

Crossroads Community Church

Sunday December 7th, 2014

Excitement filled the air as we entered God's sanctuary. This is a very special season to look forward to and prepare our hearts to make room for our Savior Jesus Christ. Worship was jubilant and Bob read Matthew 25:28, Isaiah 40:31 and Luke 2:14. Pastor Don shared announcements and Ken lit our Second Advent Candle; the Candle of Peace and read Romans 10:13-17, For "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved"? God invites us all to come and believe in His Son and He does in many different ways just like He sent an Angel to speak to Mary to believe the impossible, He spoke in a dream to Joseph to believe his plan, He set a star in motion in the skies for the Wise men to believe and follow and to the shepherds in the field He sent a spectacular coral of Angels to announce Jesus' birth; what they all had in common was their urgency to believe!

Pastor Don blessed the service in prayer, "Dear Father God we praise You for your ways of reaching out to us, we ask for your Spirit of peace to descend on us to calm our anxious souls, heal our grieving hearts and guide us to do what pleases you, in Jesus name Amen." Here's a little story about the peace God brings. We may have heard of the country singer Travis Tritt, and before becoming a success he would play in less than prestigious bars and taverns, and like many of these places men were rough and drank more than their fair share of booze and brawls would result. While these would get out of control Travis says he would start playing "Silent Night" even if it was mid-July, but men would calm down even to the point of crying. Who would believe that Christmas carols were able to bring peace to a bunch of drunken men? Peace is what many carols are about including the very first sung 2000 + years ago to those lowly shepherds in the field, "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased." Luke 2:14.

Why would God choose the least of the least to bring a message of peace announcing the Birth of His Son and the only invitation to see Him? After all Shepherds were not esteemed by society, but God held shepherds in high regard; He chose Abraham a shepherd through whom He blessed all nations, He anointed a shepherd boy David to become King, and Jesus is referred to as the Great Shepherd,(Genesis 21:27, 1 Samuel 16:19, Hebrews 13:20). God does not discriminate according to status or wealth, His peace is for all mankind and available to those who choose to receive it. Our Mission is to spread His peace to everyone around us. Spreading the Good News of Jesus can be scary just as the Shepherds were scared that first night but it quickly turned to peace, and the more we share what we believe about Jesus the more peace we will have for He is always with us, (Philippians 4:4-9,Luke 2:9-10).

After the shepherds heard of the Great News they were excited and they quickly went to Bethlehem to witness it for themselves?it would be as if someone said to us that Prince Phillip and his wife were having their baby in Orangeville, many of us would flock to go witness it for ourselves, and if we saw it were true would we not go and tell of what we saw? (Luke 2:15-16). How much more excited and eager we ought to be to share our experience of our encounter with Jesus, God's only Son. When simple genuine people share the hope and peace He brought to their lives it is powerful and it changes people's perspective on Who God is so they in turn desire His peace for themselves, (Luke 2:13-20).

Beloved Peace does not come from favorable circumstances or the absence of conflict rather it is found in a relationship with the One who assures us that God is in control of all things. Jesus is the way to Peace with God, to peace within our hearts and peace with others. If Jesus is not our Savior we are not in right standing with God, within ourselves or anyone else. Jesus makes us right with the Father and His peace is not carnal it is spiritual and His peace allows us to be peaceful towards others, (Romans 5:1, John 14:27). When we receive the peace Jesus gives we will share peace with those around us and work to maintain that peace, we will also encourage and love as Jesus does, (Matthew 5:9, Romans 14:19). If we are able to receive what God has to give then the message of peace is for us and we ought to declare as the Angels sang," Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men!" Asherey Shalom!

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