

## Study Guide

Monday, December 21- Friday, December 25

**Monday, December 21. Read Luke 2:13-14.** We hear this verse many times in the Christmas season. Have we heard it so much that we might miss something? Peace is a major theme in the birth announcement. We have tossed the word peace around a good bit. We have used it as a symbol. We have made fun of those who want “world peace.”

Throughout the history of our world there has never been a time of complete peace – at least as it relates to nations. But, the peace that is announced in Luke has nothing to do with nations; it has to do with us as individuals. Spend this week seeking “peace” in your own life. May your prayer today be a prayer of peace.

**Tuesday, December 22. Read Romans 5:1-2.** We have peace with God only because of that child born in Bethlehem. That child grew up and taught of love and grace and forgiveness. Ultimately, that little boy, Jesus, gave his life for us. We were separated from God because of sin and Jesus paid the price for our sin. Therefore, we have been made right with God. We are reconciled to God because He doesn't see our sin. He sees Jesus who took our place on the cross.

**Wednesday, December 23. Read Philippians 4:6-7.** Imagine never worrying about anything! It seems like impossibility. We all have worries on the job, in our homes, at school. But Paul's advice is to turn our worries into prayer. Do you want to worry less? Then pray more! God's peace is different from the world's peace. True peace is not found in positive thinking, in absence of conflict, or in good feelings. It comes from knowing God is in control. Our citizenship in Christ's Kingdom is sure, our destiny is set, and we can have victory over sin. Let God's peace guard your heart against anxiety.

**Thursday, December 24. Read Matthew 5:9.** Are you a peace maker? We are reconciled to God for the purpose of reconciling with others. As we think of Jesus being born to bring peace, we must understand that peace should be shared with others. If we claim we love God but hate our brothers and sisters then we really don't love God after all and don't have His peace within us. (See I John 2:9-11). There is someone in your life with whom you need to be reconciled. Make it a priority to be at peace with them. At the Christmas Eve services tonight, we will symbolically light a candle to represent Jesus. As we leave the sanctuary we are reminded we are taking the light of Christ into the world. This light can't shine if we have a conflict with another.

**Friday, December 25. Read Luke 2:1-20.** Read this familiar story with an eye to see something new, or see something in a different way.

Although our first picture of Jesus is as a baby in a manger, it must not be our last. The Christ child in the manger has been the subject of a beautiful Christmas scene, but we cannot leave Him there. This tiny, helpless baby lived an amazing life, died for us, ascended to heaven, and will come back to this earth as King of kings. Don't underestimate Jesus. Let Him grow in your life.