

Luke 2:8-15

We will be spending today and next Sunday in this passage of scripture. Let's read together the passage to get a feel for the whole context. We will focus our attention to verses 13-14.

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 ^{le}Christ the Lord.

¹² This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a ^{lm}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 ^{la}with whom He is pleased."

¹⁵ When the angels had gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds began saying to one another, "Let us go straight to Bethlehem then, and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has made known to us."

The key verse to the whole passage is verse 11. It is the good news that the angel brings to the shepherds. It is the birth announcement of Jesus Christ.

For today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

That was the best news, and the best Word from God that Israel had received for some 400 years.

This morning, I want to focus on the angels' song.

It was frightening enough for an angel of God to appear to the shepherds with the shekinah glory of God surrounding him. After the announcement of this angel, a multitude of the heavenly hosts appear. How many is a multitude? We don't know. It was a large number. These weren't members of the angel choir. These were an army of angels. That is the meaning behind the NT words. Heaven's elite unit of special forces appeared to these lowly shepherds. But instead of making war, they gave a message of peace.

I want us to pay attention to the song of the angels as we end our series of Advent sermons on the Songs of Advent.

The song of the angels is the shortest song of all of them. The song is a response to the good news that a Savior has been born who is Christ the Lord. The song of the angels can be summed as being the Song of Peace.

There are two parts to the song. The first part is in reference to God. The second part is in reference to us as people of the earth.

The meaning of the Song for God

"Glory to God in the highest"

The good news that “there has been born for you in the city of David a Savior who is Christ the Lord” brings glory to God.

This is the ultimate purpose of everything God does. It is the chief purpose of mankind, “To glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”

Our Sovereign God has set things in motion from eternity for this moment to come. That brings to Him glory.

Our Sovereign God has demonstrated His sovereignty in the fact that the world had been the position linguistically, socially, economically, politically, and religiously for the Christ to come on the scene to accomplish the purpose of His coming.

God the Father was glorified in God the Son submitting to death on the cross. God the Son was glorified in that God the Father raised Him from the dead. God the Spirit glorifies both by bringing life, eternal life into all who turn from sin to Christ.

Each time a person turns to Christ for forgiveness of sin and surrender to the Lordship of Jesus, He is glorified.

Luke 15:7, after telling the parable of the lost sheep, Jesus says, *“I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.”*

I’ve shown that verse to you before. The question we have to ask is “Who is it that is rejoicing?” We can’t say that angels rejoice, because they do not know sin, so they will not understand the value of being forgiven of sin. It could be the saints who have preceded us. I think that the better answer is that God is rejoicing when you become a believer. The moment a person asks Jesus to forgive them of their sins, to help him or her turn from sin, and to submit to the Lordship of Jesus; God rejoices. One pastor says, “God throws a party in your honor because you have become part of God’s family through Jesus.”

Glory to God in the highest, for the good news is that Jesus is Savior.

There is a second meaning of the song because of the good news.

The Meaning of the Song for Believers on Earth

On earth peace with men of His good pleasure or of men with whom He is well-pleased.
What kind of peace is this?

What does peace mean to a soldier?

What does peace mean for the mother of a colicky infant?

What does peace mean for the child whose parents won’t stop fighting?

What does peace means for the wife and children of a husband and father who has just come home drunk; when the husband and father becomes violent and abusive when intoxicated? Peace usually means the end of something. For the soldier, peace means the end of a war. For the mother, peace means the end of non-stop crying. For the child, peace comes at the end of another dispute. The mother and children sees peace at the end when the father/husband falls asleep or leaves the house.

Is this the kind of peace the angels are referring to? The answer is no. The reason is that all of those just mentioned are temporary forms of peace. Wars will break out again. Babies will cry again. Relationships will get strained again. Husbands and dads will drink again. The peace that only the Messiah can bring is a personal, permanent kind of peace. It is peace between sinful, self-absorbed people just like us and the holy God.

Romans 5:1

Therefore, having been justified by faith, ^[a]we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Justification simply means being made right with God. It means being forgiven, having our sin record wiped clean. and being reconciled.

A man who lived in England came over to the United States to go to a resort for several months. He wanted to bring along his Rolls-Royce for the trip, so he had it carefully packaged and shipped overseas. While visiting the U.S., something happened to the car—a mechanical failure of some sort—so he called over to England and explained his problem to the company. Rolls-Royce told him, "That's fine. Within 48 hours, we'll have a mechanic with the auto parts there to fix it for you."

They put a mechanic on a plane with the necessary car parts and flew him to the United States. He worked on the car in the parking lot of the resort, fixed it in good time, got on a plane, and flew back to England. The man happily drove his Rolls for the rest of his time in the U.S. Then he packaged it back up, put it on a ship, and sent it to his home in England.

Nearly a year after the man returned to England, he discovered he had never received a bill from Rolls-Royce. So he wrote the company a letter, saying, "This date last year there was something wrong with my Rolls-Royce and you flew a mechanic over to help me. You fixed it, but I've never received a bill. If you should find that bill in your office, I'll be happy to pay for your efforts at fixing my car."

He received a letter back from Rolls-Royce that simply said: "In the files at the headquarters of Rolls-Royce, there is no such account saying anything has ever been wrong with a Rolls-Royce anywhere that you speak of."

Now *that's* justification. It is being forgiven with your record wiped completely. The sins of the past are wiped clean. The sins of the present are hidden in Christ. We also have a future that is secure in Christ.

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through Christ Jesus our Lord.

Peace of our past life.

Your sins are forgiven. As far as the east is from the west, that is how far God has removed your sins from you.

Peace of our present living.

Peace for our future.

God invites you to be part of His story.

- Admit your need to God.

- Ask Him to forgive you of your sins.
- Trust in Jesus alone to rescue you.
- Follow Jesus, the King of your life, in faith from this this day forward.