

What I Want for Christmas.

Luke 2:1-14

Does Christmas really bring joy and peace and forgiveness and hope?

According to most studies, this is a season of stress and distress, of sadness not gladness.

Luke 2:1-14

Can you imagine how loud this must have been? (10's of 1000's)

Their praise then led them to declare a proclamation of peace:

Peace comes to those who praise Him and grace to those who give Him glory.

We must put God and His glory first and then peace will come.

I. PEACE WITH GOD

In his classic book "Peace with God," Billy Graham hits it on the head:

"The greatest warfare going on in the world today is between mankind and God. People may not realize that they are at war with God, but if they don't know Jesus Christ as their Savior...

God considers them to be at war with Him."

Romans 5:1-2

Once we are justified by faith, peace is a primary reality.

Do you have peace with God today? Or are you far away from Him?

II. THE PEACE OF GOD

In order to have the peace of God internally, we must first experience peace with God vertically.

Those at peace with God can experience the peace of God.

John 14:27: Philippians 4:6-7.

This inner peace is a gift from Jesus and comes to us as a key element of the fruit of the Spirit.

We will experience this peace in proportion to the room we give the Holy Spirit in our lives. Sometimes the church seems to imply that a hurting person is a deficient person.

Can I challenge you to look for the hurting during this holiday season?

Make a point to reach out to someone who is hurting.

Include those who are alone.

III. PEACE WITH OTHERS

When we're at peace with God, and we have internal peace, we can then be at peace with others.

Matthew 5:9: Romans 14:19

Jesus didn't tell us to be "PEACE KEEPERS," but instead "PEACE MAKERS."

This could be translated as "PEACE WORKERS." It takes effort to bring conflict to an end.

We're called to MAKE PEACE when we're involved in conflict.

IV. PEACE FOR OTHERS

The only way for people to have peace with God, peace inside, and peace with others, is through a personal relationship with Jesus.

Acts 10:36:

Just as the shepherds hurried off to tell the good news, so too we must share peace with others.

2 Thessalonians 3:16