

December 23, 2018

(A Savior for All Nations Series)

“The Good News that Gives Peace”, Luke 2:8-18

In Luke’s telling of the Christmas story (Luke 2:8-18), a babe is born in Bethlehem to Mary and Joseph. God announces the birth of His son through an angel: “I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord”, and by the songs of angels to shepherds in nearby fields: “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.” (Luke 2:14). The shepherds visit the child, and spread the word, “glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen” (Luke 2:20).

1. What Is this Good News?

The birth of Jesus Christ on earth is God’s way of helping ordinary people (even shepherds) to be saved from their sin, a condition of rebellion against God (Mtt.1:21). No matter how hard we might try to improve ourselves, our nature of sin keeps turning us from God. Our righteous God demands justice, even death, for such rebellion (Rom. 6:23). Yet our loving God, in His Son’s dying for our sin, offers us forgiveness & mercy if we will turn to Him in trust (Jn.3:16-18).

2. What Is the Result of the Good News?

As we turn from our sin and trust with faith in Jesus, God’s Son, we will experience a relationship of peace with God Himself. We are changed from a life of opposition and warfare with God to an intimate relationship with the King of the Universe, becoming a child in His family. Within this relationship, we have peace in knowing that God will show us his mercy all the days of our lives as we continue to turn to Him. Overflowing from this personal relationship with God (Rom. 15:13), we find peace within ourselves (Phil.4:6-7), we find peace with others (Rom 12:18), and we find peace for eternity (Rev. 21).

3. What Are We Supposed to Do with this Good News?

Out of the natural flow of our loving relationship with Jesus, we actually want to talk about Jesus to others. With the overflow of our hearts, we will speak of Him. At Perry Creek Church in 2019, our emphasis will be on immersing ourselves in our local community and on being “all in” with the people God has given to each of us. Like the shepherds, we are ordinary people leading ordinary lives with the normal flow of Gospel intent, of building relationships with others to show we care just as God cares for us.

This Christmas, may we join with the angels in giving glory to God for the Good News of His Son Jesus who brings to all of us, joy and peace, if we will turn to Him. And then, share this joy and peace from a loving relationship with God with those all around us!

Discussion Questions:

1. How do you experience the peace of God in your life this year? Is it a feeling, a thought, an avoidance of conflict? overcoming conflict?
2. How would you describe to a seeker why it is important to “find favor”with Jesus (Luke2:14), and what they can count on when they do?
3. Are those who don’t have the peace of Christ, children of God or children of wrath? If wrath, what is our response to them?
4. What do you do with the worries, anxieties, and fears of life as a Christian? Especially at night.

5. If you knew you were going to die soon, e.g.: Nicholas Ridley, would you be able to say that you could sleep as quietly/peacefully at night as you ever did? Is this confidence, power, control??
6. Is it really possible to live a life overflowing with peace and joy from a loving relationship with God? Have you ever seen or experienced it? What does it look like? For yourself, Is it truly good news or a worn out, too familiar Christmas story?