

christmas peace

By Andrea Lennon





Do you need to refocus on the true meaning of Christmas? Are you stressed just thinking about all of the things you need to do for the holidays? In Christmas Peace, Andrea encourages women to draw aside from the hustle and bustle of the season and the nagging "to do" list and claim the free gift Christ brought to those who believe--Peace on Earth.



{Christmas Peace}

Have you noticed that the Christmas season is the busiest and most stressful time of the year? The hustle and bustle can leave us with an attitude of, "let's just make it through" or "I must conquer it all!"

As we prepare to celebrate Christmas this year, let's make the choice to thrive instead of survive. Christmas represents everything that really matters in life. When we strip away all of the things going on in our world and we get down to what really counts for life and eternity, we find the Christmas manger resting quietly in the middle of it all.

God's Word tells us the story of the first Christmas. Tucked away in this familiar passage, we find God's plan for peace. And do you know what I love about God's plan for peace? It can be experienced as we live right here on earth. Please read [Luke 2:1-20](#) and ask God to help you see this passage in a fresh new way.



{3 Truths for Christmas Peace}

1. We must make room for Christ in Christmas:

"While they (Mary and Joseph) were there (Bethlehem), the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son.

She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke 2:6)

Amazingly, from the very first Christmas, room was an issue. A census was being taken in Bethlehem. The census caused extra people to gather which led to extra activities. The extra activities caused extra needs. The extra needs ultimately placed extra stress on the people of Bethlehem. The result? There was a lack of room in Bethlehem!

Sound familiar? One of the biggest struggles we face during the Christmas season is having enough room for all the extras in our already hectic lives. Think about it---



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- Parties
- Food
- Shopping
- Decorating
- Church Activities
- Family Gatherings
- Christmas Cards
- Christmas Picture---What are we going to wear?
- Wrapping- Do I need matching paper and bows and tags?
- Creating Special Traditions

The list goes on and on and on!

All of these good activities can lead to a **crowding** in our schedules that creates a **lack of room** when it comes to celebrating and experiencing the real meaning of Christmas.



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If we want peace this Christmas season, we must make room for peace in our lives. How? We must prioritize what really matters and place our time, attention, and resources in the places that count.

Ask yourself these questions:

- What really matters this Christmas Season?
- How can I celebrate Jesus in my heart and help my family do the same?
- What expectations or obligations can I remove from my life and calendar?



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2. We must recognize the first Christmas gift: In [Luke 2:8](#), we read that an angel of the Lord appeared to shepherds in a nearby field. The angel delivers an amazing message. "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." ([Luke 2:11](#))

The message of the angel was clear. Jesus the Savior is here! The sign the shepherds received was specific. The baby will be wrapped and lying in a manger. Have you ever thought about the fact that on the first Christmas day, God took special care to wrap the most amazing gift we will ever receive? Jesus, God's son, was wrapped up and waiting to be received by the shepherds.



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Think about the excitement in your house each Christmas morning. The kids can't wait to run to the tree, find their gifts, and unwrap them all. We need to have the same sense of joy, excitement, and expectation about the gift of Jesus. He is our Savior! He is our deliverer! He is our Prince of Peace! The gift Jesus offered to the shepherds as well as to you and me is found in **verse 14**, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

Very simply, Jesus came to bring peace. Peace for you and peace for me. Peace for the woman whose hectic life keeps her stretched too thin. Peace for the woman whose heart is broken and cannot find the strength to move forward. Peace for the woman who is facing an unimaginable circumstance and not sure what will happen next. Amazingly, peace that is available today and comes through the birth of a Savior.



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Peace that affects our

- Homes
- Family members
- Work
- Church
- Friends
- Our Very Selves!

Today if I asked you the question, "Do you need a little peace in your life?" What would your answer be? If we were honest, I imagine that most of us would say, "yes, I need a little peace in my life!"



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God's Word is full of promises to claim and precepts to follow! Think about these reminders from the Bible and invite the peace of Jesus to wash over your busy, crazy life:

P- Jesus brought the very presence of God into our lives in a fresh, new and meaningful way. "For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by sinful nature, God did by sending His own son." (**Romans 8:3**) Jesus came to this earth to fulfill God's plan. He died on the cross and rose again. Jesus conquered sin, death, disease, dismay, and everything that separates you and me from God. Jesus is the way! Jesus is the truth! Jesus is the life! Through Jesus, God provided a place for us to belong. A place where we are wanted, welcomed, safe, and secure. Knowing that we have a refuge to run to during hard times brings peace into our lives.



