

What We Need This Christmas

The Christmas season is here. The calendar has now shifted to December and the weather has turned cooler. Decorations are up around town and radio stations are playing Christmas music more frequently now. Christmas cards and advertisements fill our mailboxes and newspaper supplements have thickened our papers. It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas.

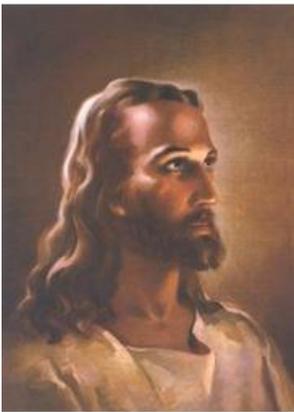
Christmas is a relief from the stresses of 2020. It has been a year like none other, a perfect storm of both natural and manmade crises. The result is that our mood is much different this year than previous Christmas' in memory. That is a mild way of describing the immense stress we are all feeling because of the events of this year. We *need* Christmas. More than ever.



On Sunday a video introduction to the Advent sermon series at church highlighted three important needs of our culture today. The word images appearing on the screen said it simply:

- We need Hope
- We need Peace
- We need Joy

Isn't that the truth? In a world in chaos, we desperately need Hope, Peace and Joy.



With our world seemingly out of control, many of us have feelings of hopelessness, fear, and isolation because of the constant streaming of bad news, robbing us of feelings of joy. It seems that our only hope is a vaccine that will protect us from the coronavirus and bring a return to some sense of normalcy. But, even when the coronavirus is in the rearview mirror we will be thrust into a string of other crisis. It is the world in which we live. We need Jesus – not just for today but for other times in our lives.

There is an answer to the continuing struggles and stresses of life. Jesus is the answer, as highlighted in the next images that appeared in the introductory video at church:

- Jesus came to fulfill the prophesy of Hope
- He came to bring Peace in the midst of fear
- He came to bring Joy to the world

These are all timeless. They are the answer to the problems of today and also of our future. They are the reason why Jesus came to live among us – to bring Hope, Peace and Joy to us.

Long ago God promised that He would send a Savior. God *always* delivers on His promises. We celebrate the birth of our Savior at Christmas as a gift not only for today, but for the future. We can live in Peace and Joy with the assurance that our Hope for a savior is fulfilled. God also promised that Jesus will return to remove death, disease

and suffering. Because we know this is true we can live our lives differently in real time. We can trust in the Hope, Peace and Joy that Jesus brings to us – for eternity but also for our daily lives.

The Bible Says: *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13).*

Question: Have you turned your life over to Jesus, so that you can re-focus your attention from the bad news of this world to the Good News that Jesus Christ brings?

Prayer: Dear Lord. We need you, now more than ever. We look forward to the Hope, Peace and Joy that you bring to us. Amen.