

Peace In A Troubled World

Text : **Luke 2: 8-14 , 12: 49-53 ; II Thes. 3: 16**

S#1.
S#2.

A. We live in a time of great international turmoil.

1. Enemies from abroad seek harm to us all.
 - a. This enemy cannot be appeased because they seek our death and destruction.
 - b. In this regard we can empathize with the nation of Israel.
2. The enemy from abroad persuades many among us to hate us.
 - a. They use our own freedoms of expression against us.
 - b. Even people who have had no previous exposure to our enemies are radicalized.
 - * *No eastern ties .. young man arrested on terrorism charges is of Hispanic decent.*

B. We have political dissension that has gotten far out of hand.

1. People are openly hostile to people who disagree with their political views.
 - a. Bullies rule ... Keeping a political promise is viewed as an ugly concept.
 - b. One politician said the country's greatest enemy was the opposition party.
2. Our country's traditional values and morals are gone ... lesser ones being re-defined.

C. Civility in society is a thing of the past. (*Political correctness is a cloak for bullies.*)

1. We have raised a generation that has no respect for themselves or anyone else.
 - a. They do not want to even hear anything with which they disagree.
 - * *They are programmed to view everything as a "micro aggression."*
 - b. Many students at Yale University signed a petition to abolish the 1st amendment.
2. When the police stop people they think they have the right to ignore their authority.
 - a. Police become so frustrated they sometimes overreact to the challenges.
 - b. When the police enforce the law, rebellious citizens riot in the streets.

D. Atheists are no longer contented just to reject God, they seek to prevent others.

1. They have filed many law suits trying to expel God from public life. (*prayer*)
2. Even cultural expressions of God are under attack. (*Charlie Brown, Santa*)

E. All of this conflict creates an atmosphere of insecurity.

S#3.

1. Terrorism creates feelings of apprehension, even of fear.
 - a. One never knows who might be a closet terrorist.
 - b. Enrique Marquez was described as being nice ... "the boy next door type."

2. Radical politics causes one to hesitate to express a political opinion.
 - a. Friends used to be able to banter back and forth about politics.
 - b. Even people within the same party may attack you over political issues.
3. One is often forced to carefully choose his words when talking with friends.
 - a. Now days a friendly debate over meaningless topics can destroy friendships.
 - b. Ethnic bantering between friends can get one arrested in some places.
4. These days many Christians are afraid to share the gospel with others.
 - a. As society has rejected the authority of God, one seldom hears “the bible says.”
 - b. Christians are increasingly silent for fear of rejection and ridicule.

It is not the will of God for His people to live in fear.

S#4.

1. Our God is often called “**the God of peace.**”
 - a. **Rom. 15: 33** - **Now the God of peace be with you all.**
 - b. Compare : **Rom. 16:20** , **Phil. 4: 9** , **I Thes. 5: 23** , **Heb. 13:20**
2. The angels said Jesus was coming to bring peace on earth.
3. Jesus said He came to bring a sword. **WHICH IS IT ! Our topic is peace.**

I. Peace in this world.

S#5.

A. The world can never be at peace because the world is all about SELF.

S#6.

1. When one becomes a Christian he is required to put away selfish thinking.

I Pet. 2: 1 – **Therefore, putting aside all malice and all deceit and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, (*attitudes that express competition*)**
2. People of the world live to fulfill their personal desires, ... *Personal desire conflict*
 - a. **Eph. 2: 3** – **Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.**
 - b. When personal desires compete and conflict, peace is lost.
3. Like individuals, nations have personal, individual desires. (*Russia wants port*)

S#7.

B. Christians are commanded to proactively pursue peace.

S#8.

1. **I Pet. 3: 10-11** For, “The one who desires life, to love and see good days, must keep his tongue from evil and his lips from speaking deceit. **11** He must turn away from evil and do good; He must seek peace and pursue it.”

S#9.

2. We are to work toward creating peace.

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

B. Christians are also instructed to pray for peace.

1. Pray for leaders so that we may live a quiet and peaceful life. S#10.

I Tim. 2: 1-2 First of all, then, I urge that entreaties *and* prayers, petitions *and* thanksgivings, be made on behalf of all men, ² for kings and all who are in authority, so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity.

2. The objective of the quiet life is not just to be happy .. it facilitates evangelism.

Acts 9: 31 – So the church throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria enjoyed peace, being built up; and going on in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, it continued to increase. S#11.

3. When God gives us peace it is to facilitate the spread of the gospel.

C. Peace among men is not always possible S#12.

1. **Rom. 12: 18** – If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men.

2. Muslims refuse to be at peace with Christians but we must not fight them.

John 18: 36 – Jesus answered, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I ...

2. Though we may not fight, we must never allow ourselves to be silenced.

b. **Acts 8: 4** – Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching the word.

c. They preached the word while they fled. (*The message may **NOT** be silenced.*)

II. Peace in the church ... the kingdom of God. (Kingdom of peace) S#13.

A. There must be peace in any kingdom ruled by the God of peace and love. S#14.

1. Jesus commanded that all of His disciple live in peace with each other.

a. **Mark 9: 50** – “... be at peace with one another.” S#15.

b. **Mark 9: 35** ... In the kingdom there should be no conflict b/c each serves others

2. The Apostle commanded us to live in peace with each other.

a. **II Cor. 13: 11** – Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

b. **I Thes. 5: 13** – ... Live in peace with one another.

