

## “Is Jesus the Prince of Peace?”

Mondo Gonzales, Pastor  
CrossRoads Community Church in New Lenox  
www.ccc-nl.org

*“And they shall call Him Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting, Father, Prince of Peace.”* Isaiah 9:6

I would first of all like to wish you and all of your loved ones a very Merry Christmas! It is during this time of the year when there is an increased focus on Jesus and His birth in Bethlehem over 2000 years ago. I think the evidence is strongly against Jesus being born on December 25, but nonetheless, it provides us a great opportunity to renew our familiarity with the story of Jesus' birth.

One of prophecies given before His arrival was that Jesus the Messiah would be the Prince of Peace. Think of this for a moment... a new baby has just arrived, born in a sleepy little village, wrapped with swaddling cloths and laid to rest in a feeding trough (manger). The expectations are that this child would one day bring peace. That was over 2000 years ago and it is a common argument against Jesus being the Jewish Messiah and Savior of the World in that the world is still full of wars, fighting, and evil. If Jesus is who is says He is, then what gives? What shall we, who believe Jesus is the Prince of Peace, say to these things?

As many of you might know who read these columns, I am a person who doesn't shy away from controversy. I want to be honest enough with myself, and the Scriptures, to see that Jesus doesn't always fit in the box that I want Him in. Jesus truly was a maverick, a revolutionary, yet He wasn't seeking to establish at that time some sort of earthly, political kingdom (John 18:36). I would like to share with you what Jesus said about the expectations of Him bringing peace and encourage us to meditate on these truths. Jesus said in Luke 12:51-53, *“Do you suppose that I came to give peace on earth? I tell you, not at all, but rather division. For from now on five in one house will be divided: three against two, and two against three. Father will be divided against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against her daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law.”*

Notice what Jesus said He was not going to bring, Peace! How do we make sense of this? The world has always been divided between those who are followers of the true God of Israel and those who are scoffers or haters of God and His truth. There is no middle ground for Jesus said, *“He who is not with Me is against Me”* (Matthew 12:30). Jesus came to challenge each of us to make a choice as it relates to His claims as being the Savior of the World. I am a personal witness of seeing houses divided over the truth claims of Jesus. Sometimes, it's a teenager standing with Jesus against the atheism of a parent, other times it's a wife standing firm in the Truth while her husband is a mocker. Jesus said He came to bring division as it relates to whom He is. At Jesus' birth, a man named Simeon spoke concerning the child Jesus, *“Then Simeon blessed them, and said to*

*Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against"* (Luke 2:34). Not only has this prophecy come true, but also shows itself not to be limited only to Israel. The baby Jesus reminds us that you have a choice of whether you are going to rise or fall in the eyes of God. Will you submit to the Lord Jesus as savior and Lord and be exalted in God's kingdom or will you reject Him as a mocker and be ground to powder (Matthew 21:42-44)? It is my hope that we will see that Jesus does bring us peace with God (Romans 5:1), but also that His return is coming soon where He will establish Peace over the entire world (Isaiah 11:1-10). Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

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