

Title: **A Peace without End**
Text: **Isaiah 9:2-7**
Date: **December 4, 2022**

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Big Idea

What is peace? And where do we find it? The biblical notion of peace (shalom) is so much more magnificent and comprehensive than we tend to think of it. And the amazing thing: it's given to us freely by grace through Christ!

1. What Is It?

It seems to me that, in our culture at least, when we think of peace, we tend to reduce it down and locate it in one dimension of life or another.

Dimension #1: Emotional/Psychological

Dimension #2: Social/Relational

Dimension #3: Natural/Physical

In the Bible the word for "peace" in the Greek of the New Testament is *eirēnē*; and in the Hebrew of the Old Testament it's a word you may well know: *shalom*. What we find when we come to consider these words, shalom in particular, is that the biblical notion of peace is vastly more comprehensive and magnificent than we typically think of it. As I said, we might locate our sense of it to one dimension or another, or perhaps some combination of them, but we inevitably fall short of the majestic sweep this word is given in the Scriptures. It encompasses everything!

This peace that the Bible speaks of is not just a warm, fuzzy feeling or a friendly embrace, or a spot on the beach, or something like this. No, it goes far beyond this! Shalom is the realization of the deepest longing of every human heart for a better world, for a world as it should be—complete, whole, perfect . . . in every dimension!

2. Where Do We Find It?

Our pursuit of peace largely follows right in line with our understanding of it back from the first question. So it should come as no surprise, then, that we tend to try to find it wherever it was we first thought to locate it.

Approach #1: Emotional/Psychological

Approach #2: Social/Relational

Approach #3: Natural/Physical

Here is where we start to connect the dots from Christmas to Easter, from Bethlehem to Calvary, from the manger to the cross. So as he's coming into Jerusalem, he pauses to weep over the city: "Would that you, even you, had known on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes" (Luke 19:42). You see, in the book of Isaiah, the Prince of Peace from ch. 9 is also the Man of Sorrows from ch. 53. How is he going to bring peace to us? By laying his life down for us. You know what's happening at the cross, right? It's the complete undoing of shalom for Jesus. It's everything you and I deserve being dished out to him. In every dimension, it's just falling apart. He's taking the full weight of God's curse against our sin. Why? "[U]pon him was the chastisement that brought us peace . . . (v. 5). To bring us peace, shalom. That's why.

3. How Does It Change Us?

When we find peace with God in Jesus, it changes us. But how? We become agents of peace ourselves. In particular, we *preach* it and we *make* it.



Reflection Questions

- Before hearing this sermon, how would you have defined peace? Which dimension would you have been more likely to locate it within? Why do you think?
- We didn't have much time to consider how finding peace with God in Jesus changes us. How has it changed you? What would it look like this week for you to preach peace and lead others to the manger and the cross? What would it look like this week for you to not just talk about peace, but to make it? Are there people you've not been at peace with? Ask Jesus to help you be like him towards them!

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Our Mission & Values

Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.

FAITH: The Way Back to God | We are redeemed to enjoy intimate presses our church *upwards* in love

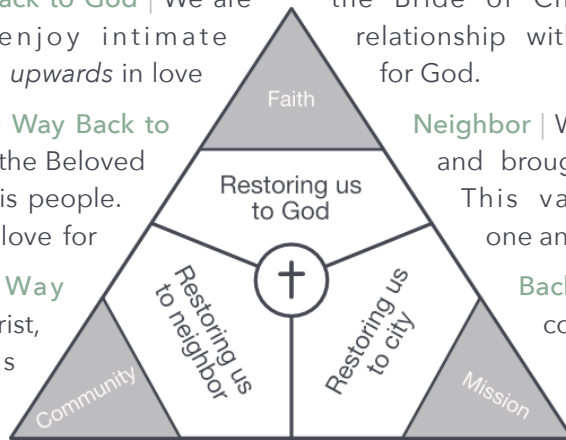
the Bride of Christ, created and relationship with him. This value for God.

COMMUNITY: The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. church *inwards* in love for

Neighbor | We are the Family of and brought into covenantal This value presses our one another.

MISSION: The Way the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his value presses our in love for the

Back to City | We are commissioned by the ambassadors. This church *outwards* unbelieving.



Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



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Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.
We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

All Church Appreciation Lunch - Today!

Mercy Hill has so many wonderful volunteers who keep all the various dimensions of our ministry thriving and fruitful. And we want to appreciate them! So after the service today, we are planning to have a special all church lunch as a way of saying thanks (think: Pizza My Heart pizza party with tasty salads, desserts, drinks, etc. . . . and inside seating - we had to shift away from doing a BBQ due to inclement weather). The whole church is invited to stay after and participate as we look to particularly appreciate those who have served in various capacities throughout this last year. We hope you can join us!

Allen at Steinbeck Holiday Gift Baskets!

We have the wonderful opportunity to partner with Allen at Steinbeck Elementary School in providing Holiday Gift Baskets for some of their most needy families. Deadline for donations will be the following Friday (12/15). Please check this coming week's newsletter for more information.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

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