B. Peace is a product of love and of effort. S#16.

1. We are very fortunate to have a peaceful congregation, but we work at it.

2. **II Tim. 2: 22** – Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.

(The same things that produce righteousness, faith and love, also produce peace.)

C. Peace must be one of the goals of all congregations.

S#17.

1. **Rom. 14: 19** – So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another.
2. Confusion must not be permitted to exist in the congregation.
 - a. **I Cor. 14: 33** – for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.
 - b. Sadly, in some congregations members complete and revelries exist over service.

C. Once achieved, peace is must be actively maintained.

S#18.

1. **Eph. 4: 1-3** Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, **2** with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, **3** being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
2. **Phil. 2** ... When we have the mind of Christ in us, this comes naturally.
3. **Peace can only exist in the absence of rivalry and in the presence of love.**

S#19.

III. Peace in your heart.

S#20.

A. All mankind seeks a peaceful heart, but it's often illusive.

1. Most in the world do not have any comprehension of true peace.
 - a. They go through life reacting to circumstances so peace is fleeting.
 - b. Dictionary definition inadequate : freedom from disturbance; quiet and tranquility.
2. True peace is not relevant to circumstances; it emanates from within.

S#21.

ILL – Two artists were commissioned to paint a painting depicting peace.

One painted a lady setting in a gazebo in a quiet glen by a glassy lake.

The other painted a broken branch jutting out from the water cascading over a raging waterfall. On the branch was birds nest and a bird singing.

The first had depicted tranquility, but the second had shown true of peace.

3. True peace does not depend upon circumstances, **but upon a man Jesus Christ.** **#22.**
 - a. Peace is a gift given by God to those who trust in Him.
 - b. **John 14: 27** – Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.

4. **Acts 16: 22f** ... Paul and Silas had peace in the Philippian jail.

B. One's peace is directly proportionate to his love for and his trust in God. S#23.

1. Jesus admonishes us to trust Him and to commit ourselves to Him.
Matt. 6: 25-33 For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life. S#24.
as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what
you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing?
(*Birds ... Flowers*) 31 Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or
'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' 32 For the Gentiles
eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need
all these things. 33 But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all
these things will be added to you.
2. Peace is a result of knowing that the God who loves you is in control of your life. #25.
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. 7 And
the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard
your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
3. Though we come to know the peace that should be ours, it's hard to surrender. S#26.
Col 3: 15 – Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you
were called in one body; and be thankful.
4. **Luke 8: 24** ... This is how Jesus was able to sleep in the storm.
5. To those who have no faith, this peace is beyond comprehension ... **it is foolish.**

IV. Peace with God.

S#27.

A. Peace with God is the foundation stone upon which all peace is built.

S#28.

1. Without peace with God no other peace matters ... **God controls all things.**
2. As the sovereign ruler of all things God dictates the terms of peace.
3. Sin is an act of rebellion which destroys peace ... **It terminates the relationship.**

B. Peace with God requires that the broken relationship be repaired. (Isa 59) S#29.

1. God is not hostile. Though man broke the relationship, God seeks to repair it.
2. **Luke 2: 8-14** ... The peace on earth the angels announced was peace with God.
3. **Col. 1: 19-20** For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to
dwell in Him, 20 and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself,
having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him,
I say, whether things on earth or things in Heaven. S#30.
4. **Eph. 2: 13** – But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been
brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For He Himself is our peace, ...

S#31.

C. Peace with God is possible only through justification by grace through faith.

1. **Rom. 5: 1-2** Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.
2. **Rom 8: 1** – .. there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. S#32.
3. Knowing we have no condemnation we have peace of mind.
I John 4: 18 – There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment, and the one who fears is not perfected in love.

CONCLUSION :**A. What have we observed about peace ?**

S#33.

1. We should pray for peace on this earth and use it when we can, but sin destroys it.
2. God demands peace in His church (kingdom) and we must work to preserve it.
3. Peace in our hearts is not dependent upon circumstances, but upon faith in Jesus.
4. Peace with God is the ultimate goal of God and should be of mankind as well.

B. Peace with God give inner peace, but it causes conflict in our daily lives. S#34.

1. **Luke 12: 51-52** Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division; ⁵² for from now on five *members* in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three.
2. Our eternal peace with God is linked to our willingness to endure temporary conflict.
 - a. **Matt. 10: 32-34** Therefore everyone who confesses Me before men, I will **S#35.** also confess him before My Father who is in heaven. ³³ But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven. ³⁴ Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword.
 - b. NOTICE ... Jesus anticipated that confessing Him would foster conflict.

C. No matter the turmoil around you, in Christ you can have peace.

S#36.

John 16: 33 – These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.

INVITATION :

S#37.

A. Have you overcome the world through Christ ? Or are you reacting to events?**C. You can have perfect peace beyond the world's comprehension.**

S#38.

S#39. ... Communion slide

Lesson Text :**Luke 2: 8-14**

8 In the same region there were *some* shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. **9** And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. **10** But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; **11** for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. **12** “This *will be* a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” **13** And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, **14** “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.”

Luke 12: 49-53

49 “I have come to cast fire upon the earth; and how I wish it were already kindled! **50** But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished! **51** Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division; **52** for from now on five *members* in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. **53** They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law.”

II Thes. 3: 16

Now may the Lord of peace Himself continually grant you peace in very circumstance. The Lord be with you all!