

December 7, 2025

God's Good News Story: The Church Alive & Growing
Advent Sunday 2
Grace-Fueled Peace

Advent is a word that describes the arrival of a notable person, thing or event. We are using the term in the traditional sense of the Four Sundays that precedes the Celebration of Christ's birth. During this important event on the church calendar, each week of Advent focuses on a different theme - hope, peace, joy, and love. Christians from all denominations and backgrounds celebrate Advent in different ways but all focus on the anticipation of waiting for the arrival of Jesus. Now I think we are have come to realize that we cannot be 100% sure the exact day of Christ's birth, but we are 100% sure that He was born, lived, died, rose again and is coming again.

Last week for our 1st Sunday in Advent we merged the Celebrations of Thanksgiving and Advent Hope. Grace-Fueled and Hope Focused Gratitude.

Today, just as the Candles on the Advent Table have increased and put forth more light, so do the benefits and blessings of allowing the key elements of Advent to *Give More Light* to Our lives Spiritually. If we will practice the Grace-Fueled and Hope Focused Gratitude that we discussed last week we will naturally receive the additional 'Light' of Grace-Fueled PEACE. Out of a heart of Gratitude Grace and Hope will flow PEACE.

However, if we are really honest, sometimes—peace often feels like the one thing we struggle to find and hold on to. The world we live in can be restless, our hearts can be anxious, and our relationships can feel strained. These times are when we need to be intentional about countering Worldly Worry with Heavenly Peace. A good place to start is always the Bible. In the Gospel of **Luke:2:13,14** we hear literal voices from heaven in the form of the angels' song at Bethlehem the night so long ago at Jesus' birth. That same message still rings out for us today... **Luke 2:13–14** — “***Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests.’***”

The good news of Advent is that PEACE is not manufactured by human effort. It is something we receive. It is fueled by GRACE—the unearned favor of God given through Jesus Christ.

Let's take a look at this PEACE through the lens of GRACE.

1. Grace-Fueled Peace Announced (Luke 2:13–14)

Luke 2:13–14 — “***Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests.’***”

The angels declare peace as the fruit of God's favor.... aka... His Grace. This PEACE is not merely the absence of conflict, but the presence of wholeness (*shalom*) or right relationship with God. It comes "***to those on whom His favor rests***"—GRACE is the foundation. Peace is rooted in grace, not in human achievement. The shepherds didn't earn peace. They received it as a gift. And so do we.

Peace was Announced 2000 years ago but sadly the world, for the most part, is still in search of Peace. The world is often full of fear, anxiety, and conflict (internal, relational, and global). Humanity seeks peace in external circumstances, wealth, or power, but true, lasting peace remains elusive because they are not listening to the right 'voices' and are not seeking PEACE in the right place. The season of Advent anticipates the coming of Jesus, the "Prince of Peace," who offers a different reality than the "peace" the world offers. True peace isn't merely the absence of conflict, but a deep, right relationship with God made possible only through His unmerited favor, or grace, given to us in Jesus Christ. How about you, have you chosen to listen to The Heavenly Voice or the World's Voice?

2. Grace-Fueled Peace Accomplished (Eph. 2:13–17)

Ephesians 2:13-19... 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, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,* ¹⁵ *by abolishing in*

His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing PEACE, ¹⁶ *and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the CROSS, by it having put to death the enmity.* ¹⁷ *And He came and preached PEACE to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near;* ¹⁸ *for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.* ¹⁹ *So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and are of God's household.*

All through the Old Testament we see that humans sadly have failed and sinned. This broke their relationship and peace with God. Paul in his Letter to the Ephesians reveals that in Christ and His 'Once-For-All Sacrifice' on the Cross, provides for us a way to have the Barrier of Sin broken down and our Peace with God through Christ re-established. Paul reminds us that Christ Himself is our Peace. By His blood, He reconciles us to God and to one another. It is by the Grace of God that the gap between hostility and harmony can be removed.

At the cross, Jesus absorbed our sin and hostility, so that we could be reconciled. Peace is accomplished by the Grace of Jesus and His death on the Cross.

