

Wishing for Peace

Luke 2:25-35

Sermon Series Summary

It's that time of year when we think about our hopes and dreams for another year, another day, and another season. Christmas time is a magical time in which it almost seems like our hopes, dreams, and wishes can become a reality. Through this sermon series we ask the simple question: What are you wishing for this Christmas? The answer for many is as straight forward as the question. They are looking for Peace, Hope, and most importantly a Christmas Miracle. Does God know our wishes? Can He make them come true?

Series Passage

Isaiah 9:6 – For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

Luke 2:25-35 – 25Now there was a man in Jerusalem called Simeon, who was righteous and devout. He was waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26It had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27Moved by the Spirit, he went into the temple courts. When the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him what the custom of the Law required, 28Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying:

"Sovereign Lord, as you have promised, you now dismiss your servant in peace. For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel."

33The child's father and mother marveled at what was said about him. 34Then Simeon blessed them and said to Mary, his mother: "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel, and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too."

Luke 2:14 – *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."*

Big Idea

Big Idea – Peace Comes to those Who Seek the Giver of Peace

The Big Idea of this sermon brings us to the first of three major points during this Christmas season. With the state of our economy and the nature of war and natural disasters that have hit this country over the last year, people are in a state of disbelief and a great time of stress. In such a season as the one in which we are now living many people are looking for a little bit of Peace during this holiday season: Peace from War, Peace from a failing & ailing economy, and peace from the stress, depression, and despair that comes with such a time of trial.

A Wish Come True

Lesson #1 – Peace only Comes with a Right Relationship

- **Romans 5:1-5** – 1 Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. 3 Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.
- **Col. 1:19-20** – For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether things on earth or things in heaven, by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.
- **Key Point** – People all over the world are longing and seeking for peace in their lives. The sad thing is that they have come to a point in their lives where they believe they can only have peace for a moment not a sustaining, lasting peace and so they keep looking for the next thing that will bring them peace for the moment. The lesson we learn here is that the world's idea of peace is completely ludicrous and does not work but there is a type of peace that is real and lasting and that is a peace that comes only from God. ***The issue is that in order to have the peace of God then you must have peace with God!*** True peace is only given when you have a right relationship with God and this is when Philippians 4:7 becomes a reality in your own life.

- **How do we measure peace (right relationship with God) in our lives? What are we doing outside the service?**

Lesson #2 – Peace only Comes as a Gift from God

- **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.
- **1 Thessalonians 5:23** – May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- **Key Point** – The second lesson brings us to the basic understanding that peace is not something that we earn nor is it something that is only contingent on outside circumstances. True peace is given to each person as a gift from God and this is the very reason why someone can have sustaining peace on the inside, in heart and mind, even when they are afflicted and hard pressed on the outside.

Lesson #3 – The Result of Peace is Contentment

- **Colossians 3:15** – Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.
- **2 Corinthians 4:8-11, 16-18** – **8** We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; **9** persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. **10** We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body. **11** For we who are alive are always being given over to death for Jesus' sake, so that his life may be revealed in our mortal body... **16** Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. **17** For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. **18** So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.
- **Key Point** – The final lesson comes to us as we reflect on the great results of peace that comes from God. True peace from God gives us strength, endurance, patience, hope, and it allows us to be content with everything that is going on around us. Paul gives us the best description of God's "peace" in action as we reflect on 2 Corinthians 4:8-11,16-18. The same peace that he describes here is the same peace you and I have access to the only difference is that he applied it.

Questions to Consider

What are you wishing for this Christmas? How can you give this to God in order to achieve peace this Christmas?

Memory Verse

Luke 2:14 – *"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."*

Challenge

This Christmas season find one person or family to shower with the blessings of the Lord through prayer, encouragement, and provision.

