

A Light has Dawned—Come O Prince of Peace

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It seems as though the days are especially dark right now. I don't know about you, but I always look forward to winter solstice (December 21st this year), not so much because I enjoy the "shortest day of the year" but because it means the days begin to grow longer each day and we experience more daylight. There's something about leaving for work in the dark and coming home from work in the dark that seem to make the days particularly dreary at times.



Of course this darkness is more than just the lack of daylight. Our world seems bent on a trajectory of hatred, destruction and death.

Terrorist attacks in Paris, mass shootings that occur with increasing frequency and carnage, and new forms of terrorist activity within our own country have reminded us that this world we live in can be very, very dark at times. We live in an age where fear, prejudice, hatred and vitriol are common place and the sense of common ground or a common good is eroding away.

But this darkness runs deeper than simply national, political or ideological positions and debates. This darkness tends to take a very personal approach as well. For some the darkness has come in the doctor's office with words like cancer, dementia, or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). For others the darkness has come raging through the tragic death of a young child, a miscarriage or an impending separation or divorce. This darkness strikes at our hearts and souls with our very personal battles against addictions, unacknowledged sinful behaviors and attitudes, and selfish motives and actions. These are dark and often devastating times in which we live brothers and sisters!

If there were ever a time to hear and take to heart the word of Isaiah 9:1-7, it is now!

1 Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—

2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

3 You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.

4 For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.

5 Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.

6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

7 Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.

He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and

*righteousness from that time on and forever.
The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.*

The light has dawned my friends! This child that was born in a manger is bringing His kingdom and invites us to pray for His kingdom to come, His will to be done on earth as it is in Heaven! His kingdom and His peace will have no end! His peace is more than just an absence of conflict, strife or war. His peace echoes back to the Garden of Eden before the fall where everything was exactly as He intended. His peace brings restoration, wholeness and fullness – this is the full and abundant life that Jesus talked about in John 10:10.



In this Advent season we not only look back and remember that Jesus came into this world, but we also look forward to that time when He will return and “the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.” In dark days such as these we need to cling to this hope that is only found in Jesus Christ our Lord! Let’s commit to believe this, and then to work together to both proclaim and demonstrate this truth to the world that’s so often overwhelmed by the darkness.

Christ’s Peace,

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