Lownes Free Church Sunday Morning – December 9, 2019

**Advent:**

**The Church Welcomes Christ**

 **PEACE: Christ Conquering Chaos**

 **Living with Jesus in the Eye of the Storm**

Isaiah 9:6–7 (NIV84)

6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David’s throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Luke 2:14 “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.”

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

Luke 12:51 Do you think I came to bring peace on earth? No, I tell you, but division.

Luke 22:36 He said to them, “But now if you have a purse, take it, and also a bag; and if you don’t have a sword, sell your cloak and buy one.

Luke 22:49 When Jesus’ followers saw what was going to happen, they said, “Lord, should we strike with our swords?”

John 18:36 Jesus said, “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight to prevent my arrest by the Jews. But now my kingdom is from another place.”

 So, if Jesus is the prophesied Prince of Peace who promised peace, then why doesn’t there seem to be much peace. And what’s that talk about swords? And why do so many not feel peaceful on His birthday? Are we listening to what He said, or just defining “peace” our way?

**First, God can not be at peace with rebellion:**

 As Prince of Peace, Jesus crushes the “god of this world” by conquering death. Now, we, too, are in a true spiritual battle, not at ease in a paradise. It is a violent spiritual encounter which demanded His death and now requires our fighting with Him. Colossians 1:19, 20; 2:13-15; Ephesians 6:10-13; 1 Peter 4:12-19

**Second, peace can and does reign in many ways:**

 We now have peace with God. Romans 5:1 He does not hold our sins against us, since they have been forgiven because of Jesus.

 We now have the peace of God as we turn from our anxieties and actually commit life to Him in prayer. Philippians 4:4-7

 We now have the God of peace as we think His thoughts, trust Him, and follow Him. 2 Corinthians 13:11; Philippians 4:8, 9

 We now have peace across cultural barriers, including the greatest divide of all, Jew vs. Gentile. Ephesians 2:11-22

 We now have peace of mind as we allow God’s peace to rule our hearts and our relationships. Colossians 3:15

 We now have peace as God’s Spirit bears His fruit in us. Galatians 5:22, 23; Romans 8:6

All of these “peaces” are possible for those who believe. If we choose unbelief, no promise can help us, since we are embracing chaos.

**Third, peace eventually will reign over all the cosmos:**

 Satan will be crushed by God in Christ. Romans 16:20; Revelation 20:7-15

 Our God of order will banish chaos. 1 Cor. 14:33; Rev. 21:1-4

***We experience God’s peace NOW as we. . .***

1. Turn from the chaos of sin to find forgiveness in grace. Psalm 34:14; Isaiah 53:5

2. Turn from the chaos of lies to trust God’s truth. Proverbs 3:13-17

3. Turn from the chaos of conflict to live in God wisdom. James 3:13-18

4. Turn from the chaos of fear to embrace God’s presence. Isaiah 26:3

5. Turn from the chaos of self to love others. Romans 12:18; Eph. 4:3