

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

DATE

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SPEAKER

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SERIES

What A Name!

PART

3

TITLE

Prince Of Peace

SCRIPTURE

Isaiah 9:6-7



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His name is Jesus, and every single one of you have a name. Names are important to all of us. The fact is, as unique as you are as a person, you look around this room, there's a thousand people in this room. Every single one of us, we're engaged in a significant struggle. For some of you, it's cancer or sickness. For some, it's your family feels like it's falling apart or your marriage. It may be finances. It may be loneliness. It may be just this constant gnawing effect within your heart that you need more, more than you have of something. As a result of that, every single one of us long for peace, and we aim for peace. We pursue peace with our heart. What we find is this. Peace is that feeling that we have within our heart of rest or of something that we feel warmth when we have adequate resources.

Here's what I mean by that. In a big financial collapse, there's two ways that folks deal with that. Most people, this is what they look like. They're overwhelmed with sorrow because they've lost everything. However, for the investor who has an adequate supply of cash in reserve on the side, he or she can know and measure a peace even in the midst of a storm. There's a lot of people in this room right now that are married. Sometimes, married people, they don't see eye to eye. Sometimes, that significant tension can actually boil over to where maybe you have looked like this at some point in your life, to where there's a strong tension in your heart. Here's the reality.

For the husband and wife that has an adequate supply of love and trust that's been built up over the years, even in those trying times, they can both know and measure a peace. What I want you to know this season of Christmas is this. Jesus Christ is the adequate resource for your heart to have the peace that it longs for, that you're aiming for. It's found in Jesus Christ. You see, the entire story of Christmas is ultimately a story about peace. The story begins very early. It says, "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." It says that the earth at the time was dark and it was void, and so God began to speak. It says that God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God kept speaking. Every time he spoke, more was created into existence.

Soon, God created a man and woman in his image to live on this earth, his earth. God loved what he created, and they enjoyed perfect peace. Just imagine a time when bodies had no sickness, no disease, only strength, where families and where relationships had no strife, no tension, only perfect love. Their worship and their heart was so full. Peace was real, and peace was perfect. God wanted to protect our peace on the earth, and so he gave an instruction. That instruction was this. He says, "You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat." In other words, all of this I have given for you to enjoy, but this one over here, this one here will ruin your peace, and so don't eat of it.

Yet, the Bible says that Adam and Eve, and not only Adam and Eve, but every single one of us has fallen short of the glory of God. We've all chosen what he said is not in our best interest. As a result of that, peace was lost. The consequences were absolutely staggering. Bodies would now get sick and they would die. Homes and relationships would experience strife. Hearts would now know insecurity and fear and shame. The Bible says that our very nature would move from a place of innocence to a place of sinfulness, so that when we had children that we would impart to our children a sin nature, making it absolutely impossible to do anything other than for them to eventually grow up and sin themselves. Every single one of us have fallen short of this glory. Peace evaporated.

In the bleakness of this moment, do you know what God did? Even though the Bible says that he was terribly offended because our sin was directly against him, his character, his generosity, God Almighty, instead of crushing us, he made a promise to send a rescuer to crush the head of evil and to restore us back into a relationship with God Almighty, and he continued to give promises throughout the Bible, sending people throughout history to tell us who this rescuer would be, who he would be for us. Isaiah chapter nine was one installment of these promises, and God said, "To us a child is born, and 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, and Prince of Peace." In the fullness of time, God did send his rescuer, and he was his Son. His name was Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ lived on this earth in absolute perfection morally as well as in love. He never sinned, and he lived in peace.

