

Prince of Peace
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I think it's safe to say that everyone wants to have peace in their lives. But some of us look for peace in all the wrong places. We think money or talents or things or people will bring us peace. But the truth is there is only one way to peace. It is through Jesus Christ our Lord.

When the angels announced the birth of Jesus, they said...

Glory to God in the highest, and on Earth peace, good will toward men.

Today we're going to see that it is only through Jesus that we can have peace WITH God...

Which leads to the peace OF God.

Which allows us to have peace WITH each other.

But it all starts by having peace WITH God.

Without that we'll never have peace in our lives or our relationships.

This is true in marriages, families, friends, neighbors and nations.

There will never be peace in the world without peace in communities.

And there will never be peace in communities without peace in families.

And there will never be peace in families without peace in individuals.

And there will never be peace in individuals without the Prince of Peace reigning in our hearts.

Jesus is called the Prince of Peace.

And there is no peace without the Prince of Peace.

Were in a series titled "Unto Us" based on the passage in Isaiah 9:6-7:

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government will be upon His shoulders. And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

This is the last message in this series and it is titled "Prince of Peace" After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, there were wise men who were looking for Him. In Matthew 2:2 they asked:

Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.

The Wise Men were wise because they recognized Jesus as a King. The Wise Men knew that Isaiah's prophecy had come true: A child was born and a son was given and He was the Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father and the Prince of Peace.

So they sought Him from afar... and they found Him. They worshipped Him and gave Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Despite the common manner in which He was born, they knew there was nothing common about Him. They knew this tiny baby was a mighty King. They recognized His authority.

This is important because unless you see Jesus for who He is and that He is your King...you really don't know Him. This will determine your entire relationship with Him. Consider Romans 10:9 which says:

If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

This passage tells us that to be saved Jesus must be our Lord which means we submit to Him as the supreme authority in our lives. Many people want a savior who isn't a king. They want to be saved – but they don't want to obey.

The biggest problems in life are caused when we try to be our own king. In our marriages, in our families, and as individuals, we want to rule. But this only leads to stress, strife, failure, and a lot of pain.

Jesus has the authority to bring peace to nations and peace to our lives. But we will never experience God's true peace until we acknowledge Him as our Prince of Peace. Everyone wants peace in their lives but peace doesn't just happen. Peace must be pursued. Psalms 34:14 says:

Seek peace and pursue it.

First we need to pursue...

1- Peace With God

Romans 5:1 says:

Now that we have been put right WITH God through faith, we have peace WITH God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

To have real lasting peace we must know God. Let me say it like this: No God, No Peace; Know God, Know peace.

You see, if you're living your life without God, you're at war with God. You're saying, "I'm going to run my own life, thank You very much." If that is your attitude, you're at war with God, and you need a peace treaty. The only way to have peace with God is for you to unconditionally surrender! Give up the idea that you know more about what's best for you than God does. Here's the thing: if you are at war with God, you are guaranteed to lose.

But our Prince of Peace came to make peace between God and man.

When you trust Him, He removes everything that comes between you and God. He says, "I'm going to erase everything you've ever done wrong. You're completely forgiven."

Have you made peace with God? If you haven't, you can do it right now.

You don't do it by promising to be good. Because you won't.
 You don't do it by being perfect. Because you can't.
 You don't do it by never sinning. Because you will.
 You make peace by faith. Faith in God's grace. That's how you get it.

Then, when we have peace WITH God, it leads to...

2- The Peace OF God

Peace WITH God gives us spiritual peace.
 The peace OF God gives us emotional peace.

Webster's 1828 dictionary defines peace as: Freedom from agitation or disturbance as from anger, anxiety, fear, and terror.

When you have the peace of God you're not as stressed. You're just not as angry or fearful. Things just don't bug you as much and you're a lot more patient. You have a lot more love than you used to. Why? Because peace WITH God leads to the peace OF God in your life. Philippians 4:6-7 tells us how this happens:

Don't worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. Tell God what you need, and thank Him for all He has 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.

This is God's prescription for peace: worry about nothing and pray about everything. In life we have two choices: We can live in faith or we can live in fear. We can pray or we can panic. We can worship or we can worry.

If we prayed as much as we worry, we'd have a lot less to worry about. Worry has never solved a single one of our problems. So, it's worthless to worry.

Instead, prayer has the power to change things. So don't worry, pray! Then you will experience the peace of God.

Once you have peace with God and the peace of God, you must pursue:

3- Peace With Others

Christ died to make peace between God and man but He also died to make peace between man and man.

That's why Hebrews 12:14 says:

Make every effort to live in peace with all men.

Notice that God puts the ball is in your court. He does not say, "Wait around for others to pursue peace with you." He says, "You pursue peace with others."

Let me ask you a question: Is there anyone you need to make peace with this Christmas? Romans 12:18 tells us:

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone.

