

# God's peace on earth (Quality: Average)

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     the gospel according to luke chapter 2 and the subject that you will find in the 14th verse luke's gospel the second chapter and in the 40th verse glory to god in the highest and on earth peace good will toward men on earth peace good will toward men at this season of the year there is much talk of peace among men as the folk around us think of natural peace they think of peace between nations they think of industrial peace they think of leave living lives which are undisturbed by anything that would bring trouble distress or disruption the natural man has his ideas about peace but as i peruse the pages of scripture and consider the gospel of our lord and savior jesus christ i am persuaded that the peace that is spoken of here the peace of the gospel is very different from that which is the concept of the world around us and of the natural man not that i would discount the blessings of peace among nations war is a terrible thing not that i would discount efforts that are made to preserve peace and order in our land or in other lands magistrates and those in authority are there as it were to protect the peace and we thank god for every natural gift and blessing which we see in this area of our life and our experience but if our ideas of peace are limited to peace are limited to these things then we have lost sight of the fundamental truth of the scripture remember that the one who is spoken of here this coming savior around whose birth the angels made this great statement glory to god in the highest and on earth peace and good will toward men said himself a little later that he came not to bring peace but a sword a strange contradiction you may say so it is at this spiritual peace that i want to try and look a little this evening as the lord may be pleased to help me it was rightly pointed out to me this morning by our dear friend who's sitting in the pew that the angels were not told the angels sang we're told that they said and suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of a heavenly hope praising god and saying whether they sang it or said it i'm not quite sure whether this the praising implies the singing but it is what they said that matters rather than whether they sang it with a full voice choir or whether they uh repeated it we know not all we know is what they in fact said say it say it glory to god in the

the highest and on earth peace god will toward men so may i then direct your thought this evening to this one who is the prince of peace for that is one of the great titles ascribed to him in isaiah's prophetic message concerning this very event unto us a son a child is born unto us a son is given and amongst those wonderful titles that wonderful counselor the mighty god the everlasting father the prince of god's peace there in the king of god's peace there in that manger in bethlehem there lying helpless in his mother's arms that little child our god contracted to a span incomprehensibly made man the great mystery of godliness there lay god's peace glory to god in the highest and on earth peace peace there there not in the earth there there not in the united nations not in this or that conference not in the pac romana not in the pac britannica or any other uh imposed peace as it were which has often been imposed by force and by uh injustice anyway but here is god's true peace glory to god in the highest and on earth peace we may say this, that true peace on earth is that which will glorify God in the highest.

And the only true peace, as I understand it, comes from one who describes himself as the God of peace.

God is the God of peace, and there is no peace, saith my God for the wicked. The troubled are like a troubled sea that cannot rest.

I've often thought, you know it Christmas time, that so many are talking about peace and about goodwill, and yet what demonstrations there are of selfishness and of indulgence and of violence and of crime.

[ 6 : 40 ] There seems to be a greater manifestation than ever of the troubled heart of man that cannot rest.

You know it's a pathetic thing isn't it, in these days, that people can't seem to enjoy life without some alcohol. Can't seem to think there's any pleasure unless they've got the television blaring.

Must carry an old radio thing around with them, wherever they go. You see, and all these things are disruptive. But perhaps I'm just speaking out of place here.

I don't want to judge others. But how different it is suddenly to be brought face to face with Bethlehem, with the manger, with the cattle stall, and with this little thing there, this child, this one who was born of Mary, who came from the God of peace as his great gift of peace, the prince of peace.

This man shall be the peace. He is our peace and none other. So that I want them this evening to open up the subject a little.

[ 7 : 56 ] And remember in the first instance that in his coming we see the fulfillment of the covenant promises of God.

In Isaiah there is a great deal of prophecy concerning the Savior in so many ways.

And in Isaiah 54 we read this. For this is of the waters of Noah unto me. For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wrought with thee nor rebuked thee.

For the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed. But my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace, the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord that hath mercy upon thee.

So that when we look at the peace of God and the God of peace and the prince of peace and this great testimony, peace on earth, we are looking at something which is bound up in the covenant, purpose and promise of God.

[ 9 : 17 ] Peace will not come to this earth by human manufacture. I've lived long enough to see many so-called peace covenants torn up and disregarded to realize that the nations will never find peace, my friend.

