

# Advent Means... PEACE!

Advent Means... #2 - Pastor Gary Combs - December 10, 2023 - John 14:27-28

**INTRO:** Good morning church! We are beginning a new sermon series today entitled, “Advent Means ...” The short answer is: Advent means “coming” or “arrival.” It’s the Christmas season when believers look back to Christ’s first arrival in Bethlehem and look forward to His second and future return through the Eastern Gate of Jerusalem.

Today is the second Sunday of Advent. The advent season includes the four Sundays before Christmas. The four Advent themes are: Hope, Peace, Love, and Joy. Today’s message is “**Advent Means... PEACE!**”


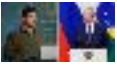

Before Christ’s first advent, the prophet Isaiah prophesied of the coming Messiah saying:

Isaiah 9:6 (ESV) For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, **Prince of Peace**.

At His first advent, an angel announced Christ’s birth to the shepherds:

Luke 2:14 (KJV) Glory to God in the highest, and on earth **peace**, good will toward men

**ILL:** Yet, where is this peace we are promised in the Christmas story? Today’s news is filled with stories of war:

- The Israel-Hamas war that began with the Hamas terrorist attack in Israel, killing, raping, and kidnapping civilians on October 7th is now in its second month. A humanitarian crisis grows in Gaza as Israel responds. War always brings suffering and pain to both sides. 
- The Ukraine-Russia war has entered its 652nd day of hostilities. Death and destruction continue. The US is entangled in this conflict and who knows when or how it ends? 
- Even in our own country, the cultural divide has grown so great that our pledge to be “one nation under God indivisible” sounds more and more hollow. We are, on most important matters, a nation divided. 

As the prophet Jeremiah said, “People are saying, ‘Peace, peace’ when there is no peace” (Jer. 8:11).

**Where does this division, this fighting, this lack of peace on earth come from?**

James 4:1-2 (NLT) What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don’t they come from the evil desires at war within you?

**Need:** Are you at peace today? Do you have a deep, abiding, quiet sense of peace? Or are you struggling with anxiety and a sense of disquiet and disorder? Let’s take a little “peace inventory” together to see how we’re doing. (Scale of 1-5: 1=Never; 2=Seldom; 3=Sometimes; 4=Frequently; 5=Always)

**With God:** Do you have peace of mind? Or is your mind filled with a jumble of unforgiveness, unresolved plans, and frustrating disappointments? Are you clear about God’s will for your life? Are you free from conflict between what you want and what you sense God wants? **With Self:** Are your inner feelings at peace? Are you free from smoldering anger, nagging fears, frustration, and envy? Is your body at peace? Are you strained by stress, agitation, nervousness? Or are you free from tension, churning stomach, tight muscles, high blood pressure? Do you have a sense of calmness in your soul and body? **With Others:** Since your relationships with people have so much to do with how you experience peace, do you let others rob you of inner peace? Do you have an unresolved offense against someone? Do you have feelings of anger and even hatred towards another? Are you at peace with others? **With Circumstances:** Do you allow circumstances to disrupt your ability to be at peace? Do you remain calm in the face of trouble? Are you able to be at peace in the midst of life’s storms?

**Trans:** The Advent season is an invitation for us to consider the promise of peace found only in Christ. God’s peace is more than the absence of hostility. It is a divine state of tranquility and well-being, with God, self, and others.

**BODY:** In the gospel of John, he reported how Jesus gave His disciples a promise of peace in Him at the last supper the night before His crucifixion. We can have this peace that Christ alone can give. What does this peace of Christ give us? The text reveals **three wonderful gifts** that the peace Christ gives us.

**Read text:** John 14:27-28 (ESV) <sup>27</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. <sup>28</sup> You heard me say to you, ‘I am going away, and I will come to you.’ If you loved me, you would have rejoiced, because I am going to the Father, for the Father is greater than I.

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## THE PEACE THAT CHRIST GIVES...

### 1. Calms our troubled hearts.

**EXP:** (27) Circle the word “peace” (2x). Notice this isn’t the world’s kind of peace. Christ calls it “my peace.” This is the peace of Christ. And if you have been given this peace of Christ, then He says, “Let not your hearts be troubled.” This is the first wonderful gift that the peace of Christ offers, it calms our troubled hearts.

“Peace” (27) (εἰρήνη, *eirēnē*) - harmony, security, safety, prosperity. For the believer, the tranquil state of the soul assured of its salvation through Christ, and so fearing nothing from God and being content in all things under God. Jesus surely would’ve used the Hebrew word **shalom**, which occurs 250 times in the OT. It is rich in meaning. It is used as a courteous greeting, an expression of health and well-being, safety, good relations between peoples and nations, quiet tranquility and contentment, friendship, wholeness, soundness, and completeness.



“Give” (27) (δίδωμι, *didōmi*) - to give, to bestow a gift. Christ gives with a “no return” policy. His gifts are given freely and forever. What does He give? “My peace.” This is the “peace of Christ.”