Have you done everything possible to pursue peace with everyone? Conflict happens automatically, but peace must be sought after.

Another definition of peace is: A period of time when there is no war or fighting. If you're at war with your spouse there is no peace. If you're at war with your parents or children there is no peace. If you're at war with anyone there is no peace.

Proverbs 16:7 says:

When a man's ways are pleasing to the Lord, he makes even his enemies live at peace with him.

When your ways are pleasing to God He can turn your situation around in an instant. And God is pleased when we try to make peace with others. Matthew 5:9 says:

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Being a peacemaker is for all people, not just some people. God has shown us grace, now He wants us to show grace to others. God has been merciful to us, now He wants us to be merciful to others. God has forgiven us, now He wants us to forgive others.

If you really know Christ, the Prince of peace, you're going to be a peacemaker, not a troublemaker...at home, at work and at school. You will build people up, not tear them down. You will compliment more than you criticize. You will love people the way Jesus loves people.

But this is easier said than done. Some of us have bad memories of people who have really hurt us. Christmas time has the potential to bring up these bad memories. Especially when families get together. Maybe there are hurts you haven't let go of. Maybe you're thinking, "I can't let go of it. They hurt me too bad."

Well, you know what? *You're right!* That's why you need Jesus. You don't have it in you to let it go. But you can allow the power of God to help you.

This Christmas will you make peace with others? Will you go to them and work it out?

Here's the thing: sometimes life is difficult and troubling. But peace is defined as a state of tranquility to a troubled soul. Even in the storms of life we can have peace. In Matthew 8 the disciples were caught in a dangerous storm. All of a sudden, without warning the waves began to splash over the boat. Have you ever noticed how one minute everything in life is great and the next you feel like you're about to drown?

Well, the disciples were very afraid of drowning. So they called out to Jesus...Lord save us, we're going to drown. Jesus replied... *"You of little faith, why are you so afraid?"* Then Jesus arose, rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Peace, be still!" The Prince of peace spoke and there was a great calm.

Are you experiencing the storms of life today?
 Will you go to Jesus and say "Lord, save me?"
 Are you in a difficult situation?
 Will you go to Jesus and say "Lord, save me?"
 Are you discouraged, depressed, or down and out?
 Will you go to Jesus and say "Lord, save me?"

And when we ask the Lord to save us...He will. The Prince of Peace will speak peace and bring peace into our lives. If you trust Him He will calm the storm in your marriage, in your family, in your health, with your children, on your job. Whatever storms arise in our lives, Jesus will arise to calm the storm.

Your life may seem like complete chaos, but when God arises, and rebukes the enemy, He turns your complete chaos into complete calm. When God arises the enemy flees. Psalm 68:1 says:

May God arise, may his enemies be scattered.

Therefore we can find peace in the midst of the storm.

Long ago a man set out to find the perfect picture of peace. When he wasn't able to find one he decided to have a contest to produce this masterpiece. Paintings came from artists far and wide.

Finally the great day arrived to reveal the paintings. The judges uncovered one peaceful scene after another, until only two paintings remained veiled. As a judge uncovered one, a hush fell over the crowd. A tranquil lake reflected green landscapes where sheep grazed undisturbed under the soft glow of the evening sky.

Everyone thought that it was a perfect picture of peace. Surely this was the winner.

Then the last picture was unveiled revealing rugged mountains. Above was an angry sky with flashing lightening and pouring down rain. Down the side of the mountain was a raging waterfall that looked anything but peaceful.

But when the judges looked closer, they saw behind the waterfall a tiny bush growing in a crack in the rock. In the bush a mother bird had built her nest. There, in the midst of the chaos, sat the mother bird on her nest... in perfect peace.

Which picture do you think won the prize? The judges chose the second picture. Why? Because peace does not mean to be in a place where there is no trouble or chaos. Peace means to be in the midst of those things and still be calm in your heart. That is the real meaning of peace.

You see – God is more concerned about calming the storm inside us than the storm around us.

If you are troubled in your soul and lack peace of mind - Then take comfort in the words of Jesus in John 14:27:

Peace I leave with you; My peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Jesus has the remedy for your troubled soul. His peace is the remedy. Remember – peace comes from being right with God by placing your faith in Jesus Christ. You just need to do what Romans 10:9 says to do:

If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

You can pray this prayer right now so you can have peace in your life through Jesus Christ.

Lord Jesus – I need your peace in my life.
 I confess that I have sinned and I need forgiveness.
 I repent of my sins and place my faith in Jesus Christ.
 I believe and confess that Jesus Christ died for my sins on the cross.
 I believe and confess that God raised Him from the dead.
 I believe and confess that Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.
 Come into my life and be my Prince of Peace.
 Thank you for saving me!
 In Jesus name. Amen.