

# What's So Special About Christmas?

Part 3 – Reconciliation

December 20, 2009

Luke 2:11-14

## What causes relational conflicts?

### 1. Natural self-centeredness

*Prov 13:10 By **pride** comes nothing but **strife**, but with the well-advised is wisdom.*

### 2. Expecting others to be what only God can be

*James 4:1-2 Where do **wars and fights** come from among you? Do they not come from your desires for pleasure that war in your members? You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask.*

Read Luke 2:11-14

*<sup>11</sup> For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.” <sup>13</sup> And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: <sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”*

## How does Jesus' birth deliver on God's claim of both glory to God and peace toward men?

### Jesus offers peace with God - (vertically)

#### Sin is the problem

*Isaiah 53:6 All we like sheep have gone **astray**; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*

#### Jesus is the solution

*Rom 5:1-2 Therefore, having been justified by faith, **we have peace with God** through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.*

## Look at the evidence

### (Flesh)

Adultery	Fornication
Uncleanness	Lewdness
Idolatry	Sorcery
Hatred	Contentions
Jealousies	Outbursts of wrath
Selfish Ambitions	Dissensions
Heresies	Envy
Murders	Drunkenness
Revelries	

*Gal 5:19-21*

### (Spirit)

Love
Joy
Peace
Longsuffering
Kindness
Goodness
Faithfulness
Gentleness
Self-control

*Gal 5:22-23*

## Jesus offers the peace of God - (Internally)

*Phil 4:6-7 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the **peace of God**, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.*

## God's peace in the midst of:

### Suffering

*John 16:33 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."*

### Condemnation

*Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.*

### A relationship

*Isaiah 26:3 You will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on You, because he trusts in You.*

## What robs us of peace?

1. Uncontrollable circumstances \_\_\_\_\_
2. Unchangeable people \_\_\_\_\_
3. Unexplainable problems \_\_\_\_\_

## The Serenity Prayer

*God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference. Living one day at a time; enjoying one moment at a time; accepting hardships as the pathway to peace; taking, as He did, this sinful world as it is, not as I would have it; trusting that He will make all things right if I surrender to His Will; that I may be reasonably happy in this life and supremely happy with Him forever in the next.*

## Jesus offers peace with others - (Horizontally)

*Matt 5:9 Blessed are the **peacemakers**, for they shall be called sons of God.*

Peacemaking is what we do - It's who we are

*II Cor 5:18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has **given us the ministry of reconciliation***

I am called to offer peace to \_\_\_\_\_

## How to make P-E-A-C-E with an enemy

### **P** - Plan a peace meeting

*Matt 5:23-24 Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar, and go your way. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift.*

### **E** - Empathize

*Matt 5:25 Agree with your adversary quickly, while you are on the way with him, lest your adversary deliver you to the judge, the judge hand you over to the officer, and you be thrown into prison.*

*I Cor 9:22-23 to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. Now this I do for the gospel's sake, that I may be partaker of it with you.*

### **A** - Attack the problem not the person

*James 3:18 Now the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.*

### **C** - Cooperate

*Matt 5:38-39, 41 You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I tell you not to resist an evil person. But whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also... And whoever compels you to go one mile, go with him two.*

### **E** - Emphasize reconciliation not resolution

*II Cor 5:19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.*