

Message Point: The world offers us chaos; God offers us peace.

Focus Passage: Luke 2:1-10

Supplemental Passage: And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7 NASB)

Introduction: The Christmas truce (German: Weihnachtsfrieden; French: Trêve de Noël) was a series of widespread but unofficial ceasefires along the Western Front around Christmas 1914. In the week leading up to the holiday, German and British soldiers crossed trenches to exchange seasonal greetings and talk. In areas, men from both sides ventured into no man's land on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day to mingle and exchange food and souvenirs. There were joint burial ceremonies and prisoner swaps, while several meetings ended in carol-singing. Men played games of football with one another, captured in one of the truce's most enduring images. It was not ubiquitous; fighting continued in some frontal regions. In others the sides settled on little more than arrangements to recover bodies. The following year, a few units arranged ceasefires, but the truces were not nearly as widespread as in 1914; this was, in part, due to strongly worded orders from the high commands of either side prohibiting fraternization.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christmas_truce

I. The Chaos of Christmas

- a. Mary & Joseph had no place to stay and the baby was due
- b. The shepherds were scared to death of the angelic sight
- c. We try to decorate the house and buy all the presents
- d. We attend the school concerts, parties, and plays
- e. We get too busy "doing" Christmas

II. The Calm of Christmas

- a. Mary & Joseph found a place to stay and to have the baby
- b. The shepherds rejoiced to find the baby as the angels had described
- c. We need to search for the calm of Christmas because the world only gives us chaos
- d. The calm can be found, but, in our culture, it must be searched for
- e. We need to step back away from the trappings of American Christmas and revisit the real meaning

III. The Peace of God

- a. When the angel came to Mary he said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God." (Luke 1:30 NASB)

b. The angels proclaimed to the shepherds, "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased." (Luke 2:14 NASB)

c. God desires to bring us peace through Jesus, not chaos through Christmas.

d. The world seeks to take away our peace

e. Claim what is rightfully yours – the Peace of God

Application/Invitation:

Pastor Clifford S. Stewart of Louisville, Kentucky, sent his parents a microwave oven one Christmas. Here's how he recalls the experience: "They were excited that now they, too, could be a part of the instant generation. When Dad unpacked the microwave and plugged it in, literally within seconds, the microwave transformed two smiles into frown! Even after reading the directions, they couldn't make it work. "Two days later, my mother was playing bridge with a friend and confessed her inability to get that microwave oven even to boil water. 'To get this darn thing to work,' she exclaimed, 'I really don't need better directions; I just needed my son to come along with the gift!'" When God gave the gift of salvation, he didn't send a booklet of complicated instructions for us to figure out; he sent his Son.