

## **December 6, 2020 Advent 2 Peace**

If you are brave enough, stand on a sidewalk and ask people walking by, What gives you peace? The answers you receive will most likely have one thing in common: the average person's definition of peace is dependent upon circumstances a solid relationship with a spouse, a well-paying job, or good health. So, what happens if a couple fights, the company lays off employees, or sickness strikes the body?

Peace that's rooted in good situations is not really peace at all. It's a brittle kind of harmony between man and the world, and it crumbles very easily..

When Jesus said my peace I give to you I do not give us the world gives, he meant just that. The world's peace consists of what we consider black of struggle lack of disagreements lack of strife and mostly getting what we want . Jesus never talked about that kind of peace.

there are basically three kinds of peace that we need to have. Peace with God, peace with one another, and peace within. I believe Jesus spoke to each of these .

When we talk about peace with God we talk about a relationship where we are comfortable communicating with and following God's plan. It is when we submit to him and offer him our lives that we best understand the comfort of God's peace.

Submission to the Lord allows His peace to fill your life. When the Holy Spirit lives within us, we can approach everything in life with confidence and serenity. The only way to get this lasting peace is through a relationship with Jesus Christ. This relationship, is called

justification. That means because of Jesus and in spite of our sin we are made right with God.

In Romans 5:1, Paul explains that to be justified that is, declared no longer guilty we must accept the sacrifice Christ made in our place. Justification makes us right with God and opens our hearts to peace.

romans 8:32 <sup>32</sup> He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

Have you told God you recognize His Sons loving sacrifice was made on your behalf? If not, then you do not have real peace. Now is the right time to surrender to Him.

When we talk about peace with it's a bit more difficult. It is when we are comfortable in our own skin. We are comfortable with what we believe in, we are comfortable with the stands we take against social injustice, or perhaps just with our thoughts. I find that I really need God to have this peace as well.

When my thoughts are jumbled, what I'm not sure that what I think is right and good I have to turn to God. So often I second guess myself and then I am not at peace with my decisions. It is then that I look to God and ask him to give me peace about my decisions or to show me where they need to change.

Philippians 4:6 says Do not **be anxious** about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

Jesus Christ offers true peace a lasting contentment that is unbreakable, no matter what happens

So many lack this inner peace that Jesus offers. This is partly because they don't know him. Jesus is a person of peace.

In his sermon on the mount, Jesus commended the Peacemakers. Not peace keepers but peace makers. (Mat 5:9 NRSV) "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

(Luke 6:27 NIV) "But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,

(Luke 6:28 NIV) bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you)

(Luke 6:29 NIV) If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic.

(Luke 6:30 NIV) Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back.

(Luke 6:31 NIV) Do to others as you would have them do to you.

Jesus calls us to be peacemakers. We can be peacemakers through him. We can treat others with kindness being gracious in all things. We can share our faith with those who seem worried and distressed.

Those around us need to hear. We need to continue in prayer, maintaining our solid relationship with Jesus. We can turn panic into peace through prayer.

Remember the story when the disciples were out on the sea of Galilee and a storm came up. They felt they were in great danger, but Jesus was sleeping through the storm. Jesus had peace in the midst. When they woke him, he rebuked the winds and the waves saying "Quiet! Be still!" and the storm ceased. Jesus speaks this into the storms of our lives as well. He is the essence of peace...

During this time of covid, many have lost their peace . We can help families and friends during this time by sharing the peace and love that Christ gives. In order to do this however, we must first maintain that relationship with Jesus for ourselves. This may be difficult in a time when we cannot worship together. But we can continue to worship God read scriptures, pray and maintain our close dependency on him. When we experience that closeness we are at peace within. It is only then that we can begin to become the peacemakers that God has called us to be.

I pray that you receive God's peace and that you learn to give it away. This time of advent and Christmas can be very lonely for people. We have the answer to that loneliness. We can offer them Christ's peace and share with them not only words About God but By the actions we take toward them.

If we can't be together we need to still be in contact. Continue to make phone calls and send letters of encouragement. spreading the peace and joy of the season is an essential work of the body of Christ.

Don't forget to do your part. Amen