

BE A BRINGER

“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....”
John 1:40-42a

A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a

MISSIONARIES OF THE WEEK



Joshua & Carol Ngunta | MALI

1. PRAISE - Despite many trials and tribulations, God has allowed us to make SIM a Malian mission agency! We can now receive and send workers officially through the government. God is good!
2. PRAISE - God has recently opened doors in the region of Kayes. This area has not previously been open to the gospel, but praise God this month we will send our first missionary into the region.
3. PRAY - Please pray for a new convert, N.D. She needs support.

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Handout: 12/13/20

Study: 12/20/20

Finding Peace In Our Struggles

To get to the best understanding of this famous announcement in Luke 2:14, we should remind ourselves what “peace” usually means in the Bible. It is not a general peacefulness with prosperity, and a trouble-free life. “Peace” means the end of enmity and warfare. The Bible says the most fundamental and important peace is peace with God. The natural human heart wants to be king, and so it is hostile to God’s claims of lordship over us. Until we see our instinctive hostility to God’s authority, we can’t understand one of the great, deep mainsprings of all human behavior. We are committed to the idea that the only way we will be happy is if we are wholly in charge of our lives. Of course, this self-centered desire to command and control leads to conflict with other human beings. So hostilities with God lead to hostilities with others. There is no peace on earth because there is no peace with God.

The proclamation of Christmas, however, is “God and sinners, reconciled.” Jesus is the perfect mediator between estranged parties. By assuming a human nature, the God-man bridges the chasm, dies for our sins, heals the breach, and makes peace (Romans 5:1–11). How can we have this peace with God for ourselves?

Remember that there is more than one way to express your hostility to God’s rule. The irreligious person explicitly asserts his or her independence from God: “I want to live any way I want to live!” But the religious person much more covertly asserts his or her independence from God. The religious person says: “I am going to obey the Bible and do all these things, and now God has to bless me and give me a good life.” This is an effort to control God, not trust him. When you obey God in order to earn God’s blessing and heaven, then you are, as it were, seeking to be your own savior. Both of these strategies are hostile to God. They don’t allow him to be either your sovereign or your savior.

The first step toward peace with God is to recognize that there has been a conflict. One way to do that is to say: “Not only have I done bad things, but even the good things I have done have been done to be my own savior, to assert my independence from my Creator and Redeemer. So I need to be saved by sheer grace, because even the right things I do have been done for the wrong reasons. I need to rest wholly on Jesus’ saving work on my behalf.” When you say that, you have finally admitted the full extent of your resistance to the Lord’s sovereignty.

You have confessed that you can’t save yourself. You rest in what the Lord Jesus Christ has done, and you turn away from your old way of living. That is making peace with God.

Source: Hidden Christmas by Timothy Keller

KEY VERSE

Luke 2:10 (NKJV)

Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people."

WEEKLY READINGS

Monday: Luke 2:8-14; John 1:1-14

Introduction

1. According to the article on the cover, how does the Bible define peace?
2. Read Luke 2:8. Why do you think God made such an important announcement to a lowly group of shepherds? What does this say about the priorities of God versus the priorities of men?

Tuesday: Luke 2:9-10a; John 14:27; II Timothy 1:7

Release Your Fears

3. What are some fears you are experiencing? How do you deal with them?
4. How does God help us not be afraid?

Wednesday: Luke 2:10b; John 10:10; I Corinthians 15:1-4

Recognize Your Faith

5. How did the angel describe the news he gave the shepherds in our reading?
6. How has Jesus brought you joy?

Thursday: Luke 2:11; John 3:16-17; I Corinthians 11:23-28

Receive Your Forgiveness

7. How does the angel describe Jesus in today's readings? Why did Jesus come into the world?
8. Do you have peace with God? How did Jesus make this possible?
9. We will be having communion on December 20. Take some time to examine yourself and confess any sins you have. Thank God for His forgiveness.

Friday: Luke 2:12-14; Hebrews 12:14-15; Romans 12:17-18

Rebuild Your Family And Relationships

10. List any people in your life that you are not experiencing peace with. What are some ways you can pursue peace?
11. How can your peace with God help you make peace with others?
12. One way to share peace is to share Jesus with someone. Who are some people who need peace with God? How will you share Jesus with them?