

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church
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SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT: HOW TO HAVE PEACE

Luke 1:46-55

December 6, 2020

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INTRODUCTION: During the month of December, it's likely you'll run into angry shoppers or experience an angry driver rushing to a holiday event. When you think of it, that's the antithesis of the holiday! Jesus came to bring peace, not anger!

SCRIPTURE: Isaiah 9:6

*“For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
And the government will rest on His shoulders;
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace”*

I have two points to my message today:

- Mary found peace in her situation.
- To have peace, you must choose the person of peace.

Today, we lit the second candle of Advent which represents peace. We talk of world peace and people living in harmony with one another, but peace begins in the individual. If a group of people is at peace, it's not because peace was forced upon them, it's because as individuals they chose peace. The result of people living in peace is a *group* of people living peacefully.

MARY FOUND PEACE IN HER SITUATION

Let's look at the peace of Mary in Luke 1:46-55 when she found out she was pregnant with Jesus.

SCRIPTURE: 1:46-55

And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant. From now on

all generations will call me blessed,

⁴⁹ for the Mighty One has done great things for me—holy is his name.

⁵⁰ His mercy extends to those who fear him, from generation to generation.

⁵¹ He has performed mighty deeds with his arm; he has scattered those who are proud in their inmost thoughts.

⁵² He has brought down rulers from their thrones but has lifted up the humble.

⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things but has sent the rich away empty.

⁵⁴ He has helped his servant Israel, remembering to be merciful

⁵⁵ to Abraham and his descendants forever, just as he promised our ancestors.”

EXPLANATION: Mary, being educated in a Jewish home, would have heard the prophecy from Isaiah 7:14, and knowing full well she had not slept with a man, she knew that she was the virgin mentioned in the ancient prophecy.

We must realize she was in the most precarious of all situations. She was unwed. She was pregnant – and guess what? She was carrying the God-man in her belly. “Mary’s pregnant – and she’s carrying the Messiah.” How many jokes would late night comedy make of that if it had happened today?

I’ve wondered how many would have believed her when she told them she was pregnant but had not been with a man.

- Her cousin Elizabeth believed her.
- We conclude by reading earlier in Luke 1 that Elizabeth’s husband, Zachariah, believed her.
- An angel appeared to Joseph, Mary’s fiancé, and he believed her.

Here are some things I want you to notice about Mary when she found out she was carrying the Messiah in her womb:

- God did not ask her. He chose her. Mary was at peace with that.
- Mary was not married, had not had sex with a man, and she was pregnant. She was at peace with that. Our text this morning, verses 46-55 reveal to us she knew the history of her people. She knew the scriptures which gave her peace.
- Whether people believed her or not, however, didn’t seem to be important to Mary. She knew the truth and she had *peace* because she knew the truth.
- When the angel appeared to her, her young life would never be the same, ever again. Yet, she had peace.

APPLICATION: This could have been a terrible crisis for Mary had she not known the truth of the scriptures. It's the same way today. John 8:36 says the truth will set you free. It is important to know the scripture! How can I convince you any more of that? I hope you read the scripture and try to memorize it... that's when I can really help you.

I've asked Terry Taylor to include scripture memory in our service because it seems people are easily taken by any statement from anybody as long as it is loud enough. Today, like never before, we need to clearly discern the truth.

There is a song in Isaiah 26:3-4 that has these words: *You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. ⁴ Trust in the LORD forever, for the LORD, the LORD himself, is the Rock eternal.*

EXPLANATION: Luke 1:30 says, "*Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God.*"

So she was probably afraid at the sight of the angel, as many in scripture were but was she afraid over the news? No, she chose to trust God. She knew from scripture that God always keeps his promises.

APPLICATION: No matter who you are this morning, I am sure you have an element of stress in your life. You have something that causes you to be uneasy. I have such and so do you. You know what it is. You can find peace in the middle of the situation. Think about Mary. Think about how she found peace in her situation.

