

## **Almost Christmas**

### **Part 1-Alttogether Peace**

#### **Ephesians 4:3-6, 25-32**

**Consider some of the different people in the Advent Story...**

- **Zechariah**
- **Mary**
- **Joseph**
- **The Shepherds**
- **Herod**

**Jesus offers PEACE-but not as the world gives.**

*But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. <sup>27</sup> Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid. John 14:26-27 NIV*

#### **The Call for Us-The Body of Christ**

*Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. Ephesian 4:3-6 NIV*

#### **Advice for us from Paul**

**1. Speak TRUTH.**

*Therefore, each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. Ephesians 4:25 NIV*

**2. Watch Your ANGER.**

*In your anger do not sin’’: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. Ephesians 4:26 NIV*

**3. Don’t STEAL.**

*Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer... Ephesians 4:28a NIV*

**4. Practice EMPATHY.**

*...but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need. Ephesians 4:28b NIV*

**5. Watch your LANGUAGE.**

*Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. Ephesians 4:30 NIV*

**6. GUARD your heart.**

*Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. Ephesians 4:31 NIV*

**7. Be KIND, COMPASSIONATE and FORGIVING.**

*Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. Ephesians 4:32 NIV*

**What kind of peace do you long for?**

**How might you begin to seek peace within yourself? with another person? for the world?**

**Which of Paul's practical instructions for peace making are hardest for you? What can you do to begin practicing them regularly?**

**Have you surrendered your heart and life to the Prince of Peace?**