

December 1, 2019 – Elmont Baptist Church

Text: Isaiah 9:6; Colossians 1:19-20

Message Series: Advent 2019

Week 1: Peace

Introduction:

1. Today is the first day of Advent. Advent is a word that means the arrival of a notable person, thing, or event”.
2. In Christian history, Advent is a time for Christ-followers to prepare their heart and mind as we think back to Christ’s first coming and build anticipation into our lives for His second coming.
3. The Christmas story isn’t some nice fairytale that is sweet and comforting. The original Christmas story was one of scandal and hardship for those involved in order to usher in the greatest blessing they would ever know.
4. As one author said, for us, “Christmas is an indictment before it is a delight.” Christmas cannot be a sweet little story of a baby in a manger without first being the realization that your sin demanded the death of the Son of God.
5. That is why He came. Not so you could have a tradition during December, but so that you could have forgiveness by His death and life by His resurrection.
6. Advent helps us focus on this and we have prepared resources for you to use during the weeks leading up to Christmas day. They are on the resource table in the back. We also have these resources in digital format that were sent out earlier this week. If you didn’t get them, please see me after the service.
7. There are four words associated with Advent and we will walk through those words starting today with Peace.
8. I am going to read a couple of passages to begin that give us an overview of the peace we have with the Father through His Son, and then we will reference several others.

9. The hope for today is that we will better understand what true peace is and walk in the encouragement of this truth.

Read Isaiah 9:6 & Colossians 1:19-20

In these verses and the others we will look at we understand that...

Jesus is Our Peace...

1. That Completes & Restores

a. Not as much the absence of conflict

b. As the presence of wholeness

- i. In our minds, we just want the conflict or difficulty to stop and then we think we will have peace, but that is not biblical peace.
- ii. The peace of God is not the absence of something but the presence of something greater.
- iii. You cannot be filled by the absence of something.
- iv. Some of us are looking for peace in this way. It's like looking to satisfy your hunger by not eating.
- v. The concept of peace throughout the OT in the word Shalom and the in the NT in the Eirene is about restoration and wholeness.
- vi. What we truly long for more than the absence of conflict or difficulty is the wholeness that comes through Christ.
- vii. And we have the promise is that peace when we understand that it comes by faith.

2. That Comes by Faith – Luke 2:14; Hebrews 11:6

a. "Peace...with those whom He is pleased"

b. "Without faith it is impossible to please Him"

- i. So is peace is meant for those that please God, it would be good to know how to be a person "with whom He is pleased".

- ii. The answer is found in Hebrews 11:6 where we read that “without faith it is impossible to please Him.”
- iii. We exhibit faith by living like we really trust that He is who He says He is and will do all He has promised to do. Living this way is called obedience and it cannot be separated from faith.
- iv. If we were to read on in Hebrews 11, the writer testifies over and over of great men and women of the faith that because they had faith, or believed God, they did certain things in obedience to Him.
- v. Ultimately this is what we celebrated the past few weeks in baptism. Those children saying by their obedience that they believe God and His promises. They believe that Christ died for their sin and has changed their heart to know and love the Father.
- vi. That Jesus has brought peace. That He has restored to wholeness what was missing because of sin. A reconciled relationship with the Father through the Son. The peace of God fills their heart and mind as the consequence of hell is vanquished and life forever with Christ is guaranteed.
- vii. But our faith doesn't stop there. We keep trusting and keep obeying God. The evidence that you trust God is that you obey God.
- viii. And peace has all kinds of real life benefits and we're going to take a few minutes to deal with one of them.

3. That Conquers Anxiety – Philippians 4:6-7

a. As we pursue prayer & thanksgiving

b. And peace guards our heart & mind

- i. God gives us peace eternally in the death and resurrection of Jesus. He reconciles us in relationship with Him.
- ii. He doesn't just remove hell because peace is not the absence of something but the presence of something greater. He gives us Himself.

- iii. And this peace is not just abstract or reserves for life after we die but has real life application for right here and right now.
- iv. One of those applications is the conquering of our anxieties.
- v. When we trust God with our anxiety and rather than fixate on what's wrong and what might happen, we go to Him and declare what is right and true and what has happened in Christ, then the peace of God will be the bodyguard of our heart and mind.
- vi. There's an obedience aspect to this. There's a trust who God is and what He has promised aspect to this.
- vii. We often need to preach to ourselves rather than listen to ourselves. We often give ourselves bad advice and rather than that, we need to declare truth to our minds and instruct our hearts.
- viii. How much sense does it make that we say we believe God has taken care of my eternity but can't handle my Tuesday?
- ix. Instead talk to Him in prayer and cast all those worries on Him and thank Him for who He is and what all He has done and open your heart and mind to His peace.
- x. Your heart and mind cannot be filled with both. Prayerless and thankless lives will be anxious ones. Prayerful and thankful lives will still struggle at times, but more times than not they will be guarded with the peace of God.

Closing

1. Do you just want the absence of conflict or difficulty or do you want to be filled with the peace of God?
2. How has prayerfulness and thanksgiving brought peace in to guard your heart and mind?
3. Let's pray and then confess to the Lord the honest condition of our heart and mind today knowing we have a God who has made great promises to those who trust Him.