John 1:9-14

The work of Jesus is the work of turning enmity to peace. You were once an enemy of God. All of humanity was once an enemy of God. Having been made in His image and placed in community with Him, we turned away. People used to make sacrifices of animals or grain to appease God and come into His presence, but that never really worked all that well. Jesus, though, fully bridges the gap to bring peace between us and God. In the book of John, we read of the birth of Jesus with a poetic and theological view. We do not read about a census or a manger, but about Light coming into the world and living with us to make peace.

God himself became flesh. Not appearing physical, not taking on human form. He became fully and completely human and gave other humans the right to join the family of God.

You see, being close to God without peace with God is a fearful thing. It is what causes Moses to call himself unworthy or to cover his eyes, it is what drives the Israelites to fall on their faces, what kills Uzzah, and what gives rise to the fearful images in Revelation. Presence without peace is a recipe for disaster. Jesus, though, brings both. It is true that He makes peace through His sacrifice, but His life is more than His death. In birth, He brings peace also.

When Jesus becomes a human, there in His very body, God and human are perfectly united. God chooses to become flesh and bone, mortal and susceptible to injury. He is fully and completely human, and fully and completely God. In that moment, when God becomes human, God condescends to accept into himself the reality of human existence. There is an example here of the peace we can have with God living as a first century Middle-Eastern man.

In Jesus there is no distinction between humanity and God but they live as one united whole. Often you hear people read about Jesus interpreting between His human nature or His divine nature. In reality, there is no separation. This is the promise of peace we might have with God. No longer a relationship of fear or hiddenness, but now we are united.

More than bringing peace with God, when the work of Jesus is accomplished in the lives of His followers, peace abounds. We become peacemakers, looking to break down walls and build bridges. Our communities become houses of peace where anger, self-preservation, or violence are overcome by care for others. The birth of Jesus is the beginning of a new age in human history when God works through us so that we that we can live at peace with one another. Jesus brings peace.

And finally, Jesus brings peace within yourself. He puts your warring desires to death so that you can live a mature and perfect life. His birth is the promise of a new life and new relationship with yourself. Jesus brings peace.

Breathe in, breathe out, and know that God is here. Breathe in, breathe out, and know that God saves. Breathe in, breathe out, and know that He is at work within you to make you whole. Jesus brings peace with God, with one another, and with yourself. Breathe in, breathe out, and know that His peace is for you today.

As you take a moment to light the 2nd candle, the peace candle, take time in silence to experience his peace. Because of Him you are at peace with God, you can be at peace with others and with yourself.

Let these flames remind you of His presence with you today.

Pray: "Lord, let me rest in your peace. Still the voices in my life that fill me with anxiety and worry. Let your voice be the one I hear, and let me hear you calling me home with you." Then spend a few moments simply resting in God's presence and knowing that He is here.