

Hey friends! Welcome to week two of our Advent Family Devotional! Let's jump right in!

Family Advent Devotional

Week 2: Peace

(light the first and second purple candle)

Ask:

Have you ever been in a fight or had a big argument with someone?

Did it end peacefully? What brought peace between the two of you?

Is peace easy to achieve or hard? Why? What makes it hard?

Read Luke 2:14

On a dark and ordinary night, while shepherds were watching their flocks on the rocky hills outside of Jerusalem, a bright light suddenly appeared! An angel had come to declare the birth of the Christ child. Luke's Gospel then tells us that a multitude of angels appeared and announced, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" (Luke 2:14)

That night, the angels could have come and declared so many things that Christ would do and accomplish. They could have talked about his healings, his miracles, and his sacrifice. They could've told of his death and resurrection. But they didn't. They summed up his entire earthly ministry with the word peace.

Yes, Christ came to heal the sick, perform miracles, die a thief's death, and rise again. But as a whole, Christ came to give us peace.

Ask:

What does peace mean to you?

What is the opposite of peace?

Overall, the Old Testament word for peace, *šālôm*, means completeness, soundness, and well-being.

Ask:

What takes away our peace in this world? In other words, what steals our completeness, soundness, and well-being in our world today? (ultimately, it's sin)

The Bible clearly teaches us that sin is the cause of disunity, violence, chaos, and anything else that tries to eliminate peace in our world. Not only has sin stolen our peace with others around us, but it has ultimately stolen our peace with God.

For sinful humanity, there must first be peace with God before there can ever be hope of peace anywhere else. The only way there is peace with God is if sin's powerful grip is removed through the sacrifice of Christ (Col. 1:20).

The prophets in the Old Testament also understood this and cried out for a time when a Messiah would come and bring an age of peace, or as Isaiah puts it, the coming of a Prince of Peace (Isaiah 9:6).

So, the angels proclaimed that night outside of Bethlehem, that Peace was coming to earth and God was going to make a way for completeness and well-being between Himself and his creation once again.

This is great news because once peace between us and God is established, we can embrace peace within ourselves (Phil. 4:7). The angels were announcing not only peace between God and us through the forgiveness of sins, but when we are at peace with God, we are able to be at peace with others. True peace with our neighbors, friends, family, and everyone else comes only after we have found peace with God (Heb. 12:14).

Like most all of the Advent themes, peace is something the world strives for but generally falls short at achieving. The reason for this is because true peace, whether it be with God, ourselves or others can't be achieved apart from Christ.

Pray together as a family and thank God that he provided a way for there to be peace between us and Himself. Ask God to help you be at peace with those around you and to help show others how much Jesus loves them.