“Not as the world gives” (27) (κόσμος, *kosmos*) - world’s system. Temporary and fallen.

“Hearts” (27) (καρδιά, *kardia*) - the center of all physical and spiritual life. It is the seat of the mind, both its will, emotion, and character. When we receive Christ, we receive a new heart governed by His peace.

“Troubled” (27) (ταράσσω, *tarassō*) (PPM) - inward commotion, restless, anxious or distressed. An agitated and troubled state of mind.

**ARG:** Our problem: Apart from Christ we are at war with God and at war within ourselves.

Romans 8:7 (NIRV) The mind ruled by the power of sin is at war with God. ...

James 4:1-2 (NLT) What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Don’t they come from the evil desires at war within you?

The solution: Receiving Christ our war with God is over. Christ gives us His peace with God.

Romans 5:1 (NLT) Therefore, since we have been made right in God’s sight by faith, we have peace with God because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done for us.

**ILL:** Christ calmed the storm and the fear of His disciples.

Mark 4:37-41 (ESV) And a great windstorm arose, and the waves were breaking into the boat, so that the boat was already filling. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion. And they woke him and said to him, “Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?” And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, “Peace! Be still!” And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. He said to them, “Why are you so afraid? Have you still no faith?” And they were filled with great fear and said to one another, “Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

**APP:** The peace of Christ is available to you. Have you trusted Him as your Lord and Savior? Have you waved the white flag and surrendered your troubled heart to Jesus?

### 2. Eases our fearful thoughts.

**EXP:** (27) This is the 2nd wonderful gift that the peace of Christ offers, it eases our fearful thoughts. If the troubled heart is more about our internal state, the fearful heart is perhaps more about our fears and doubts about external circumstances, storms of life and troubles. To this Jesus commands:

“Neither let them be afraid” (27) (δελιάω, *deiliaō*) - *Deilia* is never used in a good sense, whereas another word for “fear” (*phobos*) can be used in either a good sense (fear of the Lord) or a bad sense. This kind of fear has no business taking up space in the mind of the believer who has been given the peace of Christ.

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**ARG:** How do we obey this command? Focus on the Lord and give your fears to Him in prayer:

Isaiah 26:3-4 (ESV) You keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on you, because he trusts in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord God is an everlasting rock.

Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV) <sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**Since we have this peace of Christ, let it “rule” (umpire or guard) over your hearts.**

Colossians 3:15 (ESV) And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful.

**ILL:** The *Pax Romana* was achieved by the sword, but Jesus gives a far different peace. The peace of Christ has the power to “rule” over your heart like an umpire calling strikes and balls, safe and out. It causes your heart to keep score in a new way— according to the peace of Christ. It overrules fear and doubt!

**APP:** Peace is a Person. Trust in the Lord. Let your mind stay focused on Jesus, not your circumstances. Give your fears to Him in prayer. Experience the peace of God which transcends all understanding.

## 3. Makes our hearts rejoice.

**EXP:** (28) The third wonderful gift that the peace of Christ offers is that it makes our hearts rejoice until His promised return. He is “going away,” but He promises “I will come to you.” This is Christ’s future advent.

“Going away” (28) (ὑπάγω, *hupagō*) - to go away, depart. This is Christ’s farewell before the cross.

“I will come” (28) (ἔρχομαι, *erchomai*) - to appear, to come. This is Christ’s 2nd coming, His 2nd advent.

“If you loved me” (28) (ἀγαπάω, *agapaō*) - Conditional statement. The fact that they were questioning Jesus, rather than rejoicing with Him, proved that they hadn’t really understood the purpose for which the Father had sent Him. If they really loved Him, they should rejoice at His returning to the Father, having completed His mission of salvation.

“Would have rejoiced” (28) (χαίρω, *chairō*) - to rejoice, be glad, to rejoice exceedingly

“I am going to the Father” (28) (πορεύω, *porēuō*) - Christ will ascend to the Father as our Advocate.

“Father is greater than I” (28) (μεῖζων, *meizōn*) - greater than. Not greater in quality, but in authority. The Son is submissive to the Father. And the Spirit is submissive to the Son. Yet the three are one.

**ILL:** Remember how ch14 started? “Let not your hearts be troubled...I will come again...” But then the questions: Thomas: How can we know the way?; Philip: Show us the Father. Judas (Not): How will you show yourself to us but not to the world? Finally, Jesus say, PEACE. My peace I give to you.

**ARG:** We live between His two advents. We will have trouble, but take heart (rejoice)! He’s coming again!

John 16:33 (ESV) I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world.”

**APP:** Peace and joy go together. Let the peace of Christ make your heart rejoice until His promised return. This is an overcoming peace. This is a peace that makes our hearts sing!

**CONCLUSION:** Advent means... peace. Christ is the only source of true peace. Peace with God, within yourself and with others. Have you received Christ? Have you received His peace that ...

1) Calms your troubled heart? 2) Eases your fearful thoughts? 3) Makes your heart rejoice?

If not, why not pray to receive these three wonderful gifts found only in Jesus today? Let’s pray.