



WOW: Word Of the Week

“Well-pleasing”
December 9, 2020

Right in the midst of the angelic announcement of the birth of Jesus to shepherds, Luke 2:14 presents an interesting challenge. Translation is difficult, there are too few words, plus, there is a textual variant at the end of the verse. The verse has been translated in various ways. In seeking a better understanding of the verse, a blessing comes to us as we find refreshment of spirit and increased appreciation for God’s eternal purpose in Christ.

Here is a literal reading. The written copy shows the parallel concepts within the verse.

*Glory in the highest to God, [and]
on the earth among people of well-pleasing
peace*

What does the last phrase, “of well-pleasing,” mean? Goodwill, good pleasure, desire? The literal reading is “of well-pleasing?” We get help from other passages where the same word occurs.

Ephesians 1, Philippians 2, God’s good pleasure

Matthew 3:16, my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased

“Well-pleasing” has to do with God’s desire and purpose. This is not a reference to human goodwill. The text does not say peace comes when people have good will and please one another.

God’s plan for peace is unfolded in Christ.

Peace comes to people when they are well-pleasing to God, seeking God’s desire, God’s purpose, God’s heart. Seeking to please God.

Let us not misunderstand. The problem with lack of peace in our world is not because of lack of goodwill and agreement between people. The lack of peace among people is due to a lack of commitment to be well-pleasing to God, to fulfill God’s will and purpose.