

PEACE ON EARTH; GOOD WILL TOWARD MEN

Greetings precious people, this week we will consider one of the most famous yet misunderstood sayings of our time. It is posted on billboards and Christmas cards.

This quote of “Peace on earth and goodwill toward men” is taken from the Word of God the Bible and is found in the Gospel according to Luke. The following is it in its entirety, Luke 2:1-20 “And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, **Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.** And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us. And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger. And when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them.”

As study is made of history of this time period we soon realize that there was no peace or good will toward men happening. The world was under the tyrannical rule of the Roman Empire. Through the centuries since the birth of Christ, there has been one dictator after another ruling and very little peace and good will toward men between men.

It is always a mistake to try and find the promise of God in the actions of man. The peace and good will the angel spoke of was God’s action toward man in the giving of His Son who would grow up bearing witness to the Truth and go to the Cross to reconcile sinful man to a Holy God.

Man’s sin places him at enmity with God; man is in rebellion toward God wanting nothing to do with Him. Today, if you are not “born again” you are at war with God and be certain you will not win.

God has shown His good will (kindness; mercy; grace) toward us in the giving of His son that if man will repent of his sin and turn in faith to God, his sins will be forgiven and he will be reconciled to his Maker. This is only part of the peace that God gives.

To all that do come to Him on His terms He gives His peace that surpasses all understanding to guard our heart and mind. Jesus said: “Peace give I unto you, not as the world gives, give I unto you.” The apostle Paul identifies this peace this way in Philippians 4:6-7, “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”

Do you have this peace that only God can give? You can, turn to Christ now!

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