You may say, well I'm a pessimist. My friend, I'm not. I face the fact that the peace that is spoken of in the Bible is a peace that passes all understanding.

They cry peace, peace, when there is no peace. But here is peace. How wonderfully it is taken up in the last chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews.

Now the God of peace. The God of peace that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant.

So that this peace which I speak of this evening, which is all centered upon this blessed person, here being adored by angels and men, is a peace which is bound up with the promises and purposes of God.

[ 10 : 36 ] Now I make this point specifically this evening because of much misunderstanding which is put forward regarding this text.

Peace, our honor, peace. Good will toward men. As some have even had the audacity to change the text, to make it read thus.

Peace toward men of good will. Toward men of good will. It's a wrong rendering. It's not in accordance with the original.

And it is a misrepresentation of divine truth. As though men of good will, natural men of good will would know peace.

This is not what our message says this evening. It says this, glory to God in the highest. It's something which is glorifying to him and on earth.

[ 11 : 39 ] Peace, good will toward men. Not to men of good will. Because by nature, oh I know there are decent people, kindly folk, well disposed people.

Don't misunderstand the doctrine of total depravity, my friends. We must never disregard the reality of human uprightness and kindness and goodness as it is manifested.

But we have to look at these things in the light of divine standards. And the Bible says there's no righteous, no, not one. And there's no man of good will in that sense of perfection, of goodness.

But this good will, this inference here, is very similar to the expressions used by Paul in the early part of the epistle to the Ephesians.

When he speaks of the good pleasure of his will. According to the good pleasure of, as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.

[ 12 : 55 ] And these things are according to the good pleasure of his will. This message given by these angels to the shepherds, which has been wonderfully handed down to us, testifies of peace on earth according to the good pleasure of his will.

Now, that gives me great encouragement. Because though I live in a troubled, sinful world, which seems to know anything and everything but peace.

And because often in my own heart and experience, I seem also to know so little sometimes of that true peace of God.

Yet, here is one that is sovereign. A God that works in all things according to the good pleasure of his own will. And who is able to work in you, both the will and the do, of his good pleasure.

And that's what is inference here. Glory to God in the highest and on earth. Peace according to the good will of God toward men.

[ 14 : 13 ] Tell them, let us examine this peace. And the nature of it, of the manner of it. This peace of God.

We must, we cannot isolate any particular aspect of the doctrine, of the doctrine of scripture. As soon as you begin to concentrate too much on one aspect of the person and work of Christ, you begin to lose sight of another.

And when I look at the incarnation, the great mystery of godliness, I must never forget that this is but the first step, as it were, in this great act of peacemaking, which comes from God, according to the will of God, through the Son of God, who is the Prince of Peace.

You know, as well as I know, that the first aspect of peace is that peace of God that passes all understanding, bound up in the great act of peacemaking, which took place upon the cross.

We read of it this evening in Ephesians chapter 2. That's a wonderful chapter, isn't it? It traces out everything in a very wonderful way, concerning the way of salvation and the glory of God in the church.

[ 15 : 49 ] And we read of him as having made peace. And he came and preached peace. Now in Christ Jesus, you sometimes were far off and made nigh by the blood of Christ, for he is our peace.

So the first aspect of peace, peace with God, the peace of God is bound up with the peace of reconciliation.

reconciliation. You see, there must be an atonement. There must be a way that sinners may have peace with God.

And there can be no patch-up peace. God would accept nothing less than a perfect peace. The Lord Jesus said, my peace, I live with you, my peace, I give unto you.

Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, says Jehovah, whose mind is stayed upon it. So it is to the atonement that we must come.

[ 17 : 06 ] Our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement. Think again about that great offering and sacrifice for sin.

The one that was slain upon the cross of Calvary. The one that became the scandle, the sin bearer. The one that bore the sins of God's people away into the land of forgetfulness.

Their sins and their iniquity, I will remember no more. Now there's no other peace but in the Son of God. There's no other peace but through his shed blood.

There's no other peace but through faith in his name. Now this is the way of peace. Here is the basis of the covenant of peace, the blood of the everlasting covenant.

And that peace is a real peace. Let me emphasize this point this evening. You all stand this evening in need of this peace.

[ 18 : 17 ] If you do not know anything of this peacemaking, this atonement, this way of acceptance with God here below, then you will not know anything of peace throughout eternity.

I repeat it again. There is no peace, that my God, for the wicked. So this then is the first vital point.

