

## WE NOW MAY DEPART IN PEACE

### I. [Luke 2:1-20](#) [Colossians 1:19-23](#)

**A. Romans 13:7** reminds us of these solemn words: *"Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom is due; fear to whom fear is due; honor to whom honor is due."*

**B. With Christmas being yesterday and this being the last Sunday of 2021, it's again our privilege to remember those we've lost this past year. While this list isn't exclusive (you all know of others) a lot of you will recall many of these we've lost. So we honor these:** Kay George; Mike Romano; Sue Reasoner; Billie Fields; Bill Kendall; Don Jewell; Dan Hard; Gary Jones; Glenna Jean Terry; Jim Grant; **Rodger Harlow**; Dorothy Garrett; Ron Crew; Chuck Glaize; Les Ross; Mike Budnick; **Jack Gorham**; Kay Neubig; Dave Schilling; Joe Skidmore; James Wieber; Vicky Ryan; Sandi Eagleson; John Hoffman; Gene Parrish; Mike Yates; Mary Ellen "Spec" Reed; Caroline Foltz; Henry Shover; Gary Founds; Vicki Waterman; Bob Fields; Patty Zollinger; Bobby Hallam; Sonny Dupler; Katie Coates; David Jennens; Teri Erman; Toni Pettet; Dottie Reisinger; George Bodamer; Marilyn Pierce; Linda Taylor; Patsy Czepiel; Nick Ellas; Charles Raver; Peggy Lewis; Juanita Finke-Yeager; Esther Wrightsel; Gloria Kempton-Asbell; Van Foster; Jimmy Spade; Owen Keller... **(54 souls in all...)**

**C. Rodger and Jack were beloved members of our Church Family. Others were your family members or loved ones. Yet others were friends from other churches we once belonged to. Others were schoolmates or neighbors who lived locally. All of them were known by our Lord who saw them conceived in their mother's wombs. It's probable that these Dear Ones have left a void the past few weeks as the Holy Days came upon us. It's never too late to lift up the grieving and reach out to them in love. It's our privilege to remember them with fondness and honor.**

**D. Two weeks ago Mark shared today's verses as a part of his worship devotional. I want us to revisit these verses this morning but look at one additional aspect that I believe is important for us all. Reading from the NLT, [Luke 2:22-35](#) happens 40 days after Jesus' birth: **22** Then it was time for their purification offering, as required by the law of Moses after the birth of a child; so His parents took Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord. **23** The law of the Lord says, "If a woman's first child is a boy, he must be dedicated to the Lord." **24** So they offered the sacrifice required in the law of the Lord--"either a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." **25** At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him **26** and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. **27** That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, **28** Simeon was there. He took the Child in his arms and praised God, saying, **29** "Sovereign Lord, now let Your servant die in peace, as You have promised. **30** I have seen Your salvation, **31** which You have prepared for all people. **32** He is a light to reveal God to the nations (**Gentiles**), and He is the glory of Your people Israel!" **33** Jesus' parents were amazed at what was being said about Him. **34** Then Simeon blessed them, and he said to Mary, the Baby's mother, "This Child is destined to cause many in Israel to fall, and many others to rise. He has been sent as a sign from God, but many will oppose Him. **35** As a result, the deepest thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul."**

E. When I was around 19 or 20, I was hired on to drive a man for daily radiation treatments at Riverside Hospital in Columbus. This elderly gentleman lived on Buckeye Lake but had spent most of his vocational life in Columbus. He'd owned a successful welding business and it was this trade that caused his lungs to be afflicted with calcium deposits, every bit as lethal as lung cancer. His radiation treatments, then called *cobalt therapy*, was to stave off the deterioration of his lungs. Coughing spells were common and speaking became increasingly difficult. This man was miserable. What he went through was awful. He was dying and he knew it. One day he looked over at me and said, *"I've made my peace with God."*

F. There was an air of gruffness about this gentleman. You could tell he'd been a boss. He commanded respect and gave directives with authority. And yet when he said, *"I've made my peace with God,"* there was a childlike humility in his words. I merely tried to assure him with what the Gospel promised. Tears welled up in his eyes and I suspect such tears were a rare occurrence for this man throughout his life. I felt inadequate as well as privileged--both at the same time.

