



GETTING SETTLED

After our recent move I am often asked if we are settled. The short answer is yes. Virginia is comfortable in her new assisted living apartment. Sandra and I are moved into our new home, though not everything has found its place yet. But the question has made me ponder the meaning of being settled. Ultimately it means being at peace. As we enter the season of Peace on Earth and Goodwill towards man can we be more settled in the world?

The Christmas legend is not a story of peace. An edict from King Harrod required Joseph and Mary to return to their hometown for a census. When the expectant parents reached Bethlehem, the city was overcrowded with people returning to their birthplace to be counted. The young parents could not find any place to stay. Everyone knows how unsettling that can be. So, Mary gives birth to the Christ child in a manger. Our traditions have romanticized that birth into a picture of simple comfort. The wise men arrive from the east, dressed in their gold and fine robes bearing gifts for the Prince of Peace. The contrast couldn't be greater. Do we honor wealth and power, or does wealth and power prostrate itself before peace?

Joel taught that there is nothing more powerful than *the silence*. The idea of silence in this context is a state of being where the conflicts and struggles between concepts of right and wrong don't exist. There is no justice nor injustice. There are no oppressors nor oppressed. There is not pleasure or suffering. The deep silence of My Peace is an atmosphere of oneness. In this Christ Peace we are one with the source of all good, of all life, living in the abundance of the Godhead, untouched by the chaos of the world and as innocent as a newborn child. This is being settled.

But it is an experience in the moment. Those who know the peace help others get settled. They protect the innocent. Once Jesus was born, Joseph and Mary were again unsettled. Having heard rumors of a newborn king, Harrod ordered every infant in his kingdom born during this time killed. Joseph and Mary took their child and fled to Egypt. The story of Jesus stops there until he is twelve years old.

In this time of celebrating the Christ child, we can honor the peace that passes all understanding. It is a peace that touches our soul, a peace not of this world, but the everlasting peace of spiritual understanding.

We wish you all a Happy Christmas and a New Year filled with Peace and Joy.

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