

The Prince of Peace

Isaiah 9:1-7

The Christmas Truce, 1914

How can you celebrate Christmas and try to kill people at the same time??

“I remember hearing a German soldier shout out: ‘Tomorrow, you no shoot, we no shoot.’”

“The following day, British and German soldiers met in no man's land and exchanged gifts, took photographs and some played impromptu games of football. They also buried casualties and repaired trenches and dugouts.”

Yet this attitude “conflicted with the patriotic aggression needed by both sides.”

So...“After 1914, the High Commands on both sides tried to prevent any truces on a similar scale happening again.”

The hope and failure of the “Christmas Truce”

For a time, shared humanity brought peace over conflict
But it got swallowed up by the brokenness of humanity

The best we can do in trouble is temporary gains

Just a lull (temporary calm) in the fighting and trouble
A genuine change generally conflicts with things we don't want to lose, or we can't leave
Instead of merely dying, sometimes we choose to kill it!

We desperately need a better hope than this!

and we discover it in Christmas...

Isaiah 9:1-7

1-3: Light and great joy!

4-5: Deliverance from injustice and righteous and conflict

6-7: Righteousness and justice

“I put on righteousness as my clothing;
justice was my robe and my turban.

I was eyes to the blind and feet to the lame.

I was a father to the needy;

I took up the case of the stranger.

I broke the fangs of the wicked

and snatched the victims from their teeth.” *Job 29:14-17*

Right and good decisions and actions in relationships with God and people

Even seeking out the places that are wrong to make them right

The Big Idea

**Hope → Genuine, joy-filled, never-ending
only comes through the birth and life of Jesus Christ
who will rule as Prince of Peace forever
by the zeal of God Almighty!**

Jesus Christ was and is victorious over every attack of evil,
every human failure, every power of decay and death
→ By self-sacrifice, humility, love, and righteousness

Now He reigns as Prince of Peace (shalom) forever

Because Jesus Christ reigns, it is the trouble that is temporary!

We are awaiting the full expression
of everlasting peace
of justice and righteousness
of love
by the zeal of Almighty God

Application

Meditate, memorize, draw, paraphrase, read about, talk with people, ... **Isaiah 9:6-7** (or start at verse 2...)

When we are tempted to lose hope, or to hope in something else,
call this to mind

His people must strive for His peace, righteousness, and justice
as an act of worship of our Prince of Peace
“Your Kingdom come, your will be done!”

Reflection Questions for later today or this week...

1. In what part of life do you desperately long for peace and justice and righteousness?
2. What strategies do we often use to pursue those things? What makes the strategies of the Son of God different from the ways of humanity? Why isn't it enough for us to simply choose His strategies?
3. What does it look like for you to seek the ways of this Son of God, especially in peace, righteousness, and justice? What does it look like for God's people to seek these things?
4. What helps you to rejoice in this amazing reality of the Son of God who entered our world to reign with peace forever?
5. How will you center your heart and mind on the Son of God?