Peace is not a truce we negotiate—it is a reality Christ accomplished for us and that we receive by Grace in Faith.

3. Grace-Fueled Peace Applied (Phil. 4:6-7)

Philippians 4:4-9... *⁴ REJOICE in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. THE LORD IS NEAR. ⁶ 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. ⁸ Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, DWELL ON THESE THINGS. ⁹ The things you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, PRACTICE THESE THINGS, and the God of PEACE will be with you.*

These verses give us a hint about next week's Key Word – JOY. Spoiler-Alert – when we have the Grace-Fueled Gratitude of Hope and Peace we WILL HAVE JOY. But, that's for next week...

\How Do we move from Peace Announced and Accomplished to actual Application?

A. **By Rejoicing Always** -The 1st Verse give us a hint about next week's Key Word – JOY. Spoiler-Alert – when we have the Grace-Fueled Gratitude of Hope and Peace we WILL HAVE JOY. So, if we are going to actually APPLY Peace in our lives we must choose JOY. More about that NEXT WEEK...

B. **By Acknowledging The Lord is Near In Your Life**- this passage also gives us a clue as to a Key Element of Peace...that is the Presence of the Lord (vs. 5b... “The Lord is Near”. Grace-Fueled Peace is not based on circumstances, but on the very Presence of God in our lives.

C. **By Praying About Everything** - We have a wonderful gift of Grace in Prayer. We can enter into a supernatural divine relationship where He interacts with us through PRAYER... note theses verses...⁶ 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. Grace-fueled Prayer connects us to the Peace of God which guards our hearts and minds and transcends all understanding.” It guards our hearts and minds even when chaos surrounds us. Advent invites us to rest in this peace, not because life is calm, but because Christ is near.

D. **By Dwelling On These Things**: Paul also reveals to us the need to have our minds dwelling on the things that are worthy and honoring to God... ⁸ whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, DWELL ON THESE THINGS.

E. **By Practicing These Things**: It is not enough to just realize that Christ has made Peace available to us, we have to Dwell on that Peace and then actually put in into PRACTICE. We have to LIVE PEACE.

Conclusion: The Result of Grace

Biblical peace (*shalom*) means wholeness, right relationships, and union/reconciliation after separation.

Peace with God:

Romans 5:1 - *"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have Peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ".*

The primary peace we need is reconciliation with our Creator. Because of Christ's sacrifice (grace), we are no longer enemies of God.

The Peace of God:

Philippians 4:6-7 - *"And the Peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."*

As a result of peace *with* God, we can experience an internal "deep contentment of soul" and peace which "guards and rules over our hearts" even amidst life's turmoil.

Isaiah 26:3... *"You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you."*

Often, we are our own worst enemies. We defeat ourselves with negative, critical or over-expectational thoughts. But the glorious thing about Grace is that it provides us not only Peace with God and the Peace of God, but also Peace within ourselves. We no longer have to be self-sufficient, we no longer have to fix ourselves

Peace with Others:

Romans 14:19....*So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.*

This internal peace should naturally flow outward, changing our view of others and compelling us to be peacemakers in a broken world.

God in His Grace has provided His Presence, Power and Provision through His Grace to meet all our needs. Now that's PEACE!

- Receive God's peace by trusting His grace, not your performance.
- Extend peace by forgiving others as Christ forgave you.
- Be a peacemaker in a fractured world, showing that true peace flows from grace.

To Do these things we must:

A. Acknowledge the Need: True preparation for Christmas involves acknowledging our need for a Savior, for help with our sin and anxiety.

B. Receive the Gift: Grace and peace are gifts that must be received through faith and trust in Jesus. We must let God work on our hearts through His Word and prayer.

C. Live as a Child of God: Embrace the truth that because of grace, you are a child of God, not an enemy. Live in the light of His forgiving love and let His peace rule in your heart.

Advent reminds us that peace is not a human

achievement but a divine gift. Grace fuels peace—peace with God, peace within, and peace with others. As we focus on the Advent candle of peace, we proclaim:

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests. Luke 2:14.