

**Day 13**

**Friday, December 12**

**Pastor Bethann Johnson**

**“In Jesus We Have Peace Because He Has Overcome the World”**

**“I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)**

The older I get, the more I crave peace. Peace in my family, peace at Christmastime, peace in my community, peace in the world. But that desire for that type of peace isn't so easily found or maintained. At best, peaceful times are temporary, fleeting and we continue to long for a lasting peace.

For some reason, we all are under the false belief that during the season of Advent our lives will be picture perfect, a photo filtered vignette of a carefully stylized cozy scene of hope, peace, love and joy radiating throughout our house and everyone in it. Why would we as followers of Jesus buy into that Madison Avenue depiction when we know how Jesus entered our world and lived in it?

Jesus' arrival wasn't peaceful! Despite “Silent Night” it wasn't a very peaceful situation when Jesus was born. Not for Mary, who had to deliver Him in a barn and the only available place for her sweet baby boy was an animal's feeding trough of hay! Not for Joseph, who couldn't provide for Mary a room with at least a bed or some small comfort to deliver a baby away from home. And yet, God broke through to us by giving us His Son, Jesus, in the middle of a not-so-picture-perfect peaceful moment to redeem us all.

Jesus' ministry wasn't peaceful! Jesus didn't stay sweet little baby Jesus, but grew into a man. A man who made statements and healed people in a way that no one had ever witnessed before. Surely by doing these things Jesus brought peace but we know by reading each Gospel that even in the middle of healing and Truth telling, the people didn't perceive these actions as peaceful but instead at times asked Jesus to go away or plot a way to kill Jesus. His cousin John the Baptist even sent one of his own disciples to ask Jesus, “Are you the one or should we look for another?” (Matthew 11:2) Even Jesus' own immediate family thought He was crazy and came for Jesus to send Him away. (Mark 3:21-35)

So, what type of peace is Jesus talking about in John 16:13? In this verse, Jesus spoke these words to His disciples right before He was arrested. This was after Jesus had shared His last supper with His disciples where He had spoken plainly to them about what would happen to Him and what would happen to them as His followers. *Nothing* about Jesus' words to them (or us) was peaceful. And yet Jesus says, “I have told you these things so that **in Me** you may have peace”. Jesus didn't lie to His disciples and He doesn't lie to us...we will have trouble in this world. That's why we cannot have sustained peace whether it's within our families, at Christmastime, in our communities or in the world. Our world is broken and sinful. But we need to heed Jesus' words and take heart because Jesus promises that in the midst of the world's trouble, in HIM we

will have peace...and His peace trumps any world trouble because He has overcome the world!

Jesus' peace is a peace in the midst of fear, persecution, confusion and chaos. The peace we embrace and the peace we can experience consistently is the peace that Jesus has overcome the world and it's troubles even if "at present we do not see everything subject to Him." (Hebrews 2:8)

Advent is the the arrival of Jesus' birth and for those that have received Him, Advent also marks the time that we await for Jesus' return. Jesus' peace reigns now and will reign in full on that day. May you set your heart in Jesus' Peace with full knowledge that He has overcome the world and that presently we will see everything subject to Him.