



PEACE

ADVENT | Week 2

Peace is one of those words that we are all familiar with, whether it is used to describe a calmed spirit, the ceasing of war, or a casual greeting. Peace has its own iconic symbol that can be seen on bumper stickers and at the center of social movements.

It is a word that is also significant to the biblical story.

The angels announce “peace” to the shepherds on the hillside the night of Jesus birth (Luke 2:14).

Seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus Isaiah prophesied, “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end...” (Isa. 9:6-7).

The Gospel writer Luke records the days when Caesar Augustus was summoning the world under the name of peace to increase the burden of taxes. God was summoning the world to fulfill His Word, to establish the throne of His Son, and to make the way for a peace that will have no end.

God’s glory is revealed in the coming of His Son Jesus. God’s peace comes everywhere His Son is received. And the eternal promise is, of the increase, there will be no end!

Isaiah is looking forward. Luke is looking back. Both are looking at the same event. Both are seeing the same day. Isaiah writes with hope. Luke writes of fulfillment. Peace is announced. Peace has come!

The Light of Peace

"So Jesus said to them, "The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." When Jesus had said these things, he departed and hid himself from them."

John 12:35–36 (ESV)

The absence of visible light diminishes one's ability to see, perceive, and discern. Colors are indistinguishable and objects are indiscernible. What can be recognized clearly in light is often reduced to a mystery in darkness. Darkness can transform a landscape of beauty into footsteps of fear and uncertainty.

John announces at the beginning of his gospel that Jesus is the light that has come into the world (John 1:4-5). For John, the darkness represents the cosmic enemy. It is the blanket of hopelessness seeking to suffocate humanity.

In Genesis, creation begins in darkness. A darkness filled with chaos and nothingness. God's first recorded words are, "Let there be light!" And there was light. The darkness was vanquished, chaos was tamed, and what was nothing became something. The first words spoken by God brought peace on earth.

Adam and Eve were created in the light. They were made for the light. Tragically, it did not take long before they turned to the darkness. And once again,

by the invitation of humanity, darkness moved in and cast its shadow of chaos and nothingness. Humanity turned from living in the light and trusting God, to trusting in themselves and loving the darkness (John 3:19). We stepped out of God's peace into chaos. We gave up light of God and exchanged it for the nothingness of darkness.

That is why John describes Jesus' arrival into humanity as the light shining in the darkness. It is the same reason Zechariah sings in Luke 1:79, "the sunrise shall visit us from on high to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." And it is why the angels, shining in the night, announced to the shepherds keeping watch over their sheep, "peace on earth" (Luke 2:14).

Christmas comes as God's word of peace once again: "let there be light, and there was light." His name is Jesus. This word of God comes to us as an invitation—"believe in the light, that you may become sons of light" (John 12:36).

**"Christmas comes as
God's word of peace
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was light.'"**

That is the way to life and light. That is the only hope of finding peace, ceasing to trust in yourself or in anything else of this world, and stepping into the light of Jesus. Believe He has come to rescue, save, and redeem you from the darkness.

"I have come into the world as light," He said, "so that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness" (John 12:46). That light is still shining, and through Him you can have life everlasting, life abundant, life in Christ.

During Advent, we light a candle each Sunday when we gather to worship. A light to shine in the darkness. One of the observations we often make is that candlelight is fleeting—it is fragile. With a puff of breath, or a breeze, and the light is easily extinguished.

Jesus came into the world as the light that can never be extinguished. He will never be blown out. In fact, He is the light that will never be overcome by darkness.

In Revelation 22, where John describes a glimpse of the new creation, he writes, "And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign for ever and ever" (Rev. 22:5). It is as though John has witnessed the darkness being blown out and the chaos extinguished. No more night, only light. Peace forever and ever.

Prayer

Father, thank you for sending your son Jesus as the light to overcome the

darkness. I pray that the light of Jesus will expose the dimness of every fragile and fleeting flame that I chase after in search of peace. Kindle in me a longing for the light of life. And as you have created me in your image and caused me to be born again as a son or daughter of light, I pray that the light of your glory would shine through my life into the darkness around me. In Jesus name, Amen.

Further Reflection | Individual Study Questions

1. What is one specific area or situation in your life where you have grown accustomed to the darkness?
2. In what way do you notice or experience a lack of peace in that area?
3. How would that area or situation look different if it was brought into the light?

Further Reflection | Family Study Questions

1. Do you remember a time you were in the dark and were afraid?
2. Discuss what it is like to be in a dark room when a light is suddenly turned on.
3. Since Jesus is described as the light of the world, what is one way we can specifically illustrate aspect of the Christmas story in our decorations and traditions?

Notes:

Year: _____

Year: _____

Year: _____