G. Simeon said he was now able to *"depart in peace"* because he had beheld Jesus the Messiah, the Christ, the consolation of Israel, the Light to the Gentiles, the Savior of the world! Truthfully, Jesus was in Simeon's heart long before he beheld Him, even before actually knew His name and took Him into his arms to bless Him! The question that begs asking is, has Jesus made His way into your heart of hearts? If today was your Day to depart, could you do so in peace?

H. Colossians 1:19-23 (ESV) reminds us how and by whom this peace between God and us was achieved: *19 For in Him (Jesus) all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, 20 and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross. 21 And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, 22 He has now reconciled in His body of flesh by His death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before Him, 23 if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister. (God the Son, died for your sins, removing all enmity between you and God!)*

I. Last Sunday we read the Christmas story as recorded by Dr. Luke. When that angelic choir showed up among those lowly shepherds on that incredible holy night, Luke 2:13-14 (NIV) tells us what they said or perhaps sang aloud: *13 Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, 14 "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests."* (Hear it? *"Peace on those on whom His favor rests!"* Truthfully, I believe you're here right now in this moment because His favor rests on you and therefore the *peace* that surpasses understanding, that which only comes from the *Prince of Peace*, is yours to take hold of! Take hold of it!)

J. Many of those who passed away this past year were professing believers. They walked the walk. They exhibited the fruit of their confessions. Others among that lot we just don't know where they stood. We either didn't know them or know them all that well. Ecclesiastes 11:3b (NIV) says: *"Whether a tree falls to the south or to the north, in the place*

*where it falls, there it will lie.*" **This life is brief but what happens here has eternal consequences. I'm not trying to sound cryptic, just honest, and I don't want anyone to miss out on the peace and reconciliation offered to you in Christ. God's wrath is upon sinners. But Jesus came to absorb God's wrath and pay the penalty for our sins. That's how much He loved us! From cradle to cross that was His mission. The affirmation that His mission was accomplished is His resurrection from the dead. This News is better than good!**

**K. Colonial American preacher and philosopher Jonathan Edwards affirmed peace this way:** "The foundation of the Christian's peace is everlasting; it is what no time, no change can destroy. It will remain when the body dies; it will remain when the mountains depart and the hills shall be removed, and when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll. The fountain of His comfort shall never be diminished, and the stream shall never be dried. His comfort and joy is a living spring in the soul, a well of water springing up to everlasting life."

**L. Simeon beheld Christ in his own arms and could depart this world in peace. We are blessed to behold Christ in our hearts because He has taken us into His own arms and declared that we are His. Therefore, when the time comes, we too can depart this world in peace...**

**\* 2 Thessalonians 3:16 (ESV) takes us all home and straight into our New Year:** *"Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all.*

**\* Close with Prayer...**

## **[Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff](#)**

### **[Luke 2:22-35 \(NLT\)](#)**

**22** Then it was time for their purification offering, as required by the law of Moses after the birth of a child; so His parents took Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord. **23** The law of the Lord says, "If a woman's first child is a boy, he must be dedicated to the Lord." **24** So they offered the sacrifice required in the law of the Lord--"either a pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." **25** At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him **26** and had revealed to him that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. **27** That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required, **28** Simeon was there. He took the Child in his arms and praised God, saying, **29** "Sovereign Lord, now let Your servant die in peace, as You have promised. **30** I have seen Your salvation, **31** which You have prepared for all people. **32** He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and He is the glory of Your people Israel!" **33** Jesus' parents were amazed at what was being said about Him. **34** Then Simeon blessed them, and he said to Mary, the Baby's mother, "This Child is destined to cause many in Israel to fall, and many others to rise. He has been sent as a sign from God, but many will oppose Him. **35** As a result, the deepest thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul."

