

A Christmas Reflection (subtitle: Christ the Gift from God)

Luke 2:8-14 New American Standard Bible

⁸ *In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock at night. ⁹ And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood near them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. ¹⁰ And so the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of **great joy** which will be for all the people; ¹¹ for today in the city of David there has been born **for you a Savior**, who is Christ the Lord. ¹² And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” ¹³ And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly army of angels praising God and saying, ¹⁴ “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth **peace** among people with whom He is pleased.”*

Introduction

Merry Christmas to you!

Tonight, I am going to talk about God’s Christmas gift to us.

I am sure you heard about the story of three wise men (magi) who brought from afar their gifts to the newborn King. Gold, Frankincense, and Myrrh. They were gifts from humanity to God. What about God’s gift to humanity on the first Christmas night? In fact, it was God who has given us His precious gift first. Then, in response, we give our gifts back to God. On the very first Christmas night, 2000 years ago, God has given humanity three gifts through His Son Jesus Christ. When you receive Christ, you have them all: they are salvation, joy, and peace.

Content

1. Salvation: v. 11. Christ is our salvation. The angel called Jesus the Savior. The Savior of the world. The Savior of the people. The Savior who saves us from our sins. Let me tell you: if you ask me what God’s greatest gift to humanity is, I will say without hesitation, it is Jesus. Why? Because through Jesus our broken relationship with God is restored. Through Jesus God gives us a new life. And through Jesus God gives us eternal life in Heaven. Jesus is the salvation gift from God. By the way, the name Jesus means, God saves. He is our salvation. Next,

2. Joy: v. 10. Christ is our great joy. Not just joy, but great joy. *Joy to the world, the Lord is come. Let earth receive her King.* Question for you. Do you consider Christ as your great joy? Some do, but many of us don't. In fact, some people even in the church rather think that Christ is a killjoy believing that He takes the fun out of their life.

Think again. You would not call anybody a joy unless you truly enjoy having company with them or benefit from them. E.g. Children are our joy because they bring us innocence, energy, enthusiasm, and laughter. When you follow Jesus, you too will find great joy instead of losing it.

Why do you think the angel that night proclaimed that the birth of Christ was a great joy to all people? All people. With no exception. In Christ, every one of us will enjoy good benefits, both on earth and in Heaven, such as love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, gentleness, faithfulness, and self-control (Galatians 5:22-23).

Question is: Do you want them all? I do. Let me tell you: they are all available in Christ Jesus. When you have Christ, you will have them all. And vice versa. Oh, let us not forget eternal life. That's why Christ is the great joy to all. To you, to me and to all the people on earth. Finally, Christ is our peace.

3. Peace: v. 14. Peace. Isn't that everyone is yearning for? How often do we cry out for world peace? Peace in our nation. Peace in our family. Peace at work. Peace in our heart. The peace that would free us from anxiety and fear from COVID 19. The peace that calms our heart down. We need peace more than ever before.

Yet, few of us seem to have it. Here's why: we don't know where to turn to. It is not the government that gives us peace, mind you. If that's the case, why do so many millions of Americans seem agitated and angry at each other? This year seems to me so worse than other times. Do not expect our loved ones to give us lasting peace, either. They, at best, may be able to give us peace that is fragile and only temporary. No one but God can give us lasting peace. So, let us stop demanding any humans to give us peace because the peace we are looking for only comes from God.

So, we want the lasting peace that also transcends our circumstances, right? To get it, we need to look into the right source of peace. I would call divine peace. The peace only God can give. Did you know that Christ is that peace? He is the Prince of Peace. He gives us the peace that the world cannot give nor take away from us. His peace keeps our hearts and minds even in times of anxiety and fear (Philippians 4:7).

Do you want peace in your life? Then, have Christ in you. Let Him rule in your heart. Here's what He does for you: He restores in your heart peace with God first.

When you are at peace with God in Christ, then your home will be filled with peace. When your home is filled with peace, then everyone in the family will have it, too. They may even carry the same peace to their workplace. People at work will notice their peace right away. When their workplace is filled with peace, then they will take that peace back to their families, and their home will be filled with Christ's peace. When every family is filled with Christ's peace, then our society will enjoy the same peace. When our nations are filled with Christ's peace, then we will have world peace. That's how it goes.

Why do you think the world is in such a mess today? Because our nations don't get along with each other. Why do they not get along with each other? Because something within their society is not right. The lack of peace in society usually results from unhappy homes. Why are the families unhappy? Because the members are unhappy. Why are the members unhappy? Because they have no peace in their hearts. Why do they have no peace in their hearts? Because they have no Christ in their hearts. Let peace begin in your heart through Christ.

Conclusion

As for closing, I am going to tell you this. Christmas is all about Christ. Without Christ, Christmas means nothing. On the very first Christmas, God gave us a gift. His own Son, in whom, He packed three gifts to all of us: salvation, joy, and peace.

Believe in Jesus as your savior and receive three everlasting gifts in your life: love, joy, and peace. Claim them in Jesus' name. Amen.