**Royal Baby, Prince of Peace**

Based on [Luke 2:1-20](https://biblia.com/books/esv/Lk2.1-20)

Preached on December 24, 2020

The Nativity of Our Lord ~ Christmas Eve (Midnight)

Pastor Nathan Fuehrer

This most holy night we achieve in church a type of calmness and serenity that we ought to experience every worship service. Something about the evening, the candlelight, the gathering of Christians singing familiar carols can, even for an hour, have us experience the very peace promised by angels singing that first Christmas night.

The peace of which the angels sing is not "world peace." Contrary to what the "Gospel of John and Yoko" says, Happy Christmas does not mean "War is over." And if Christmas has you waiting for the 7-some-billion people on the earth to just get along and sing kumbaya...it aint' gonna happen, not this side of the pearly gates. God says that ain't gonna happen. Christ says we can expect...not to have world peace but, Wars and rumors of wars. He says to expect Earthquakes, floods, typhoons, famines, pestilences. And we see such signs of a sinful world groaning with death pangs. And this year, 2020, has been a doozy. A conflicted election in the most powerful nation in the world, and generally heightened political bickerings here in Canada and elsewhere. There is an Economic shutdown, mask mandates, travel bans and even a ban on gathering for Christmas. Conflicts overseas; conflicts at home, conflicts in the home. Oh, there's good news too; a COVID vaccine is being shipped out--and though we may have a ways yet to travel through the tunnel, we might now be seeing a light at the end of it to happen in the new year. Good news i suppose, but hardly a meaningful step towards world peace and stability.

The angel says to the shepherds, "Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth." But, peace on earth is not "world peace," its peace from heaven to earth. Christmas is not about men's good will towards one another; it's about God's "good will" towards men. Because you see...the "peace of heaven" that comes to earth is a person, a child, wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. This child is named Jesus, the angel says, because he will save his people from their sins. This child is born the prince of peace, and yet, the prince of peace will have no peace of his own. In fact, he will be rejected. How can that be?

You know, in getting an organ transplant, say a kidney, the body knows something foreign has been introduced. The immune system is designed to attack foreign substances and so a person’s got to take anti-rejection meds. Ironic isn't it? That in an organ transplant, the body...it takes measures to reject the very thing that was put there to save it.

Beloved in Christ, the first principle of this world is that it is corrupted with sin, and doesn't even realize it. And a world of sin has all sort of auto-immune defenses to reject the holiness of God. So, like a heart replacement, the Son of God was transplanted into the world, the holy one of God was grafted into a world of sin, and the world rejects the one who would save it.

Holiness is rejected in a sinful world. It's like the law of gravity; or the laws of thermodynamics. Just as there are laws of physics that seem to govern the physical universe, there are laws of holiness that govern the spiritual. If holiness comes into contact with sin there will be friction, and resistance, and rejection.

And so if you're not experiencing peace on earth. If you experience rejection in this world, that doesn't mean God's peace hasn't come to you. On the contrary, it may just be one of the evidences of Christ in you. The prince of peace himself faced perpetual rejection. The very night of his birth began with it. The shepherds received a sign of a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger. The first sign Jesus received was flashing "no vacancy." His family was rejected from the inn and relegated to a stable. Not off to a good start.

Jesus was born a royal baby but you wouldn't know it looking at the circumstances of his life. He isn't given the silver spoon of William and Kates lil’ princes," His parents certainly didn't have a royal wedding to inspire the masses. Theirs was probably a shotgun wedding and a scandal to the world. Nevertheless, he is a royal baby, a prince of peace.

And the rejection continues, when wise men come to worship Jesus as a royal child, Herod instantly plots his murder. Rejected by Herod the family flees to Egypt, before returning to Nazareth, where the child grows to adulthood, preaches his first sermon there, and his own hometown people reject him, try to throw him off of a cliff. Truly--besides a lowly manger--the Son of Man had no place to rest his head.

The proof of this child's holiness was not in a halo around his head, or the aura around him in most paintings. It wasn't the gifts of the wise men, or the adoration of the shepherds that prove that he is the Holy one of God. The proof of Jesus' holiness is in his rejection by the world, that would like to keep things just the way they are.

But not all rejected him. This Holy child, the image of the invisible God, enters into a sinful world to save the world and the world did not receive him. And yet some did receive him. Mary received him; Joseph received him, shepherds and wise men received him. And you have received him. Not because of your will power or any anti-rejection meds; but precisely because you have heard the Word and believed.

Mary heard the world of the angel and said, "Let it be." Joseph was planning for divorce when the angel said, "Her child is of the Holy Spirit." And he believed and took her to be his wife. The shepherds heard the angels and marveled and believed. And they went to see the child in the manger when they saw the royal baby, they praised God for giving them his Word, that their ears heard from the herald angels, and that their eyes had seen in the manger. To those who received him, who believed in his Name, he gave the power to become the sons of God.

There is a war going on, and yet in its midst we have peace. Sin has been battling against God in the heart of all mankind since the beginning. So we needed a transplant, a replacement. And lo new alliance has been formed; a new trust established. As a marriage between two warring families brings a child of peace, so too it pleased God, who created his people, to marry himself to them, and bring forth a child of promise--God veiled in human flesh--a child that will unite the warring factions, by reconciling sinners unto himself.

Mankind no longer need fear the almighty God, because he has had a child with us. That is our peace. But the story of this child only begins in the manger, it doesn't end there. There were still many battles to come. For the sins of man continue to war against the holiness of God. But when the war came it was not waged on the frontlines of the earth. It was to take place in the person of this child, who would suffer the war in his body and so bring peace with God to all those who believe in his name.

Merry Christmas