

Christmas Day 2005

Luke 2:1-15

December 25, 2005

Intro

Christmas Day is on a Sunday this year. There has been some debate about whether there should be church service today. There was even a front page article in the Oregonian about churches taking a holiday.

To me, Christmas is about Jesus and so it is very fitting for us to celebrate together by having a church service.

Christmas celebrations change over the years, but the most important part is to keep Christ at the center. There was first a debate about whether schools should have Christmas, and then stores were the center of debate. Personally, it seems that the effort is driven by a desire in many to remove the power of the church, but the danger is that they will remove Christ from being in the heart of our community.

What we need is for Christ to be the center because it was all about Him then and it should all be about Him now.

In these verses we learn about the importance of Christ's appearing as the answer to our darkest hour.

I. He was Born Unto Us

A. So do not be afraid

- There were many reasons to be afraid in that day;
 - Herod was on the throne; a cruel man.
 - The Roman army was occupying their land.
 - Many wars had taken a toll on the people.

- There are many reasons to be afraid in our day as well;
 - 9/11 has shown us that we are vulnerable as a nation.
 - The economy is fragile.
 - There are wars and rumors of wars.
 - People are killing innocent people in the name of God.
- **Without Jesus, there is good reason to be afraid...**

Ephesians 2:12, "remember that at that time you were separate from Christ ... without hope and without God in the world."

B. God is now with us

- His name shall be called, "**Immanuel.**"
- As a response to the fears of the shepherds, the angel responded, "Do not be afraid, I bring you good news..."
- **And repeatedly, the answer to fear is the presence of the Lord.**

Isaiah 41:10, "Fear not, for I am with you; Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand."

Illus – We used to sing a praise song and the verse of it was very powerful...

*“I have redeemed you I have called you by name,
child you are mine.*

*When you walk through the waters, I will be there,
and through the flames; you’ll not – no way – be
drowned, you’ll not – no way – be burned for I
am with you.”*

Fear not, for I am with you, fear not.”

Illus – When the angel spoke, he said, “Do not be afraid for behold, I bring you good news.” That’s the answer to fear – a more excellent word.

C. This is good news of great joy

- The angel was not just bringing good news, but good news of great joy.

Illus – When fear has been relieved, joy is the proper response. Their great fear had changed to abounding joy.

- Some people have lost the right perspective on life and need to know again that good news of great joy has come to our dark world!

Matthew 2:10-11, “When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy. After coming into the house they saw the Child with Mary His mother; and they fell to the ground and worshiped Him. Then, opening their treasures, they presented to Him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.”

Nehemiah 8:10, Then he said to them, “Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the Lord is your strength.”

II. He was Born a Savior

A. He will save from sin

- This was the word given to Joseph in a dream.
- He will save them *from their sins*.
- Have you ever realized that that is what we need to be saved from; our sins?

Illus – God must save us from our sins because without Christ, we will drown in them.

Acts 13:38-39, “Therefore let it be known to you, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and through Him everyone who believes is freed from all things, from which you could not be freed through the Law of Moses.”

B. He must be born in each person’s heart

- A vital part of this good news must not be lost in us.
- He is given to the world, but He must be received one person at a time.

Illus – The third verse of “O Little Town of Bethlehem”

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given! So God imparts to human hearts, the blessing of His heaven.

No ear may hear His coming, But in this world of sin, Where meek souls will receive Him still, The dear Christ enters in.

John 1:12-13, “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.”

III. He is Christ the Lord

A. He is God’s chosen one

- There is no other.
- Why would anyone want another?
 - There can be no better news than what He brought to man.
 - There can be no better provision for our sin.
 - Taking our sin upon Himself.
 - Giving us His righteousness.

Hebrews 1:1-4 How excellent is His name...

- **Jesus is not only God’s Word to man, He is God’s complete and final Word to man.**

B. And He is Lord

- The word “lord” is used many times in scripture to indicate a person of authority.
- A worker would use the word to refer to his supervisor.

- But when it is used of Jesus, it must be clearly understood.
- The angels said that He is both Savior and Lord.
- We are to recognize Jesus as Lord of our lives.

Colossians 2:8-10, “See to it that no one takes you captive through philosophy and empty deception, according to the tradition of men, according to the elementary principles of the world, rather than according to Christ. For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;”

Illus – It’s important for our children that there is an authority at home, so they will know there is authority under heaven.

Conclusion

The hopes and fears of all the years; are met in Thee tonight. Jesus is the very place where our fears come face to face with hope. But we must receive Him as He was given; Savior and Lord.