As we look upon the one that came from on earth, who was born of a virgin, that holy thing that shall be born of ill, this one who became the man of sorrow, the perfect Savior, the suffering substitute, the dying Lamb, the dear Redeemer, who opened a fountain for sin and for uncleanness, he is the way of peace.

Peace by his cross hath Jesus made. The church's everlasting head, or sin and death, hath victory won, and with a shout to glory gone.

And that's what the angels were singing about, my friends. They weren't singing about just good advice, good examples. They were speaking about men beginning to treat one another with a little more kindness and respect, commendable though it may be.

[ 19 : 47 ] They were singing of God glorified in a great act of peacemaking, whereby God and sinners, as the hymn puts it, God and sinners reconciled.

Now that's vital. It's absolutely vital. Don't anyone leave this chapel this evening without this note ringing in your ear.

No peace, but by the Son of God. And if you are resting peaceably upon any other foundation, it's a false peace.

It's a false peace. Don't rest there. You're resting on something dead, and what if your peace is not resting, holy, upon the finished work of Calvary's cross, the offering that our great high priest made when he offered up himself without spotting to God, and thereby finally ratified this covenant of peace.

But remember this, it's a covenant that cannot be broken. and he that is brought into this place of peace with God, although he may have many trials, many afflictions, many temptations, many backsliding, yet ultimately, he has a settled peace with God.

[ 21 : 20 ] say again, many nations have put their signatures to a covenant of peace and have broken them again and again.

But this covenant of peace is given by a God that cannot love. The angels spake of it. The Lord Jesus in his coming bear witness to it and became our peace.

He is our peace. But then, the next peace, the next aspect of peace, is surely tranquility. Reconciliation, yes, but the next aspect of it is surely tranquility. Tranquility.

The Lord Jesus was once sleeping, in the hinder part of that storm-tossed vessel upon the Sea of Galilee.

[ 22 : 26 ] The same one that was born of a virgin whose birth we commemorate today. There he slept upon a pillow while his disciples cried out, Master, carest thou not that we perish?

And he rose. and he rebuked the wind and the waves, the mighty forces of nature disturbed by the powers of darkness. And in a word, he changed the whole situation.

Peace, be still. Peace, be still. You need peace with God and you need the peace of God.

And my friends, there's none of it that can speak peace with power and authority. And so come the troubled mind, the troubled breath, the tumults that rise in our hearts like those waves upon Galilee often suddenly rising up, taking us as it were in a moment by surprise and unexpected and it seems as though the Saviour sleeps for a season yet he hears the cry of his people.

And this is a real life blessing. The one that came to him in the press and touched the hem of his garment, she went away with a great blessing and it was this, go in peace.

[ 24 : 07 ] Go in peace. Thy faith hath saved it. She too who touched thee in the press and healing virtue stole was answered daughter go in peace.

Thy faith hath made thee whole. I put it to you this evening because we need to examine our religion.

I would ever encourage seekers, I would ever seek to build up the members of this little flock in the things of God. But you need first way to know the vital reality of peace with God.

God. And you need to receive by precious faith the blessing of the peace of God.

Very wonderful thing to know the peace of God. The passive of understanding. The peace of tranquility.

[ 25 : 17 ] My peace I leave with you. The Lord Jesus bequeathed them upon his people. For my peace I give unto you. Not as the world giveth.

Give I unto you. So something that is not of this world. Something which is not understood by this world.

Have you ever noticed the difference between the attitude of the Christian and the worldly as they pass through some dark situation some dispensation that spells out trouble and need and pain and suffering and sorrow.

God my friends there is a difference there is a difference some of God's people may tremble at time may seem to know the assaults of Satan as they go through the path of affliction but I note it again and again the serenity the serenity of those who know this people you see that's basic death for the true believer is entering into peace the ultimate peace Abraham was the presence of the Lord and you can only know the tranquillity if you know the reconciliation and

God alone gives both the God of peace the atonement the reconciliation the tranquillity the inward peace then there's another aspect of peace as I read it in the scriptures and again it's all bound up with the everlasting covenant the person of cross this blessed message peace on earth good will toward men comes through the atonement it comes by the work of the Holy Spirit it comes from Christ who is the Prince of Peace and it is the peace of security the peace of security it's a wonderful word isn't it over 26 where Jehovah there is revealed as the everlasting strength of his people that is the rock of ages they will keep him in perfect peace that's double peace whose mind is stayed on thee because he trusted in thee the true believer enters in to a wonderful security it comes out again in the epistle to the