### **Colossians 1:19-23 (ESV)**

**19** For in Him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, **20** and through Him to reconcile to Himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of His cross. **21** And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, **22** He has now reconciled in His body of flesh by His death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before Him, **23** if indeed you continue in the faith, stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

### **Luke 2:13-14 (NIV)**

**13** Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, **14** "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom His favor rests."

### **Quote by Jonathan Edwards**

"The foundation of the Christian's peace is everlasting; it is what no time, no change can destroy. It will remain when the body dies; it will remain when the mountains depart and the hills shall be removed, and when the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll. The fountain of His comfort shall never be diminished, and the stream shall never be dried. His comfort and joy is a living spring in the soul, a well of water springing up to everlasting life."

### **2 Thessalonians 3:16 (ESV)**

**16** Now may the Lord of peace Himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with you all.

### **Bonus Goodies**

"Jesus Strong and Kind" - CityAlight

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5Y8s-Sz\\_ac](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T5Y8s-Sz_ac)

How God Gives Peace on Earth - John Piper

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ud39fkTRfkY>

Word Study: Shalom - "Peace" - BibleProject

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oLYORLZOaZE>

Looking For A Church? Here's What to Look For - Jim Elliff (For the Church)

<https://ftc.co/resource-library/blog-entries/looking-for-a-church-heres-what-to-look-for>

Know the Ideal Church. Commit to a Real Church - Adam Nesmith (Average Churchman)

<https://theaveragechurchman.com/ideal-church-real-church/>

### **Exodus 13:1-12 (ESV)**

**1** The LORD said to Moses, **2** “Consecrate to Me all the firstborn. Whatever is the first to open the womb among the people of Israel, both of man and of beast, is Mine.”

### **Leviticus 12:1-8 (ESV)**

**1** The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, **2** “Speak to the people of Israel, saying, If a woman conceives and bears a male child, then she shall be unclean seven days. As at the time of her menstruation, she shall be unclean. **3** And on the eighth day the flesh of his foreskin shall be circumcised. **4** Then she shall continue for thirty-three days in the blood of her purifying. She shall not touch anything holy, nor come into the sanctuary, until the days of her purifying are completed. **5** But if she bears a female child, then she shall be unclean two weeks, as in her menstruation. And she shall continue in the blood of her purifying for sixty-six days. **6** “And when the days of her purifying are completed, whether for a son or for a daughter, she shall bring to the priest at the entrance of the tent of meeting a lamb a year old for a burnt offering, and a pigeon or a turtledove for a sin offering, **7** and he shall offer it before the LORD and make atonement for her. Then she shall be clean from the flow of her blood. This is the law for her who bears a child, either male or female. **8** And if she cannot afford a lamb, then she shall take two turtledoves or two pigeons, one for a burnt offering and the other for a sin offering. And the priest shall make atonement for her, and she shall be clean.”

### **Isaiah 9:6-7 (ESV)**

**6** 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. **7** Of the increase of His government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over His kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

### **Romans 5:1-2 (AMP)**

**1** Therefore, since we have been justified [that is, acquitted of sin, declared blameless before God] by faith, [let us grasp the fact that] we have peace with God [and the joy of reconciliation with Him] through our Lord Jesus Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed). **2** Through Him we also have access by faith into this [remarkable state of] grace in which we [firmly and safely and securely] stand. Let us rejoice in our hope and the confident assurance of [experiencing and enjoying] the glory of [our great] God [the manifestation of His excellence and power].

