

CHRISTMAS IS A TIME FOR RECONCILIATION

Romans 5:11, Luke 2:14

- *"So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God."* (Romans 5:11)
- **Through Jesus, we can be reconciled to God.**
- *"Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."* (Luke 2:14)
- **The angel's words were more than a heavenly announcement; they were an invitation to peace between God and humanity, and subsequently, peace among individuals.**
- **Christmas is a time to celebrate the restored relationships we can have with God and one another.**
- ***What does "unwrapping" the gift of baby Jesus mean to us this Christmas?***

Because Jesus Came at Christmas:
WE CAN HAVE PEACE <u>WITH GOD</u>

- *" All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on Him the sins of us all."* (Isaiah 53:6)
- **We have all been separated from God because of our sin, yet God showed us His immense love by sending Jesus to bear our sins and restore the broken relationship between us and Him.**
- Charles Wesley/George Whitefield - *Hark the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King: Peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"*
- *"For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of His Son while we were still His enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of His Son. So now we can rejoice in our wonderful new relationship with God because our Lord Jesus Christ has made us friends of God."* (Romans 5:10-11)
- **Christmas is the celebration of our restored relationship with God through all that Jesus is and has done for us.**

Because Jesus Came At Christmas:
WE CAN EXPERIENCE THE PEACE <u>OF GOD</u>

- *"You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in You, all whose thoughts are fixed on You!"* (Isaiah 26:3)
- **The peace of God is not the absence of conflict, but a deep, abiding tranquility that comes from keeping our hearts and minds focused on God.**
- *"For God was in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And He gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation."* (2 Corinthians 5:19)
- **This reconciliation is the heart of Christmas-when God came to us in the form of Jesus and did what was necessary to offer us a restored relationship with Him.**
- *"Then Jesus said, 'Come to Me, all of You who are weary and carry heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you. Let Me teach you, because I am humble and gentle at heart, and you will find rest for your souls."* (Matthew 11:29)
- **By taking the yoke of Jesus and learning from Him, we discover rest for our souls that permeates every aspect of our lives.**

Because Jesus Came At Christmas:

WE CAN EXTEND PEACE <u>TO OTHERS</u>

- **Christmas is a season to celebrate our reconciliation with God AND a time to seek reconciliation with others.**
- *"God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God."* (Matthew 5:9)
- **When we work for peace, we will be identified as God's children.**
- *"And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to Himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to Him."* (2 Corinthians 5:18)
- **God took the initiative to mend the broken relationship between Himself and humanity by giving His Son; His divine act of reconciliation places the responsibility on us to become agents of peace in our own lives and community.**
- Christmas Song by Jill Jackson Miller - "Let there be peace on earth, and let it begin with me."
- **When we make peace with God it leads us to encounter the peace of God which is the ammunition to extend peace to others.**
- ***How do we go about seeking reconciliation with others this Christmas?***
- **We extend peace to others by *Praying For Them*.**
- *"You have heard the law that says, 'Love your neighbor' and hate your enemy. But I say, love your enemies! Pray for those who persecute you!"* (Matthew 5:43-44)
- **We extend peace to others by *Prioritizing Confidentiality.***
- *"If another believer sins against you, go privately and point out the offense."* (Matthew 18:15)
- **We extend peace to others by *Pursuing Connection Over Correction.***
- *"Sensible people control their temper; they earn respect by overlooking wrongs."* (Proverbs 19:11)
- **The willingness to make peace with others will position us to receive God's greatest gift this Christmas - an encounter with God's presence.**

- *“So if you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.”* (Matthew 5:23-24)
- ***What broken relationships do I need to work at reconciling this Christmas?***