

THE GRAPEVINE – Issue 39:9th Dec 2020

Dear Friends,

The angels proclaimed “Peace on Earth” when Christ was born, but today we wonder as we watch the news whether peace is possible? God's peace is about wholeness, when all is made well. We all need two parts of God's peace in our lives. We need inner peace, but we also need peace with others. God addresses both, and he tells us what to do to find it.



Inner peace begins with our relationship with God, and it continues as we focus on his strength and allow him to fill us. We can exchange our weakness for his strength in any area of life. In the book of Isaiah it says, “You will keep him in perfect peace whose mind is focused on you because he trusts in You” (Isaiah 26:3). You can personalise the verse: “God will keep **me** in perfect peace as my mind focuses on him and trusts him.” Inner peace hinges on our trust and reliance in God.

If inner peace is eluding us in these days and anxiety is filling our lives, we can make a choice to trust God. We can choose to put your hand in his and draw from him as we take each step. It may not always be easy, but he is there to guide us through the maze of life if we will let him. Choosing to trust God with those blind corners in our lives will take us down the road to inner peace. Choosing not to trust him will take us down the road to stress and worry. Inner peace is there for the choosing.

Jesus said: “Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9).

Peace with others begins as we understand that God has called us to be peacemakers in our world. Is there somewhere in your own circle where you can be a peacemaker this Christmas? Is there an invitation that needs to be extended to smooth over a fractured family relationship? Is there an apology to be made or a silence to be broken that has stood as a barrier for too long? Don't miss the blessing God promises in your life as you respond to his call to be a peacemaker in your own circle of influence. We can help bring peace to our world one heart at a time.

Perhaps you might like to join me this week in praying the prayer of St. Francis of Assisi:

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love; Where there is injury, pardon; Where there is doubt, faith; Where there is despair, hope; Where there is darkness, light; and Where there is sadness, joy. Master; Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love; For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

Nativity Scenes: Don't forget to create your own nativity scene for us this Christmas. Take a photo of the scene and send it to Stan either via email or Whatsapp (07979 652783) by 18th December so we can show them on our weekly worship broadcast 20th December. Thank You!

May God bless you this Advent!

