



Peace on Earth  
Luke 2:8-14; 7:36-50  
December 22, 2019

The angels announced good news of great joy: a Savior had been born, Christ, the Lord! Today we have joined the angels in joyfully glorifying God for sending a Savior and paving the way for peace on earth (Luke 2:8-14). We have also remembered and humbly given thanks for the Jesus giving up his life for us. The spear that pierced his side was also a sword that pierced Mary's heart (John 19:34; Luke 2:35). Through Christ, God has made provision for salvation and peace on earth.

We cannot be satisfied, however, with merely remembering and worshiping God for what he has done. We must assimilate and practice peace and salvation. This subject may not feel "Christmas-y," but it is paramount. The starting place for peace on earth is making peace with God. If we are suffering alienation in our primary relationship, it will be difficult to have peace within ourselves or in our other relationships.

A few chapters after recording the birth of the Savior, Luke tells the story of a woman who found salvation and peace in Christ (Luke 7:36-50). From this event we learn that peace on earth comes from:

1. Humbly recognizing that we have sinned against God (vv. 37, 41-42; cf. v. 39). In so doing, we also alienate ourselves from him, and put ourselves into debt to him (vv. 41-42; Matthew 6:12; 18:21-35; Colossians 1:21).

2. Admitting that, even though some of us have sinned more and therefore owe God more than others, none of us is able to repay our debt (vv. 41-42).
3. Looking to God to forgive our debt! (vv. 42, 48). Providing forgiveness is the work of the Savior (John 4:42; Acts 5:31; Titus 3:4-7). Luke will record many more details about how we are forgiven in his second volume (=Acts, e.g., 2:22-47; 3:11-26; 4:10-12; 5:29-32; 8:9-13, 26-40; 9:1-19; 10:1-48; 13:13-44; 17:1-4, 16-34; 18:1-8).
4. Grasping the enormity of our debt and truly appreciating the generosity of our forgiveness to the extent that it creates "great love" (v. 47) in us (vv. 37-38, 44-47). This account indicates that love emerges from grasping how much we have been forgiven.
5. Going in peace (v. 50). Peace with God depends on being forgiven by our Savior (Romans 5:1; Colossians 1:21-23). This enables us to experience personal peace and live in peace with others, topics to which we will turn at the beginning of the new year.

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Explanatory Note: When you first read this account, it's easy to assume the woman was forgiven on this occasion. But a closer reading suggests that she had been forgiven *previously*, and on this occasion Jesus is reaffirming her forgiveness and blessing her with peace. This is indicated by three things: 1) Jesus says that the things she did for him (in v. 38) were expressions of *love*, not repentance (vv. 42, 47); 2) in his parable, forgiveness comes *before* expressions of love and produces such expressions (vv. 41-42); and 3) a literal translation of Jesus' words to the woman are, "Your sins *have been* forgiven" (v. 48, see NASB). The form of the Greek word "have been forgiven" is used to describe something that happened in the past but whose results continue into the present. Thus the NIV correctly interprets Jesus' words in v. 47 to mean that her great love *shows*



that she really has been forgiven. Similarly, "Your faith has saved you" (v. 50) uses the same verb tense that indicates something that happened in the past and continues into the present.