

CHRISTMAS SERIES

THE PEACE OF GOD

What we want to see this Christmas morning is the announcement of the angel to the shepherds. Something spoken there may be of significance to us today. Lk. 2:10 *Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you. You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.*

Of all the things the heavenly host could say, they emphasized on the glory to God in the highest and peace and goodwill to all men. This is putting in a nutshell what Jesus' coming to our planet earth in the redemption plan of God means. Of all the many things that they could have announced, they announced peace on the planet earth. They could have announced prosperity. They could have announced other blessings. However, they announced peace. Why is peace so important that the angels especially mentioned peace to all men?

Men lost the peace of God when men fell. When Adam fell, the peace of God was lost. Here God wants to restore peace through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, sometimes we think about peace as a lack of strife. That is what we think of. Peace between nations in the world is a lack of strife where they do not harm each other. Sometimes, we think about peace in the same context. However, the Bible speaks about peace in a stronger way than you think. It is not just being neighborly although it includes that. The Bible speaks of peace not as a fragile force. Today the peace on this earth is very fragile. Just a little bit of shaking in one nation against another and the peace will be upset. We think about peace as a force that is not strong.

However, the Bible speaks about peace as a conquering force. Peace is a conquering force. It is not something fragile. There is power in peace because

Jesus Christ brought this peace. One of the last words of Jesus Christ to His disciples was in Jn. 14:27 and He says *Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you, not as the world gives do I give to you.* It is a powerful peace. Jesus had come to bring this special peace. Not a natural peace. Peace is a spiritual supernatural force that is supposed to transform this whole earth. Rom. 16 shows us the significance of peace. Rom.16: 20 *the God of peace will crush Satan under your feet shortly.* See peace is not a fragile force. It is supernatural and it is powerful. It is a supernatural force that Jesus is releasing and that is what the angels were announcing. Powerful peace that will come upon all men. Paul used the phrase *the God of peace.* He could have used a different phrase to speak about God. He could have said the God of power will crush Satan and we would have understood it. He could have said the God of strength will crush Satan but instead he said the God of peace. Who would have imagined that the manifestation of God as peace is involved in our victory over Satan? The God of peace will crush Satan under our feet. Therefore, peace is a powerful force as far as the Word of God is concerned.

I asked the Lord why is it that Paul mentioned peace. What we are interested in is how is that peace connected to our victory. The Lord began to show that unless we have peace we could not discern God's will. The opposite of peace will be confusion. The only place in the world where we can hear God clearly is the position of peace. There is peace in our life. The only evidence of being in God's will is peace. One of the powerful evidences is stillness and calmness. One of the manifestations that faith is in a person's life is peace. Someone striving in the flesh to do something is different from someone in peace who just flows along with what God wants to do. In the former, you could see all the effort and struggles. There is a world of a difference. Therefore, peace is also the result of faith.

Whenever something takes place like a healing in Mark 5, Jesus pronounces peace on the woman. He says, "Daughter, peace be with you." He announces peace upon people's life because He is the Prince of Peace. Now there are many titles to our Lord Jesus' name. However, there is one title that we must appreciate very much - Jesus is the Prince of Peace. Unless we are in the will of God there is no peace. There is no peace outside of the will of God.

The Bible calls peace a way. Right at the end of the prophecy of Zacharias in the gospel of Luke 2:79 *To give light to those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death. To guide our feet into the way of peace.* Now his prophecy was about John the Baptizer but here is a wonderful truth. The phrase says to guide our feet into the way of peace. Do we think of peace as a way? We think of peace as a condition. However, he says peace is a road. To put it in our terms today, it would be the road of peace. We think of peace as a condition, which is true. Peace is a condition but it is more than a condition. Peace is a force, peace is a

substance, which can be imparted, and peace is a road that we walk in. It is the road called the will of God for your life.

You and I could be doing different things. However, as long as the things that you do and the things that I do are in the will of God, we will both have peace. The only peace that is possible is when people are in the will of God. When people do not want to do God's will, they cannot have peace in themselves and neither can they have peace with others. Do you realize that the only possible way for me to have peace with you and with all the people around is when I am at peace myself? If you do not have peace, you cannot give peace. You cannot give what you do not have. Only when peace rests in our hearts, we are cool and calm in the things of God and in the will of God that we can bring peace to people and then can we have peace with others. However, when we are in strife, we will bring strife to people. We cannot give what we do not have. Therefore, peace is a way, a way that we walk. It is the will of God. No other place is more powerful than to be in God's perfect will. When we are in God's perfect will, we are in the shadow of the Most High or the secret place of the Most High that David talked about. In that place no evil shall be found neither shall any plague come near your dwelling place. You shall not be afraid of the arrow that flies by day or the pestilence that walk at night. That is the place of peace. It is found in God's perfect will.

