

Jesus the Prince of Peace

Isaiah 9:6 (New American Standard Bible)

*For a Child will be born to us, a Son will be given to us;
And the government will rest on His shoulders;
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, **Prince of Peace.***

Introduction

Throughout the year people in the church asked me to pray for them and their families on certain things such as salvation, health, patience, understanding, new jobs, and so forth. Around Christmas time, though, one thing always comes up and on top of the list, too. That is *peace*: peace in the world, peace in our nation. Peace in our cities. Peace in our neighborhood. Peace in our family. Peace in our relationships. Peace in our hearts. *Peace.*

By the way, where can we find the peace that we all long for? Some nations look up to the United Nations to great disappointment. Many people look up to our government. Some have hope in our politicians. Others look to the political system which we call democracy. More others look to religions all around the world. Yet, we still wait for a tangible and lasting peace around us and in us, don't we?

So, the question is, where can we find peace? How can we achieve a lasting peace in the world when we can't even get along with our own family members who share the same parents? Furthermore, what good is it, when the world seems peaceful when your mind and heart is at war with yourself, with others or with God? Can someone give me an answer to these questions?

Content

One day, the crowd came to Jesus and reported to Him a horrific thing that had happened to some people in Galilee. Let me read the Scripture to you: *“Now on that very occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. ² And Jesus responded and said to them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans just because they have suffered this fate? ³ No, I tell you, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. ⁴ Or do you think that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were worse offenders than all*

the other people who live in Jerusalem? ⁵ No, I tell you, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish” (Luke 13:1-5).

Now, what do you think of His answers to the crowd? As for one, I am baffled with His answers. For instance, about the incidence of mixing human blood with animal sacrifices, I would've loved to hear Him condemning the abominable act committed by Pilate the heathen governor of Rome who had no fear of God. About the tower that collapsed upon eighteen innocent citizens and killed them all, the crowd might have expected to hear Jesus' kind words for the victims and their families. Perhaps, they even wanted to hear His sharp criticism on the builders holding them accountable for the shoddy construction. No, folks, none of the above. Instead, Jesus pointed out something I never expected to hear: *unless you repent, you will all likewise perish* (Luke 13:5). He said it twice. *Strange, isn't it? Truly odd, I would say. Really shocking.*

May the Lord allow me to bring my own frustrations this morning. *Lord, have you not seen all the atrocities happening in Gaza? Have you not heard the ongoing war between Ukraine and Russia? What answers would Jesus give to me? In my own judgment, I don't think it would be any different from what He already said to the crowd two thousand years ago. I almost hear Him saying, “Do you think people in Gaza worse sinners than the rest of the world? No, I tell you, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Do you think people in Ukraine were worse offenders than the rest of the world? No, I tell you, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”*

All I can say here is this: *Jesus is telling us the truth.* In so doing, He makes us think. Not about others, but about ourselves. He challenges us to look inward not outward. He says, when you see the world full of evil, when people do things abominable in the sight of God, and when the world is completely out of control and makes no sense, before you point out your fingers to others to blame, look within your own soul and **repent lest you too perish.**

So, if you agree with me so far, let's bring Jesus' answers to the context of peace in the world. He would tell me this morning that peace in the world begins with me. It begins with you. It begins with my repentance. It begins with your repentance. To be more specific, our repentance begins with God first, then with our neighbors. As we repent of our sins and ask for God's forgiveness, we will have God's peace in us. If we repent of our sins with our neighbors, we will have peace with them. *Repentance, Peace.* The opposite is true. *No repentance, No peace.* By the way, repentance means more than just to say sorry to God for the wrongs we have done. We must bear the fruit of repentance by not repeating the wrong again.

Let me say it again: everything begins with peace with God in us. That comes only after we repent our sins. When we have Christ's peace in us, we will have room for others. When we have peace with each other, our neighborhood will become a peaceful place to live in. Peace in the cities will soon spread into the nation. Peace among the nations will eventually bring forth peace in the world. In that order, folks.

Do you want peace? Then, *Come to Me*, Christ the Prince of Peace invites us, *and I will give you peace*. He is the author and the giver of peace. True peace comes from Him and in Him we find a lasting peace. Once we have His peace in us, no one or nothing can take it away from us. Come and worship Jesus, and He will grant you peace that you desire: the peace that the world cannot give or take away from you; the peace He alone can give. Listen to His own words: *"Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful"* (John 14:27). *"These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world"* (John 16:33).

This Christmas, as we clamor for the world's peace, Christ urges us to look within our own hearts. Ask yourself this morning, *do I have peace with God? Do I have peace with my family and with my neighbors?* May God help us not to blame others for the absence of peace in our lives. Peace begins with us. It begins with our own repentance. Let us repent of our sins and restore the peace with God first. Then, we can restore peace with our neighbors by forgiving each other. This Christmas, let us repent of our sins of blaming everybody else but ourselves for the mess we are in. Perhaps, then, only then, we will have peace that we desire.

Conclusion

I am going to close my message with a true story that Christ alone made it possible.

It was Christmas 1914: the entire Europe was engulfed with World War 1. Along the Western Front, about 100,000 *British and German troops* were engaged in battle. (Capt. *Bruce Bairnsfather* described the truce as follows):

"The Germans placed candles on their trenches and on Christmas trees, then continued the celebration by singing Christmas carols. The British responded by singing carols of their own. The two sides continued by shouting Christmas greetings to each other. Soon thereafter, there were excursions across No Man's Land, where small gifts were exchanged, such as food, tobacco and alcohol, and souvenirs such as buttons and hats. The artillery in the region fell silent. The truce also allowed a breathing spell where recently killed soldiers could be brought back behind their lines by burial parties. Joint services were held. In many sectors, the truce

lasted through Christmas night, continuing until New Year's Day in others"
(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_truce).

If you think that is so wonderful, remember the name that made it possible. It was the name of Christ—the Prince of Peace. No other name can. May such Christ's peace spread to every corner of the world this Christmas. That's my prayer!

Merry Christmas to you all! Christ the Prince of Peace gives peace to all. Amen.