



THE GIFTS OF Christmas

SERMON NOTES—PASTOR THOMAS A. KEYS

The Gift Of Peace: Know Jesus, Know Peace (No Jesus, No Peace) — Scriptures: Isaiah 9:6; Rom 5:1 – 2; John 16:33

INTRODUCTION

There are certain Images that all are very recognizable as signs of peace (two fingers raised in a “V” shape, Dove and Olive Branch). Interestingly, not one was developed out of an abundance of peace but rather out of the need for peace.

Although these symbols represent the longing for peace. The truth is that, as much as we may desire, strive and fight for it – true and lasting peace will only be realized when Jesus the Prince of Peace is reigning and ruling in our hearts and minds. Hence the statement “No Jesus, No peace – but only when you Know Jesus – you’ll Know Peace.

SERMON POINTS

Today on this second Sunday of Advent we are looking at the Gift of Peace. I don’t know about you, but the older I get the more I value peace. Peace is the most valuable thing in the world. That’s why Jesus came – to bring us Peace. This is peace is the summation of the Angel announcement of the Birth of Jesus in Luke 2:14 “*Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!*”

So what I want to do in this message, as we look at the Gift of Peace is for us to discover and appreciate – the Peace with God (Exterior), the Peace of God (Interior), and the Peace to Come (Superior) from the OT (Isaiah) and the NT (Romans and John) so we can be assured that as we know Jesus – we will know His peace.

I. Jesus: Peace With God – Exterior (Isaiah 9:6, Romans 5:1–2)

- ♦ **Exterior Peace in the Coming of Christ** - Isaiah in his prophecy of the Messiah – pronounces His Name(s): Wonderful – Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Check this out – because Jesus is all of this and more – He is the Prince of Peace that has come and is coming to take away all of our doubts and fears and give us His peace.

- ♦ **Exterior Peace in the Work of Christ** – The Apostle Paul in the book of Romans – now fleshes out what Jesus has done for us to bring us the peace with God. I am so glad that I am right with God buy my faith in Christ and what He has done on the Cross and not by my works. O but I can trust in the Work of Christ on my behalf – His love never fails, and His blood never fails and justifies us, giving us peace with the Father.
- ♦ **Exterior Peace from the Grace of Christ** – I remember being in Desert Storm in the Army - 7 months’ pay going straight to the bank (tax free). I ran straight to the MAC – put my card in – and **couldn’t remember my PIN number**. I had resources (thousands of dollars) but no access. Paul says that we have peace with God – access to Him and all of His blessings and provision by faith through the grace of Christ. In other words, we have peace with God, access to the very throne- room of Heaven to ask any thing we need – because Jesus Christ has already paid the way – He is our access code – that we can never ever lose

How does faith in the Person and Work of Jesus Christ on your behalf give you peace?

II. Jesus: The Peace of God – Interior (Philippians 4:6 – 7)

- ♦ **Interior Peace from Prayers/Petition to Christ** – Paul recognizes that we live a world full of trouble and problems. Despite what the Prosperity Preachers say, as long as you are in this evil world you are going to have problems. But instead of loosing our peace with worry – we can maintain our peace with prayer – not being anxious - Knowing that we can present our request – great, small, known unknown in the Name of Christ – the One who loves us and who never fails
- ♦ **Interior Peace from Provision from Christ** – Paul encourages us that we can have and maintain our internal peace – because when make or prayers and petitions to God in the Name of Christ – we tag our prayers with **Thanksgiving**. We can end our prayer with Thanksgiving because we know that he has heard us and will do what is best (Mark 11:24). We have internal peace because we can ask God for the things we need. Is there anything stressing you out? Cast your cares upon the Lord and receive His peace.

- ♦ **Interior Peace from Protection from Christ** – When I was in the Army – we used to pull a lot of guard duty. We had to remember our 3 General Orders. And even though I’ve been out for over 30 years I still remember them. And Paul says that when we make our petitions and thank God for His provision that is on the way – the peace of God that is greater than we can comprehend sets a guard – sentry on your mind and heart and keep you in peace.

What things are you facing that threaten to rob you of your peace? Give them to the Lord in prayer.

III. Jesus: The Peace To Come – Superior (John 16:33)

- ♦ **Superior Peace in the Word** – Now more than ever with the fake news, crazy posts on social media, the trouble and turmoil in the world – we need a word that supersedes, overrides the words of so-called leaders of this world. Jesus told his disciples for going to Cross – that would have trouble – but in those times of difficulty to remember His Word! Only the Word of God is able to give in the midst of any circumstance.
- ♦ **Superior Peace Over Worry** – Again I am so glad that Jesus gets real with us - in this world you will have trouble. You will have heartaches, you will have difficult people to deal with, you will have financial problems, sicknesses, loss of loved ones. His peace is superior over our worry and whatever seeks to worry us. Because Jesus and His Word is superior that any problems we face – what do we need to worry about?
- ♦ **Superior Peace Over the World** - Finally, Jesus tells His disciples and us as well to be of good cheer. In other words, be encouraged – even as you see the World around spiral downward in sin and unrighteousness. I know that there are systems in place that are designed to put us and keep us down. But Jesus said I have overcome the world. And since He has overcome, all who have faith in Him are overcomers too. And if we haven’t overcome yet – we can have that we will overcome someday

One of Stephan Pastis’ “Pearls Before Swine” comic strips shows a mouse with his cell phone. Up comes the words “Clear Recent Calls,” and the mouse deletes them. Then comes “Delete Chat History,” and that too is deleted. Next up comes, “Clear Browser History,” and the mouse clears it. Still on the smart phone, the mouse reads “Delete All Texts.”

The mouse deletes all texts. Finally, up comes the message, “Erase Every Bad Thing You’ve Ever Done in Your Life.” Wouldn’t it be nice to have an app that would erase all the bad things we have done? Would it be nice to have app from the cloud you could download in the your crazy life – that wipes out you past sins, shortcomings and mistakes the doesn’t clean up your phone – but cleans up your life and gives you access to Eternal Life? It doesn’t exist, but Jesus and His Peace comes very close:

- ♦ Jesus Come down from Heaven
- ♦ Jesus was Born in Manger
- ♦ Living he loved, Dying He saved me
- ♦ Buried He carried my Sin far Away
- ♦ Rising He justified and freed me forever and one He is coming back...

We can’t wipe out all the problems, we face in the world but we can stand at peace with God. If you know Jesus – You can have peace – not just at Christmas but every season of the year.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS:

- ♦ How does having a right relationship with God through Jesus Christ ensure our peace?
- ♦ What resources has God provided to help us to keep or maintain His peace?
- ♦ Since Satan cannot cause us to lose our Salvation, he will use “triggers” to make us lose our peace. How can we recognize the “triggers” in our lives?
- ♦ What are some ways you can better experience and share the Gift of Peace in Christ this Christmas Season?