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PEACE - REASON FOR REDEMPTION

Good news pierced the cold darkness of the first century with a glorious Christ-mas proclamation: "***Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of a great joy that will be for ALL the people. For unto YOU is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.***"

That's Luke 2:10, which says this good news is for ALL the people. Why does Luke 2:14 say "***on earth peace among those with whom He is pleased.***" Why do only SOME get what's available to ALL?

Good question. But first, WHY is this peace good news anyway? Why was it absent? Why instead was there fear and conflict and darkness and disease and death in the world? Because "***Sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned***" explains Romans 5:12. You sin because you inherit Adam's sin. You are a born sinner. You personally disobey God and perpetuate human rebellion against Him.

That's the bad news. But there's good news: "***We rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation***" (Romans 5:11). And the good news came right after the bad news in Genesis 1-3. Adam's sin brought the curse of death upon mankind. Immediately, the first gospel was given. In Genesis 3:15 the "proto-evangelium" our gracious God promised "***the offspring of the woman,***" a Savior to bear the curse. This came true thousands of years later, as Isaiah 9:6 promises, "***to us a child is born, to us a son is given... the Prince of Peace.***" Jesus is our true peace.

As the "second Adam" Jesus pays the penalty for the sin of the first Adam and his progeny, including your personal debt of sin. Galatians 4:4 explains, "***When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, to redeem those who receive adoption as sons.***" A redeemer makes payment for something. He does what you cannot do. Jesus makes everything right with God.

But only by receiving this gift of Jesus can you receive the promised peace with God. That's why the peace available to ALL becomes reality only for SOME. It's like a Native American peace council in the movies. It is called for all, but only those who participate in the peace pipe will have peace. As Romans 5:1 says, "***we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.***"

To receive redemption, you receive God's gift, Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. The Prince of Peace becomes Lord of your life, making you an adopted child of God, and giving you peace with God. In Christ, you now address God as Father, personally and peacefully, no longer at enmity with Him. Galatians 4:6 says, "***God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, 'Abba, Father!'***"

2 Corinthians 5:17 explains this supernatural work of the Holy Spirit this way, "***If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away, behold the new has come.***" This is the "new birth" Jesus talked about in John 3:3, being born again from above by the Holy Spirit. And 2 Corinthians 5:18-19 goes on to say, "***All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us... and gave us the message of reconciliation.***" God did what only He can do and sent His Son to redeem us, to reconcile us to Him.

Reconciliation is the reason for redemption. Only in Jesus can you have peace with God. It's not something you can do, it's something you receive. By faith, you believe that God is as good as His word, and that your peace with God comes from trusting Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

But it's not just for you. New life in Christ also brings peace with yourself and peace with others. And a new life purpose. You receive God's gift of redemption, and He also entrusts you with His message. As 2 Corinthians 5:20 explains, all who become new re-creations in Christ are now "***ambassadors for Christ, God making His appeal through us, on behalf of Christ, to be reconciled to God.***"

That's why YOU say the same things and sing the same songs as the angels who heralded Christ's birth in Luke 2: "***good news of great joy... unto YOU is born a Savior, Christ the Lord.***" And just like the shepherds who told EVERYONE what they had seen and heard, you too have a lifetime Christ-mas mission, to invite others: if YOU receive The Gift - trust in Jesus - you too will have true **PEACE!**