

PEACE

2ND ADVENT – LUKE 2:21-33

STARTING THE DISCUSSION...

Christmas has often become synonymous with stress and anxiety. The demands of everyone getting together, buying gifts, the expectations that it needs to be a joyous time can become so burdensome that it is anything but peaceful! And that is before we throw in worries about flooding, pandemics, and restrictions. This does not feel like a peaceful season. But that really shouldn't surprise us when we come back to the Christmas story. Jesus wasn't born in a peaceful situation; he was born in a desperate and broken one. Jesus wasn't born into peace, he brought peace into the chaos. The birth of Jesus is the reason we can have peace even though it seems as though the world is spiraling out of control. It's because God has never lost control even once. He isn't concerned, he is working out his salvation for his people so that we can have true peace. That is the point of Christmas, true, lasting, genuine peace entered into the world for the first time since sin entered the world and the peace that Jesus brings will not be overthrown!

KEY TEXT: LUKE 2:21-33

²¹ And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

²² And when the time came for their purification according to the Law of Moses, they brought him up to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord ²³ (as it is written in the Law of the Lord, "Every male who first opens the womb



shall be called holy to the Lord") ²⁴ and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in the Law of the Lord, "a pair of turtledoves, or two young pigeons." ²⁵ Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. ²⁶ And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. ²⁷ And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, ²⁸ he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said,

²⁹ "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace,
according to your word;

³⁰ for my eyes have seen your salvation

³¹ that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples,

³² a light for revelation to the Gentiles,

and for glory to your people Israel."

³³ And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him.

Additional Texts: *Genesis 17:10-12, Exodus 13:2, Leviticus 12:8, Micah 5:2, Isaiah 40:1-3*

UNDERSTANDING THE WORD

1. Look back at the beginning of Luke's gospel (Luke 1:1-4), why does he take so much time to explain the Mosaic Law? How does Jesus interact with the Law of Moses during his ministry? See at Matthew 5:17-20 and 12:1-8.
2. Looking at Simeon's prayer over Jesus, what should we understand about the purpose of Jesus' ministry? How does he fulfill the "consolation of Israel" that Simeon was waiting for?

APPLYING THE WORD

3. What are the most stressful parts of Christmas? How do those things pull us away from the peace of Jesus? How can we focus on the peace that Jesus brings more?
4. How can we show the peace of Jesus to those around us in this chaotic season?



PRAYING & ACTING

1. How can your life group bless someone this Christmas Season?
What ways can you bless your community around you? Discuss a couple practical ways that you can do this as a group and decide one that you will do together.
2. Who is someone who doesn't know Jesus that you could invite to a Christmas service this year? Discuss how you can hold one another accountable to inviting them.

