

Living In The Peace That Christmas Brings

*"In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world...And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth...to Bethlehem...because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, "**Glorify to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men.**" (people on whom God's favor would rest.) When the angels had left them...the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing...which the Lord has told us about." So they...found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told." **Luke 2:1-20***

I. Introduction

II. Celebrating Christmas and Peace----What We Should Know!

1. Peace is a _____.

*"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.**"*

Isaiah 9:6

Isaiah wrote that nearly 700 years before the birth of Christ. It was a prophetic promise of not only of a coming promise of peace, but---more importantly—a promise of the coming of the Messiah, who would be called the "Prince of Peace!"

Peace= "*shalom*" (Heb.) 'peace; to make complete; to be at ease; safe, well, happy, prosperous and healthy.'

2. Peace is a _____.

"I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for You alone, O LORD, make me dwell in safety."

Psalm 4:8 (NKJV)

See Psalm 121

"...He gives His beloved [sweet] sleep." Psalm 127:2 (NKJV)

"It's useless to rise early and go to bed late, and work your worried fingers to the bone. Don't you know He enjoys giving rest to those whom He loves?" Psalm 127:2 (MSG)

*"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have **overcome** the world." John 16:33 (NKJV)*

OVERCOME=TO HAVE CONQUERED. JESUS, AS THE "STRONG MAN" (SEE MATT.12:25-29), HAS OVERCOME AND CONQUERED SATAN'S KINGDOM, AND, AS THE CONQUEROR, HE WANTED HIS DISCIPLES---AS EQUAL PARTAKERS IN THAT VICTORY---TO CHEER UP, TO TAKE HEART, TO BE CONFIDENT, AND TO BE COURAGEOUS ALL THE WAY THROUGH EACH SEASON AND CIRCUMSTANCE THAT THIS LIFE CAN THROW AT US! (SEE ROMANS 8:37)

Key Questions:

- What was—or is—your most stressful life-experience?
- How did the Lord come through for you?
- How did God's peace become most real and personal to you through it!

3. Peace is a _____.

(Jesus is not only the Prince of Heaven, but He is also the Prince of Peace)

*"For **He Himself** (Jesus) **is our peace**, who has made us both one and has broken down in His flesh the dividing wall of hostility." Ephesians 2:14 (ESV)*

*"Peace I leave with you, **My peace** I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." John 14:27 (NKJV)*

"I will honor Christmas in my heart, and try to keep it all the year."---Charles Dickens

"Once in our world, a stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world."---C.S. Lewis

"One of the most glorious messes in the world is the mess created in the living room on Christmas day. Don't clean it up too quickly."---Andy Rooney

"How many observe Christ's birthday! How few, His precepts!"---Benjamin Franklin

HAVE A MERRY AND BLESSED CHRISTMAS!

ANSWER KEY:

1. PROMISE
2. PRACTICE
3. PERSON