separated us from Him. And as sinners, we are by nature opposed to God and cannot find the way back to Him on our own. And without God we are doomed to a life full of conflict and distress. But God sent His Son Jesus to bring peace thus making a way back for us. Jesus is called the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6), He brings peace to all who come to Him, regardless of race, wealth or status.

But that peace was not without a high price! God's justice requires that satisfaction be made for the sins of rebellious people like us. Jesus did this by His death on the cross. In Colossians 1:20-22 we read, *"and through him (Jesus) to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, he has now reconciled..."*

When a person truly believes this atoning sacrifice, God forgives his sins and makes peace with him. *"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Romans 5:1.

When a person finds peace with God, war, conflict, illness and other distress will become merely a surface disturbance on a deep, calm sea. The prophet Isaiah writes, *"You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you."*

Jesus said in 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 hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid."*

With all of the anxiety in our country today due to COVID, the Presidential Election, illness, unemployment, various addictions, and more... true, real peace is found only in **Jesus!** And only in Him will we persevere and finish the race.

May you be reminded of this peace – the peace that surpasses all understanding - that guards your hearts and minds and overcomes all conflict and distress.... God's love in Christ Jesus... shown and given to you by grace through faith.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Love,

Pastor Ron