

This year is the 50th anniversary of "A Charlie Brown Christmas." For 50 years, that cartoon has been sharing the meaning of Christmas with those who watched the show. In the show, Charlie Brown is searching for the true meaning of Christmas and it is Linus who is able to tell him what Christmas is all about.

If you watch Charlie Brown, you already know that Linus is never without his blue security blanket. That blanket helps him to remain calm and if he loses that blanket, then he falls apart. He relies on that blanket to help him through the day.

But when he tells the story of what happened on Christmas, Linus does something that is truly out of character for him. He is telling about when the angels appeared to the shepherds and said "Fear not" and Linus dropped his blanket and kept on telling about the baby Jesus. Whenever Linus was without his blanket, he was in fear. It was that blanket that kept him calm.

But in this story, Linus dropped the blanket and did not get all worked up because he was telling about the birth of Jesus. I think Charles Schultz did this on purpose. Right when the angels said fear not, Linus drops his blanket. In this story, Mr. Schultz is saying that the birth of Jesus separates us from our fears. This birth frees us from the habits that we are unable or even unwilling to break ourselves. This birth allows us to drop our false securities that we hang on to and as a result, learn to trust and cling to Jesus instead.

This world we live in can be a scary place. ISIS is alive and well in the United States through sleeper cells. There is a large amount of hatred directed toward a variety of groups in our country. There is senseless violence every day of the week. Many things in our world causes us to tremble in fear.

But in the midst of fear and insecurity, this simple cartoon from 1965 continues to live on as an inspiration for us to seek true peace and true security in the one place it has always been and can always still be found.

Jesus is the source of our peace and security. Even when we are afraid and full of anxiety because of what is going on around us, Jesus can still give us peace. As we face our fears, the angels' message is still the same. "Do not be afraid; for see I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: ¹¹to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord."

Don't be afraid because our savior, the Messiah was born on that first Christmas morning so many years ago. Even though there are many things to worry about and to fear, the angels tell us that there is good news for us because Jesus was born.

That good news is that Jesus laid down his life for our life. What begins on Christmas morning with the birth of a baby is fulfilled with the resurrection on Easter morning. And no I am not trying to jump ahead to Easter, I just don't believe that you can have one without the other. Without Christmas, there is no Easter and vice versa because Jesus is the central figure in both.

Instead of hanging on to our fears, the angels tell us to hang on to Jesus. Allow Jesus to be an active part of your life. We are never promised that we will not suffer or never fear anything, but we can trust that whatever we face, we will not have to do so alone. God is always with us, even during those times where it seems like we have been abandoned. But if you look closely, you will see God has been active in your life.