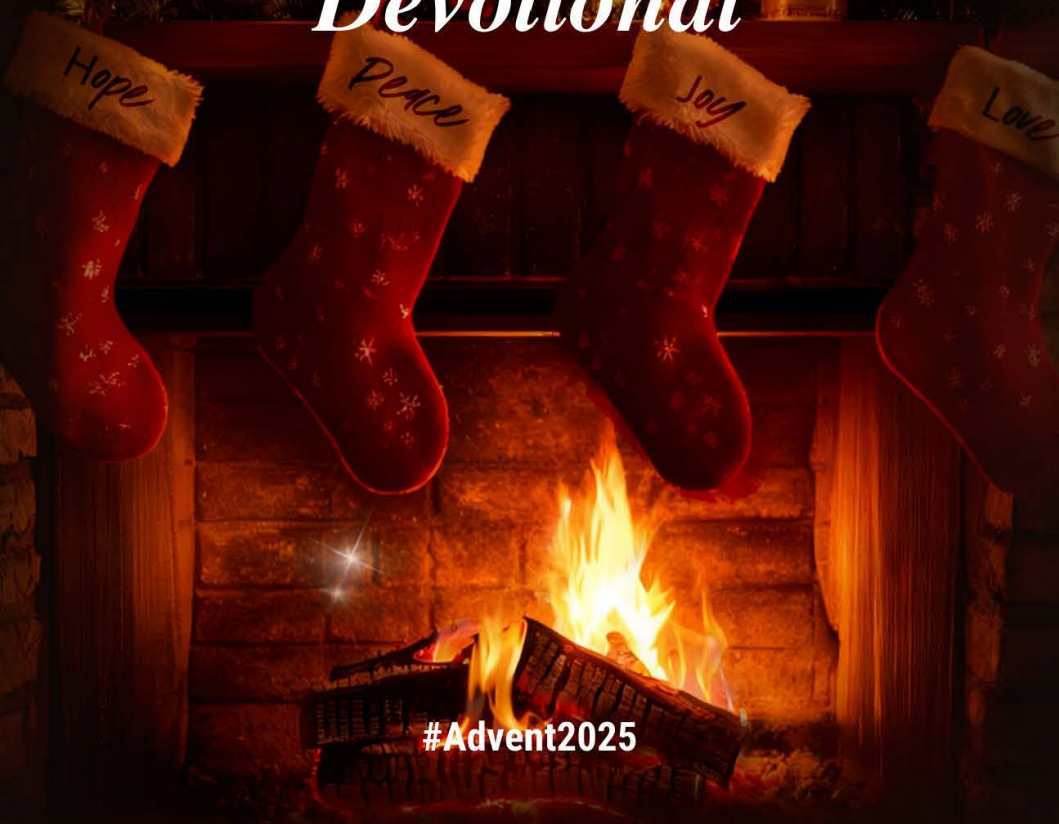


Stocking Stuffers

GIFTING THE THEMES OF ADVENT

Devotional



#Advent2025

Stocking Stuffers

GIFTING THE THEMES OF ADVENT

Week 2

The Gift of Peace

SERMON NOTES

Scripture Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19

Title THE GIFT OF PEACE

NOTES

1.

2.

3.

4.

THE RIGHTEOUS STUMP

Isaiah 11:1-10

DEVOTION

In Jesus there is peace as purpose unfolds. It is a present and futuristic peace that will transform relationships for the better within all creation.

Tree components include shoot, stump, branch, roots, and fruit. No this is not Tree Anatomy 101. These are necessary to depict the solution to man's inability to save himself.

In Isaiah 7:17-20 an unrepentant Judah suffered a serious threat from a prideful enemy, the Assyrians. God does allow judgment to come to His people. Here's the good news. A correction from God does not nullify your eternal destiny. Like trees these two nations are cut down to the stumps of their previous existence.

Enemies cannot thwart the ultimate outcome of the prophesized - miraculous – righteous – kingly - rule that will bring peace and secure the eternal life of believers. When all looked dead and fruitless only one stump, the remnant of God's people, brought forth life. You may be reading this devotion with a deep longing for peace. It can be yours. It is the peace of promise, the peace of perfection, and the peace of purpose.

The prophet Isaiah opens Chapter 11 with the eternal answer for all mankind. In Jesus is the promised peace. He will rule like none other. Jesus is the shoot that grows into the branch from these roots (11:1) His humanity and humble beginning are confirmed through the lineage of Jesse the Father of King David.

In Jesus peace is filled with perfection. The Spirit of God rests on Him to empower a finality to this perfection. You can hang on to His every wise word, trust Him to justly handle every situation, and reproduce His humble reverence of God (11:2-5). Jesus' divinity is manifested in His perfection. **In Jesus there is peace as purpose unfolds. It is a present and futuristic peace that will transform relationships for the better within all creation.** All the earth will have knowledge of the Root of Jesse our soon returning King and it will be marvelous! (11:6-10).

Today, as we continue our celebration of the Advent Season don't lose the wonder of your inclusion in God's redemptive work.