Satan cannot touch you but that is not all you become a trap to Satan. You could trample him under your feet and there is nothing he can do to you. The most powerful demonstration of the kingdom of God in people's life is when they walk in God's will. When you walk in God's will, you become a tremendous force to crush Satan under your feet. Therefore, here is the connection - the God of peace will crush Satan under our feet. How will that happen? See when we are in peace we are in God's will. When we are in God's will, we become an awesome force. We become a fear and a threat to the devil and we are in a position where we can crush Satan under our feet. Therefore, all is channeled through the will of God in our life.

Turn to Phil. 4 it gives us more details about this peace that Jesus has come to bring. Verse 7 the *peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus*. It is amazing that every epistle starts with grace and peace and there are truths inside. We understand that grace is not just favor; it is a substance imparted and it brings us to accomplish things beyond our ability. Peace is also one of the forces that is imparted at each greeting. Peace is a tremendous force in Christianity. The angels announced this powerful peace that Jesus came to bring. It says the peace of God will garrison your heart and your mind. The word *guard* means a garrison around a fortress. Peace guards us.

Peace can come in two areas. It can come in your heart and in your mind.

Sometimes you have peace in your heart but your mind is not at peace. Sometimes your mind thinks peaceful but your heart is troubled. What God desires is for us to have peace in our heart and in our mind. See the heart is always the important factor. When we have peace in our heart and there is not much quietness in the mind, God could be telling you to walk in some thing that your mind does not understand. Your carnal mind wants to limit God. Therefore, when your mind does not understand some thing there is no peace. When your mind has no comprehension, the peace in the mind is not there yet. In such a state, you have to walk by faith without your understanding. Peace has not come into your mind yet but your heart is at peace. Just keep doing whatever you are doing because the peace is the confirmation.

On the other hand, when you have peace or quietness in your mind but no peace in your heart, you have to check yourself. Stop right where you are. You may be outside the road of peace. See peace is a road - the road of your life and my life. If you walk outside of that road, you will straight away lose your peace. The first area you lose your peace is in your heart. Our minds are not so clever; our spirits are smarter than our minds. Our mind may not understand that some thing has gone wrong yet. Our mind may be quiet and peaceful but your heart starts being troubled. The moment you move out of it, your heart starts being troubled. Peace leaves your heart. Please stop and check yourself because you may be outside the road of peace in your life.

If Christians will be more obedient to peace, they will never get into trouble. It is because we walk outside the road of peace that we get into position of defeat by the enemy. However, when you walk in peace, the enemy is the defeated foe. The only way you can defeat Satan is to walk in the path of peace. If you walk outside of that, you are a prey. Therefore, when you have peace in your mind, do not follow it; check your heart. Wait on the Lord in prayer until peace comes. Unless there is peace, you are helpless. You cannot do anything unless your heart is at peace. What you do will not have any success involved. Jesus came to bring an all-powerful peace.

Can you think of peace as some guarding force? It says the peace of God garrison your mind. We never think of peace as a powerful conquering force. However, the Bible says peace guards us. Peace is a powerful force. Peace is not a fragile force that is easily broken. The peace of God is powerful. Peace is supernatural since it defeats the enemy.

Another phrase to look at is in Colossians 3. The most powerful manifestation of peace is in the heart and in the mind. However, if there is only one manifestation only in your heart follow your heart. Blessed are you when you have peace in your heart and in your mind. Col. 3:15 *Let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body, and be thankful.* It says the peace of God

rules in our hearts. The word *rule* is from a Greek word that is translated in the Amplified Version as *umpire*. You know what an umpire does. An umpire will be there in a game and whenever there is a foul in the game, the umpire will call out. Therefore, an umpire tells you whether it is in or out. Peace rules in our hearts. Peace is the umpire in our hearts. Peace is guarding your life and my life. Jesus has brought this peace. Every time you move outside of God's will, peace shout "out." Better pay attention to peace in your heart. Many people want to be led by the Spirit but they are thinking of some supernatural spectacular thing. When they are thinking of being led by the Spirit, what they actually want is to see an angel, or Jesus. Or they want to have lightning bolt flashing, thunder rolling, angels singing, God's voice booming and they say, "I have heard God." Most of your life will be led by peace.