I want you to think about a few things about this one, this rescuer for you and for me who's called Prince of Peace. We know from God's word that he lived on this earth in peace. Multiple times, we find people around him utterly unglued and Jesus in a state of peace and rest. One day, he's on a boat. He's sleeping. There's this enormous storm. His disciples, they wake him up. They're absolutely unglued, and he is at perfect peace. He says, "Where is your faith?" One day, a father, his little girl was sick, so sick that she was going to die, runs to Jesus and says, "I know that you have the power," and he tries to pull him home, "Can we rush? Can we hurry? I know that if you get there in time, she can be healed." Jesus says, "Do not fear. Just believe." One day, after telling his own disciples that he would die, the Bible says that they felt nervous, they felt anxious about what was taking place. Jesus, staring the cross down, he says to them, "My peace I give to you."

You see, Jesus lived, when he was on this earth, in perfect peace. You know what's interesting is that Jesus Christ also chose to give his life in order to restore peace. You see, the Bible says that the government shall be upon his shoulder. One day, that's going to take place, but the first time that he came to this earth, instead of governments being placed upon his shoulders, the Bible says that he took the shame of our sin and a Roman cross upon his shoulders. Jesus Christ died on that cross for our sin, for my sin. Jesus was buried in a grave and, three days later, he rose from the dead. He conquered the grave. He conquered sin on our behalf.

What the Bible tells us is really fascinating. When Jesus rose from the dead, he extended an invitation to you and to me and to everyone else in the world. It's this. If you will admit that you are a sinner and you can not save yourself, if you will admit and believe in what I have accomplished and who I am, that Jesus is the Christ and he did die and rise from the dead and we confess him as Lord of our life, Jesus says, "I will forgive you of all of your sin, I'll bring you into my family, and I will give you my righteousness."

This is the dramatic exchange of all of the scriptures, is that Jesus Christ takes our sin, and he gives us, in exchange, his righteousness. Do you know what happens to the heart when it receives the righteousness, the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ? Isaiah says it like this. He says, "The effect of righteousness will be peace, and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever." You see, some of you, right now, you are so riddled with guilt and anxiety because of sin in your past. I want you to know that Jesus Christ can take it all away, and your heart can know peace once again. This is why the angels, when Jesus was born, they come out to this hillside, and there's all these shepherds. What do they say? They say, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased."

As we sit here today in Raleigh, in this building, I want you to know the good news of Christmas because of what Jesus has done is that peace is available for you and for me, but there's also sobering news in what the angel said because it says that that peace is only available with whom he is pleased. This is the question of the ages. This is the question in every culture, in every country, "How do I please God? How do I earn some favor with God?" Most people, that's exactly what they think. It's something about earning. I have to do something so that he will be pleased with me. If he's pleased with me, then I will know peace. The Bible says this is a dead end.

Hebrews chapter 11 says, "Without faith, it is impossible to please God," but the antithesis is also true. That is that it is absolutely possible to please God with faith. For those of you who are here today and you don't know peace because you don't know Christ, we want to give you an opportunity right now to pray and receive Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. I want to ask, if you would, all of us in the room, I know many of you have already trusted Christ. If you have, you can just pray for those in the room maybe who haven't. As you think about your life, if you're at the place to where you know for certain that there is nothing that you can do, that you believe what the Bible says, that there is nothing you can do to save yourself, that there is no amount of fresh water that can be poured into the ocean to take away its salt and there's no amount of our good works that can be poured into our life to take away our sin.

If you admit that you're a sinner, you can't save yourself, you're believing in Jesus Christ and what he did and you confess him as Lord, you can pray a prayer to him, not to me, to him, something like this, "Father in heaven, I admit that I have sinned against you. I have done things that have caused me shame. I know that I can not save myself, but I believe that you sent the rescuer, your Son, Jesus to this earth in order to redeem me, in order to save me. I believe that Jesus is the Son of God, the rescuer, and I believe that Jesus died on a cross, that he was buried in a grave, and that he rose from the dead, and I confess him as Lord of my life. Would you forgive me of my sin? Would you give me your righteousness? Would you reestablish peace in my heart even though I'm going through difficult times? Thank you for saving me. I pray this in Jesus' name. Amen."