[ 28 : 49 ] Philippians in Paul's gracious exhortation there concerning prayer I usually begin at verse 6 but I begin at verse 5 because of the season that we're passing through in Philippians 4 let your moderation be known unto all men the Lord is at hand we need to remember that in each day be careful for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God and consequent upon this the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus now go back to

Isaiah for a moment and there in the 26th chapter which we've already referred to he's speaking about a strong city we have a strong city salvation will God appoint for more than forward open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in many by faith receive the gift of righteousness enter into the kingdom of God into the city of Zion and thou will keep him thou will keep him he's never lost one yet now I thank God for the blessed truth concerning the final perseverance of the saints thou will keep him in perfect peace now the word keep here and in Philippians 4 means garrison garrison with salvation walls surrounded thou may smile at all thy bones thou will keep him in perfect peace glory to God in the highest and on earth peace on earth here in this troubled world here through the circumstances of a troubled son here with all the infirmities of your flesh and your might often feeling to be tempest top often feeling to be amongst those who are wavering as it were yet remember this

Jehovah speak thou will keep him in perfect peace the peace of God that passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds with salvation's walls surrounded thou may smile at all thy foes I will extend her peace like a river he will not remove the covenant of peace well you say I don't seem to experience much of it my friends we're not always in conscious possession of the gifts which are ours in Christ Jesus the Lord knows what to give and when to give it and if you didn't know something of the tempest and the tossing and the criteria that repair it then you may hardly expect to know the blessings of peace be still and if you have not proved your weakness and inability as it were to pursue the paths of peace then you will not truly appreciate they will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is safe upon day so often you see we are looking to our own native strength so often we are looking to our circumstances so often we are looking to that which can never bring true peace but thou will keep him in perfect peace glory to

God in the highest and on earth peace good will if God has a purpose a purpose of his good pleasure toward you he will keep you in perfect peace but then I must come to my last observation this evening we have considered the peace of reconciliation the peace of tranquillity the peace of security but also there is the peace of unity or of harmony unity or of harmony Paul speaks of this in the chapter that we read in Ephesians chapter 2 when he spoke of the breaking down of the middle wall of partition between the Jew and the Gentiles the

Ephesians were Gentile believers the Jewish church somehow thought they were distinct and superior and Paul was writing to these Ephesian believers who had once been idolaters he was showing them that they were just as much a part of the inheritance they were just as much in Christ they were chosen in Christ as much as the natural Israelite they had a part in the blessings and he says now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far made nigh by the blood of Christ for he is of peace who hath made both one the unity of the spirit and the bond of peace the fruit of the spirit is peace the fruit of righteousness is so in peace by them that make peace blessed are the peacemaker for they are the children of

[ 35 : 45 ] God now you don't want a false peace at any level my friend but remember this those who know the peace of the atonement those who know the peace of true inward tranquility those who know the peace of true security in the everlasting arms of God and of Christ will know something of making peace my friends how good it is for brethren to dwell together in unity surely one of the evidences of the presence of Christ in his church is peace breaking down of partitions the breaking down of oppositions the bringing together of the children of God in one and at this time when the world is going round shaking hands with everybody and offering this one and that one a drink and wishing them all the best for

Christmas and the new year it beholds Christians to consider their relationship one with another it could beholds Christians to consider that if they know something of peace with God and the peace of God then they must demonstrate it in and among themselves oh that the Lord would give us that desire to know more of his peace in our heart as we look upon this blessed babe to know more of that tranquility that evidence of his grace and to bring forth that peaceable fruit of righteousness and remember that is brought forth through the divine discipline Paul says in Hebrews that the chastening is not a pleasant thing but he said afterward it yielded the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby such is the will of

God his sovereign will his manifest will to his people because he sent his own dear son into this world to become the great peacemaker may he lead us to know more of it lead us in his ways for all his paths are peace and that these fruits may be seen even in us at this season my peace I leave with you said the Lord Jesus my peace I give unto you not as the world give unto you may it be our portion of this time that with these angels we may say glory to God in the highest and on earth yes in our death in our life in our circumstances peace goodwill toward men may the

Lord have his blessing amen peace peace to him