TO HAVE REAL PEACE, YOU MUST CHOOSE THE PERSON OF PEACE

EXPLANATION: While there were many Jews who believed, there were also many who did not! Their idea of peace on earth was that peace would come through a Messiah who would kill their enemies. They did not, in any way, see that Jesus was the way of peace and the way to peace. He completely messed up their theologies.

As you know the Pharisees created additional laws to keep people from breaking the Old Testament laws. The Sadducees were a sect within the Jewish society who

had their own ideas... then you had the rabbis, and the priests. They all doubted that Jesus was the messiah. They refused to believe he was the messiah. They didn't want his peace. They just wanted a messiah to get rid of their enemies so they could continue being Pharisees, Sadducees, rabbis, and priests. They wanted peace *their way*, not God's way.

They did everything within their power to defame Jesus. He wasn't the Messiah they expected. They wanted an earthly king who would return Israel to its greatness. They did not truly want a spiritual kingdom. They were more interested in earthly things.

Look at their characteristics:

- Some doubted that Jesus was the Messiah – there's no peace in doubting.
- They refused to believe Jesus was the Messiah – there's no peace in unbelief.
- They were paranoid that Jesus' teaching would spread and unseat them – there is no peace in paranoia.

If you find yourself caught in doubt or complete unbelief, if you are paranoid, you are not enjoying peace in your life.

If they really wanted peace, they would have chosen the person of peace. But no, they wanted peace their way.

Think of those in scripture who found peace because of Jesus:

- There were Jews who believed.
- Mary Magdalene
- The woman at the well
- The demoniac
- The Apostle Paul
- And many, many others.

I'm seeing blogs and vlogs of people who call themselves prophets. I am not convinced that I've run across any true prophets. Recently, several people have stated that God is setting up his kingdom on earth right now. The problem is, they

sound like the religious leaders in Jesus' day who expected him to set up an earthly kingdom. If you've been following any of these, let me clarify: God's kingdom on this earth is not going to come through any political party or any politician. Yes, he uses man's systems. If I did not clarify enough, let me try to be even more clear: When Jesus came the first time, he came to set up a spiritual kingdom. He has not come a second time, so this means he is still setting up his spiritual kingdom.

There will be no earthly kingdom until Jesus returns the second time. Yes, in a sense there is an earthly kingdom because the Lord is in control of all things. But there will be no true earthly kingdom of Jesus until he returns and sets up his earthly kingdom.

The spiritual kingdom that Jesus set up when he was on this earth is still growing today. It was, and is, a kingdom of salvation, faith, hope, and love. The extremely clever thing about it is that it permeates all earthly kingdoms, all governments. The spiritual kingdom of Jesus is alive and well today on every continent. All believers are a part of the one spiritual kingdom.

So, for those who say that God is setting up his earthly kingdom right now, I disagree...we are citizens of his spiritual kingdom.

APPLICATION: If you want peace in your life, you must choose the person of peace. A person hearing this may say, "I've found peace without Jesus. I've found peace through meditation, or nature, or whatever..." And perhaps you've found a level of peace without Jesus. But you only have a level of peace, not complete peace.

SCRIPTURE: In John 16:33, Jesus says this:

*"I have said these things to you, that **in me** you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."*

Jesus had a lot to say about peace: Matthew 24:6 reads: *"You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but see to it that you are not alarmed."*

That's the same thing Gabriel said to Mary. Do not be alarmed. Do not be afraid. Instead, choose peace.

CONCLUSION: Let me tell you the story of a girl in Sri Lanka. She was seven or eight years old. A couple of years ago, her family was at church when a terrorist detonated a bomb. Her parents were killed, and she lost her eyesight. There was a story about her in Voice of the Martyrs magazine. The story was not so much about the bombing as it was about the girl's peace. She believed what her parents had taught her. She knows that one day she'll see them again. It's incredible that a little girl would have such peace in her life that it was noted by others, enough so that Voice of the Martyrs wanted the rest of the world to know.

Tribulation, yes, but with the peace of Christ, she'll make it through.

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Sincerely, Paul Gunn
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