

JWAR: Advent 2011/PEACE

Intro: Peace is almost as difficult to define as Joy! Last week we talked about Joy. Today we want to examine Peace...Again one of those things that we talk about, but many times don't really KNOW about.

Luke 1 and 2 we see the foundation and origin of Peace...and then discover how to get it. Pg 724

Peace Defined:

Peace is a state of tranquility, quiet or well being based on harmonious relationships. It carries with it the concept of a lack of disturbance because things are in their proper order and place and are united and correctly connected. At its core Peace rises from within when we are in right relationship with God, Others and Self, and is broken or disturbed when we are not.

Peace Illustrated:

Because we so seldom experience Peace it is important to illustrate it in a way that we can understand and embrace.

<u>Peace Is:</u>	<u>Peace is Not</u>	<u>Example</u>
Based In God	Based in Events or Circumstances	<i>My Peace I leave with you</i>
State of being we possess	Not something we acquire	
Internal Wellbeing	Dependant on Circumstances	<i>Let not your heart be troubled</i>
orks from Inside Out	Not Outside In	
Dependant on God	Independent of others	
Arises from within	Drawn from without	
Spiritual Fruit	Emotional Attitude	<i>Peace passes all understanding</i>

Peace "Makers" or "Breakers!"

- Peace with God: Luke 2:14: *"Peace to men on whom His favor rests"*

FOUNDATION Peace with God is the foundation of all peace. Unless and until we are in right relationship with Him we will not know true peace. St Augustine: "God shaped hole in our hearts..."

Eph 2:12-19

Sometimes people tell me, I feel far away from God, pray He doesn't answer or hear...Possible

Gospel Presentation

Story of Prodigal Son (On whom His Favor Rests!!!!!!)

Today...YOU CAN HAVE PEACE: We can have peace on HIS terms...not ours...Not a meeting of equals!

- Peace Within: Luke 1:29 *"Mary was greatly troubled at His words."*

Sometimes even when we have peace with God there is unrest within because we don't understand what He is doing!

Mary: Greatly troubled: Lit = *disturbed; agitated, alarmed, puzzled, confused*

How do you find peace in those circumstances?

~Embrace it even BEFORE you understand! (1:38) Let it be to me....

~Listen to what He tells you! (It was all explained by the angel! 1:28-37) Read your bible Is 55:8 "My ways...Not"

~Seek Godly counsel from someone that has similar/more experience (Elizabeth) (Spiritual Director)

~Allow for time to bring perspective and focus (Simeon/Anna brought that for Mary!)

- Peace With Others Luke 1:25 *"The Lord has shown his favor and taken away my disgrace among the people!"*

Elizabeth: Disgrace: Lit = *Notoriety or taunt*

BACKWARDS: This is the one that we think of most often...when in reality it is the LEAST important of the three.

Elizabeth was looked down upon, and there was no peace between her and others in her life.

KEY: You see, the reality is, When you have peace with God, and you have Peace within then you are able to deal with other relationships. BUT, if you don't have peace with God, and You don't have peace within, no matter how great your other relationships are you are not going to be at peace. Because ultimately it arises from within.

CONCL:

Most of us are pursuing Peace in the wrong way. Go about it backwards. Work from outside in....when it should be inside out!

Do you have Peace with God?

Relationship with God through Jesus

Do you have Peace within?

Maintaining Right relationship through Obedience

Do you have peace with others?

As much as within you....in keeping with Truth of God

If you have it...you can share it...if you don't...you cant.

Maybe today you need to start by getting the foundation right,
Which comes from Relationship with God.
When you have that...everything else begins to fall into place.
It doesn't CHANGE or PREVENT troubles...it does give you the STRENGTH to overcome them!

ILLUSTRATION: Horatio Spafford Story: SONG

Prayer:

God,
I know there are people searching for peace all around me;
people with empty, restless, broken hearts needing you.
I ask you to show them to me.
I ask you to give me the courage to go...and LOOK for them.
I ask you to give me the words to speak, and the actions to take that make your peace clear to them
God, give me the courage to walk across the room....
With all my heart I say to you here I am, send me.
And God when you speak...I will be quick to hear...and quick to go.
And quick to share your Peace.
Amen