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E- Jesus provides everything that we need for life. "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and Godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by his own glory and goodness." (2 Peter 1:3) Each day we are not without help. God's Word tells us what we need to know and how we need to live. I say it all the time, "Jesus has the answer because Jesus is the answer!" Doing what God's Word tells us to do, brings peace into our lives.

A- Jesus is the standard for absolute truth. "For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does." (Psalm 33:4) In the midst of a world that tells you, "anything goes," Jesus is the perfect standard of truth. Living for Him, following His example, and serving others the way He served gives us a goal for our day. The goal of becoming more like Jesus and less like this world. Living with this goal in mind and Jesus as our standard of truth brings peace into our lives because it helps us to eliminate the things that do not matter in life.



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C- Jesus gives comfort in times of stress. Christmas peace reminds us that peace is not the absence of problems, but rather the presence of God in our lives. "But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. 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." (John 14:26-27) Right now Jesus is at the right hand of the Father and He is praying for you and me! For just a moment, let that truth sink in. Not only is Jesus praying for us, the Holy Spirit is living inside of us. Through the work of the Holy Spirit, we have access to real peace because we are never alone. Surrendering to the power of the Holy Spirit brings peace into our lives.



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E- Jesus is the only way to have eternal life.

Romans 5:1 states, "We have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The ultimate Christmas gift is salvation. Through salvation we move from spiritual death to spiritual life. We receive this gift by asking Jesus to forgive us and save us. Today you can ask Jesus to save you from your sins! Being free from the burden of sin and shame brings peace into our lives!

Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." Admit that you have sin in your life. (Sin is any wrong thought, action, or reaction.)

Romans 5:8, "God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Acknowledge that Jesus died in your place.



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Romans 10:9, "That if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved." Confess Jesus as your Lord and place your trust in Him. You can simply say, "Lord Jesus, save me from my sins and be the Lord of my life!"

John 1:12, "To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." Tell a friend, get involved in a Church that teaches the Bible, and live secure in Him.

Daily we need to unwrap the very first Christmas gift (Jesus) by remembering and living out these amazing truths. When we do, we will experience His life-changing peace, right here on earth.



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3. We must tell others about the peace that is available this Christmas season: The shepherds did not waste any time finding the baby lying in the manger. **Verse 16** states, "So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child." The shepherds did not keep the news of the manger to themselves. They were so greatly impacted by what took place that night that they shared the news with everyone they met.

As we prepare to celebrate the Christmas season, we would be remiss if we did not share the news of Jesus' birth with others. Ultimately, that is the proof of peace in our lives because it demonstrates what matters the most.



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The people in our lives need to know the gift that Jesus offers to them. People are desperate for hope and peace; and as believers in Jesus Christ, we need to be prepared to share with them. We have friends, family members, and acquaintances that need to know the love of Jesus. Just like the shepherds, we need to be ready to tell them about the manger. We need to eliminate the busyness and the distractions so that we can see the real opportunities this Christmas Season and share the best gift ever given.

Think about all of the things that you share at Christmas... your favorite recipes, meaningful traditions, donations to people in need, decorating tips, gifts, and maybe even some fruit cake. I do the same things and all of these things are great! But, if we go through the entire Christmas season and never share Jesus, what is the point?



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Let's ask God to place one or two people in our lives that need to know Him. Then, let's look for ways to share the gospel with them this Christmas season. Maybe it is a friend, family, coworker, or even a child.



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Conclusion

My favorite part of this story is the neat response that Mary had to all of the things going on around her. Let's admit it-- Mary had a lot to process. She was young. She was in a barn. She had just given birth to the Savior. There was an Angel and shepherds and animals and probably a pretty bad smell. What did she do? **"Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart."**

(Luke 6:19)

- To Treasure means to protect, defend, preserve in memory.
- To Ponder means to engage in.

Mary knew that something significant was going on in her life. She did not let the distractions going on around her steal the most important thing.

Mary stopped and protected the moment by fully engaging in it. (I love that!)



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This Christmas season the Word of God invites us to do the same. We can slow down, eliminate the distractions, and fully engage in the moments that matter. When we do, we will experience Christmas peace right here on earth by:

- Making room for Christ in Christmas.
- Recognizing and unwrapping the very first Christmas gift--- Jesus was born and the world was forever changed.
- Looking for opportunities to tell others about the gift that came wrapped and lying in the manger over 2000 years ago.

"Lord, we thank You for Jesus' birth and what His birth means to us. We know that Jesus came and brought peace. Help us to embrace peace and live it out each and every day. Lord, help us to slow down this Christmas season and celebrate in our hearts and in our homes what really matters-- Jesus!"



