

PEACE

Scripture: Psalm 85:8-13

December 3, 2020

Message:

**I will listen to what God the Lord says; he promises peace to his people,
his faithful servants—but let them not turn to folly.**

Psalm 85:8 (NIV)

So, my friends, it's the most wonderful time of the year. The hustle and bustle of the Advent rush is upon us. To be honest, this time of year isn't always merry or bright for me. At the beginning of the season I'm excited about all of the fun holiday activities about to unfold. I revel in writing personal messages in Christmas cards. I joyfully decorate the tree at my house with shiny ornaments and tinsel. I love getting my party on at various church, work and family get togethers.

Soon I begin to lose steam. By the fiftieth time I've heard "Jingle Bell Rock" and burnt yet another batch of cookies, I'm officially done. I throw in the towel. I'm totally done with the holiday before it even arrives. Have you ever felt this way about a week before Christmas? How did we get to this frustrated and pitiful state? Psalm 85:8 shares a bit of wisdom to help us with holiday burn out. The Psalmist challenges us to listen carefully to what the Lord is saying, for he speaks peace to the faithful. We are also told not to return to our foolish ways.

So often in the busyness of Advent, we let the seasonal requirements of the world block out the voice of God. We choose to let our lengthy to-do list steal the time that we should be spending with him. If we take a moment to realign our priorities, placing God first, we will discover the peace we truly desire. Instead of running from store to store buying gifts for everyone we've ever met, we can spend that time in scripture study and prayer.

By recommitting ourselves to these spiritual disciplines, we can connect with the only true source of peace. So will you join me and refocus your priorities? It's easier than you think. You start by grabbing a mug of hot chocolate. Then grab your Bible, read it, and talk with God. But don't forget to wait expectantly for His loving response.

Prayer: God of fresh starts, during this sometimes hectic season, help us to recommit ourselves to you and listen for your peaceful voice. Amen.

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