Prayer

Father help us to join Jesus in producing fruit that expands your kingdom. In Jesus' name. In Jesus' name, Amen.

SERENITY THROUGH HARMONY

Romans 15:4-13

God's peace has the power to bring people from completely different backgrounds together as one body in Christ.

DEVOTION

A symphony produces a unified sound because each musician knows their part, plays their role, and shares the same goal—to create beautiful music together.

That's the picture Paul gives to the believers in Rome.

He's writing to a diverse group of Jews and Gentiles who once despised each other, but now, united in Christ, Paul calls them to find joy in one another.

This kind of unity doesn't come naturally—it begins with peace with God (Romans 5:1), which then overflows into peace with others. **God's peace has the power to bring people from completely different backgrounds together as one body in Christ.**

So, let me ask: is there a relationship in your life that needs the peace of God? Who is God calling you to extend peace to, so that He may receive glory?

Never forget—divine peace has the power to bridge differences and to form connections even amid past or present conflict.

Prayer

Lord, fill me with Your joy and peace so that I can create and cultivate meaningful relationships with people who are different than me. In Jesus' name. Amen!

THE PATH TO PEACE: PREPARING THE WAY

Matthew 3:1-12

*This Advent, consider what
“preparing the way” looks like
for you.*

DEVOTION

As we journey through Advent, Matthew 3:1-12 invites us to reflect on the call of John the Baptist. He emerged from the wilderness, proclaiming, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” This call to repentance isn’t just about turning away from wrongdoing; it’s an invitation to cultivate peace within ourselves and our communities.

In a world filled with noise and chaos, finding peace can be difficult. We often chase after it through distractions, relationships, or achievements, only to discover that true peace lies deeper. John reminds us that preparing our hearts for Christ means clearing away the clutter of our lives—our worries, our grudges, and our busyness.

This Advent, consider what “preparing the way” looks like for you. It might mean letting go of resentment toward someone, making time for silence and reflection, or reaching out to those in need. Each step taken toward peace not only transforms us but also impacts those around us.

As we actively seek peace, we prepare our hearts to receive the Prince of Peace. Embrace this season as a chance to align your life with the promise of peace that Christ offers.

Peace does not just happen; it requires intentional preparation in our hearts and lives.

Prayer

Lord, help me to prepare my heart for Your peace and to share that peace with everyone I meet. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

LET PEACE RULE

Colossians 3:15

DEVOTION

Peace is power, not passivity. It's a fruit of the spirit that takes the strength to stay calm when chaos surrounds you.

In a world full of noise, anger, and confusion, God is calling us to a higher place, a place of peace. Not the kind of peace that's anchored in everything going right, but the peace that comes when Christ sits on the throne of our hearts. When Paul says, "let the peace of God rule," he's saying peace should call the shots in our lives.

As we've seen in our Movies with a Message series, sometimes we let anxiety, sadness, envy, or even ennui (boredom) take the throne. But peace is power, not passivity. It's a fruit of the spirit that takes the strength to stay calm when chaos surrounds you. It takes faith to respond with grace when the world pushes your buttons. We are called to be one body, one community, one ruled by peace and rooted in gratitude. When we walk in peace, we become light-bearers in a dark world—examples of Christ's love in motion.

This week, before you react, pause and ask: Is peace ruling right now? Then speak, move, and love from that place. Text someone encouragement. Forgive the one who hurt you. Let God's peace reign—and watch your world change.

Prayer

Jehovah Shalom, thank you for being the God of peace. Thank you for reigning supreme over worry, pride, fear, pain, or whatever else tries to take the throne of my heart. Forgive me for when I've allowed them to take the throne of my heart and help me to walk in peace. I need you in every moment of the chaos. Help me to be still. In Jesus name! Amen!

THE PRINCE OF PEACE

Isaiah 9:6-7

DEVOTION

Despite our current, chaotic world, be encouraged during this Advent season with this reminder: The Prince of Peace is coming.

We are living in chaotic times. It feels like everywhere you turn, turmoil is staring you in the face. Unprecedented weather events, economic instability, and certainly political unrest. The news and social media feeds are literally exhausting.

In the midst of all of this chaos, we need peace. Something, wrapped in someone that will anchor us in the midst of these stormy conditions. Our text today gives us a promise worth remembering and one upon which we can rely.

The descriptives used then are eerily similar to 2025: gloom, distress, deep darkness. Despite the conditions, the prophet urged them to look forward. Help was on the way. A time was coming when light would be present to replace darkness. Increased joy was coming to replace gloom. The yoke weighing them down at the hands of their oppressors would be shattered.

What was changing? The economy? The political party in power? No. Verse 6 reads, “For unto us a child is born, unto 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.”

Despite our current, chaotic world, be encouraged during this Advent season with this reminder: The Prince of Peace is coming.

Prayer

Lord, in these trying and uncertain times, prompt me to spend more time looking up at You rather than out at them. Help me look to the hills from which comes my help; trusting that all of my help comes from you. In Jesus' name, Amen.

REFLECTIONS