Jesus started the cycle of peace in our lives. It is a supernatural, godly, and spiritual peace in our hearts. When did it start? The Bible tells us in the book of Romans 5:1 *Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.* Peace starts when you were born again and when Jesus Christ came into your life and washed all your sins away. Unless sin is removed, there is no peace in the heart. Many people out there have an outward form of peace and tranquility but it is not real. Many of the people out have sleepless nights. They are depending on pills to sleep. Many of those people are troubled. Therefore, some of them try to forget their trouble by drinking. Some forget their troubles through friends. They keep on mixing with people. However, every time when they are alone, they cannot even face their own self and their own life. Why because peace is not in their hearts. You can only have peace when your sins are cleansed and under the blood.

Christmas time is an announcement of peace. Peace can only come into your heart when Jesus comes into your heart. Why? He is the Prince of Peace. When the Prince of Peace comes in, He brings peace. A cleansing of sins will come and that is the beginning of peace. It is the beginning of the walk of peace on the road of your life. Far too long we have walked outside the road of peace when we did not know God. However, the day you knew God, the gates were opened and you started walking in a way of peace. However, too many people do not realize such power in peace. They do not realize that to be sensitive to peace in their hearts and in their lives so they never walked in God's perfect will. The only place to seek to be in is God's perfect will. Do not seek fame, do not seek fortune, and do not seek anything else in the world but to be in God's perfect will. Unknown or well known, honored or dishonored, the best and safest place in the world to be is to be in the will of God, which is the peace of God. Peace of God that the world cannot take away.

Do you know peace comes first and then joy? You cannot have joy unless you have peace. How can you have the true joy when your sins are not forgiven? Do

you know people do not have joy because they do not have peace? However, when you have peace you have the potential to have joy. If you already have peace, learn to move in the joy. I observed this unless we can sit together, laugh, and cry together easily we cannot work together. Do you notice that when your relationship with somebody is strained one of the things that stop is that you cannot smile and laugh together anymore? You cannot even face each other. Every time you see that person, that smile goes upside down. We need to do something about that. I find in church relationship and in church working together one of the things that I always seek to preserve is for people to be able to pray together, cry together, and laugh together. When that happens the oil of love will lubricate our working together so that when we get together in the Lord, our gears, our spokes, our character come together in the Lord. Although we work together and our gears churn one another because of the oil of love and flowing together we will not feel the pain. It is when the relationship loses joy and when members lose their peace, they can never work together. Can two walk together unless they agree? They cannot. Therefore, peace is an important force in our life. It is powerful when you understand that peace can crush Satan under your feet.

The Bible tells us that today as you visit each others' homes that peace is a substance that you can impart. Jesus said in Matt. 10:12 *when you go into a household, greet it. When Jews meet one another, they always say, "Shalom."* However, Jesus takes it further and shows that it is a powerful force in verse 13 *If the household is worthy, let your peace come upon it. However, if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you.* Jesus treats peace like a substance that you could give out and take back. Make sure today when you give out your peace, you do not take back your peace. The homes you are visiting should be worth it.

Here is where Jesus talks about peace as something you can impart. Some times when people have been to your home they seem to bring an atmosphere and a blessing. When they leave, they leave an atmosphere of change in your home. You should open your house to people who walked with God and lived with God. You notice that they impart peace and blessing into the atmosphere of your house. If Jesus Christ were to manifest just once in your prayer closet, do you know that your prayer closet is never the same again? He leaves something behind. Of course, He is with us all the time whether you see Him or not. I am illustrating the power of impartation that we can impart peace as a substance. When you visit one another, pray for one another. When you go to one another's home, you do not have to pray long prayers like the Pharisees do. However, make this a habit when you visit one another and fellowship with one another. When you go in or before you leave, have a short prayer to bless the Lord and bless that home. You do not have to be a preacher or a five-fold minister to do that. Any believer could do it. As you visit one another, pray before you leave. Impart the blessing of God to the home and on the family. There will be spiritual

blessings that come back into your life.