### **Ephesians 2:14-16 (AMP)**

**14** For He Himself is our peace and our bond of unity. He who made both groups— [Jews and Gentiles]—into one body and broke down the barrier, the dividing wall [of spiritual antagonism between us], **15** by abolishing in His [own crucified] flesh the hostility caused by the Law with its commandments contained in ordinances [which He satisfied]; so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thereby establishing peace. **16** And [that He] might reconcile them both [Jew and Gentile, united] in one body to God through the cross, thereby putting to death the hostility.

### **John 14:27 (NKJV)**

27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

### **John 16:33 (ESV)**

33 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.

### **Romans 15:13 (ESV)**

13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.

### **Quote by Martin Luther**

"Peace is more important than all justice; and peace was not made for the sake of justice, but justice for the sake of peace."

### **Quote by C.S. Lewis**

"God cannot give us a happiness and peace apart from Himself, because it is not there. There is no such thing."

### **Quote by Thomas Merton**

"Man is not at peace with his fellow man because he is not at peace with himself; he is not at peace with himself, because he is not at peace with God."

### **R.C. Sproul on Shalom**

Shalom...first of all means an interlude of safety from the ravages of warfare. The insecurity that comes from war made its mark on these (Hebrew) people. They looked for the day when the swords would be beaten into plowshares ([Micah 4:3](#)). The Old Testament concept of peace ascends into a theological vision. It is a vision of a new relationship between God and us, and with each other: a relationship of friendship. In sin we are estranged from God ([Ge 3:8](#), [9](#), [10](#), [Ro 5:12-note](#)), but in Christ we have peace with God....The fruit of peace with God is peace with others ([Gal 5:22-note](#))....Too often we desire to be the recipients of joy and peace. We wait for it to come to us through other people and circumstances. However, Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers," ([Mt 5:9-note](#)) suggesting we should initiate peace. Anticipate how you can actively bring peace and joy to a situation, relationship, or task.

- R.C. Sproul, *Before the Face of God*.

### **Peace, Perfect Peace**

by E.H. Bickersteth, Jr. (1825 - 1906)

Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin?  
The blood of Jesus whispers peace within.

Peace, perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed?  
To do the will of Jesus, this is rest.

Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging round?  
On Jesus' bosom naught but calm is found.

Peace, perfect peace, with loved ones far away?  
In Jesus' keeping we are safe, and they.

Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown?  
Jesus we know, and He is on the throne.

Peace, perfect peace, death shadowing us and ours?  
Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers.

It is enough: earth's struggles soon shall cease,  
And Jesus call us to Heaven's perfect peace.

Peace, perfect peace, 'mid suffering's sharpest throes?  
The sympathy of Jesus breathes repose.

### **Perfect Picture of Peace**

Long ago a man sought the perfect picture of peace. Not finding one that satisfied, he announced a contest to produce this masterpiece. The challenge stirred the imagination of artists everywhere, and paintings arrived from far and wide. Finally the great day of revelation arrived. The judges uncovered one peaceful scene after another, while the viewers clapped and cheered. The tensions grew. Only two pictures remained veiled. As a judge pulled the cover from one, a hush fell over the crowd. A mirror-smooth lake reflected lacy, green birches under the soft blush of the evening sky. Along the grassy shore, a flock of sheep grazed undisturbed. Surely this was the winner. The man with the vision uncovered the second painting himself, and the crowd gasped in surprise. Could this be peace? A tumultuous waterfall cascaded down a rocky precipice; the crowd could almost feel its cold, penetrating spray. Stormy-gray clouds threatened to explode with lightning, wind and rain. In the midst of the thundering noises and bitter chill, a spindly tree clung to the rocks at the edge of the falls. One of its branches reached out in front of the torrential waters as if foolishly seeking to experience its full power. A little bird had built a nest in the elbow of that branch. Content and undisturbed in her stormy surroundings, she rested on her eggs. With her eyes closed and her wings ready to cover her little ones, she manifested peace that transcends all earthly turmoil.

- Berit Kjos, *A Wardrobe from the King*, p.p. 45-46.