

Celebrating Christ's Birth Every Day.

Sermon for Sunday, December 29th, 2019.

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3. Conclusion

Pointing out that we must remind ourselves of these things, and celebrate them, daily.

Introduction

As I began thinking about Christmas and the new year, God put a question on my heart. At Christmas-time, I feel a keen sense of awe and wonder. Why do I not live with that same awe and wonder every single day? Didn't Jesus come for the purpose of bringing hope and joy not just 1 but 365 days a year? Why do we celebrate the coming of God to earth as a little baby only once a year and not every day that we have been given breath?

When we think about Christmas, it's a celebration of a special event that takes place once a year. But the hope and joy that is brought to us at Christmas through the birth of Christ should fill our hearts every single day.

Ephesians 2:4-6 NASB - "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,"

Romans 5:8-11 NASB - "But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from the wrath of God through Him. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. And not only this, but we also exult in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received the reconciliation."

Why do we not have hope?

Hope: To believe that something good will become a reality that has not as of yet.

Because we have lost sight of the object of our hope. We have failed to set our eyes on Christ who has come, but yet is coming again according to many of His own words and prophecies speaking about His return to earth. Not only this, but we have failed to set our eyes on Christ for who He says He is. How can I expect Jesus to work in my life when I have no hope that He can or will. Hebrews 11:6.

Why do we not have joy?

We do not have joy because we are too busy relying on our own man made solutions and self-sufficient methodologies to accomplish what we believe is necessary in our day to day life. Plus we do not have the joy that hope brings when hope is fulfilled. We do not have joy because we have lost our hope.

What I would like to do this morning is to look back over the revelation of Christ as found in Chapters 1 and 2 of Luke and relive the hope and joy that is brought to us in Christ's birth.

Message to Zacharias | Luke 1:13-17

Jesus turns people back to God.

Since Adam and Eve sinned in the garden of Eden, this has been a desire of the heart of God to reconcile the world to Himself and this is the reason for which Christ came. You see, each of us were designed to have a relationship with God and commune with Him, worship Him, live for Him. However, sin has separated us from God and keeps us from having that relationship and causes us to worship something or someone other than God. Yet, this is the purpose for which Christ came; to restore the broken ties so that we might once again have a relationship with God! This came at a price of course. Jesus knew this because it was the Father's will before Christ set aside His glory and came to earth as a baby.

2Co 5:18-21 - Now all these things are from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation, namely, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

I am an ambassador for Christ in the ministry of reconciliation.

Evidences of God's desire to reconcile people to Himself.

2 Peter 3:9 - "The Lord is not slack concerning [His] promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance."

1Ti 2:3-4 - "This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."

Eze 18:23 - "Do I have any pleasure in the death of the wicked," declares the Lord GOD, "rather than that he should turn from his ways and live?"

Why is this important for me to remember?

As 2 Corinthians 5:19 so aptly states, we are called as ambassadors of Christ to join Jesus in the ministry of reconciliation. What this means is that I am called by God to be a testimony and a light to those around me and work with Christ to bring people back into a relationship with God.

Message to Mary | Luke 1:30-37

Jesus is King and His reign will not end.

This was one of the main things the Israelites were looking for as a result of the prophecies of the coming Messiah given in the Old Testament. However, the king they had in mind was very different from the King that Jesus came as. A king had been promised, but no king had yet fulfilled the prophecy given. Jesus came to this earth to fulfill those prophecies and sit down at the right hand of God's majesty as Lord of all the universe.

Isaiah 9:6 For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, On the throne of David and over his kingdom, To establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness From then on and forevermore. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will accomplish this.

Why is this important for me to remember?

1. This is important for me to remember because I struggle with wanting to run life my way instead of living my life according to Christ's commands. I want to be my own king. Not only that, but Christ calls me along with the rest of the world to submit to His Lordship. I must consciously take myself off the throne and allow Christ to sit in His rightful place every day.
2. Our world is reeling from political and civil unrest on an international, national and local level. What this world needs to know is that Christ is the one that sits as Supreme Ruler of the universe and that God has extended a call for every man to submit to Him. This is an act of love, not of God's desire to Lord it over His creation. This is God lovingly giving someone who is against Him, the opportunity to surrender to Him.

Prophecy of Mary | Luke 1:46-55

Jesus brings Mercy and Justice.

Since Jesus is the King and the one purposed to reconcile people with God, He is the one that can deal mercy and justice. All the time we see acts of wrong taking place and long for justice to be done. Then on the flip side, we see those who did no wrong falsely accused and condemned and we long for mercy to be given to them. This is what Jesus came to do. He offered mercy and dealt judgement while He was on earth, He still does today, and when He returns He will bring a final resolution to all evil by imparting justice and will also extend mercy to those to whom mercy is due.

Acts 10:42 - "And He ordered us to preach to the people, and solemnly to testify that this is the One who has been appointed by God as Judge of the living and the dead."

Why is this important for me to remember?

This is important to remember because of how much it encourages me when I see all the things happening around me that I know need God's divine and absolute sense of justice and mercy allocated. Though it may not be resolved now, I have peace in the midst of those situations knowing that Christ is going to make everything right.

Prophecy of Zacharias | Luke 1:68-79

Jesus fulfilled prophecy by bringing hope through salvation and redemption of men.

Zec 6:12-13 - "Then say to him, 'Thus says the LORD of hosts, "Behold, a man whose name is Branch, for He will branch out from where He is; and He will build the temple of the LORD. Yes, it is He who will build the temple of the LORD, and He who will bear the honor and sit and rule on His throne. Thus, He will be a priest on His throne, and the counsel of peace will be between the two offices.'"

Jesus is the one that was promised to Abraham in Genesis 22:18-19 that would bless all the nations of the earth. And by His coming, He has brought what was promised ages before; Salvation for all men. The fact that He fulfilled all the prophecies concerning the Messiah is an amazing thing in and of itself. Then to understand that Christ humbled Himself to accomplish this as we see in Philippians 2:5-9 and set aside His glory to come to our world as a helpless little baby, to die for the purpose of atonement, and to raise again from the dead; what a sobering and humbling thing for Him to do but how glorious for us!

Why is this important for me to remember?

Jesus fulfilling over 300 prophecies concerning Himself is not only an excellent cure for doubt about who He is, but it also brings an amazing confidence in the person and work of Jesus Christ. When I have doubts or someone I am sharing Christ with has doubts about who He is, this is a powerful piece of evidence that is a grounding piece for my faith. It also helps me remember that Christ came in the spirit of humility, submitted Himself to torture and death, but overcame by His own power through resurrection.

Message to the Shepherds | Luke 2:10-12

Jesus is the promised Messiah who destroys the power of sin.

Isa 49:6 He says, "It is too small a thing that You should be My Servant To raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved ones of Israel; I will also make You a light of the nations So that My salvation may reach to the end of the earth."

Savior and Christ. Both of those are words that are used by the angels to describe the baby boy that was born that first Christmas night.

Savior meaning Jehovah his help also known as Jesus.

Christ meaning "anointed". This was a word used to describe those anointed with oil in the priesthood.

Christ Jesus "The anointed one who has Jehovah as His help" has come to earth. What was Christ anointed to do that would bring "joy which will be for all the people"?

Luke 4:18-19 vividly speaks of the purpose for which Christ came, Christ Himself affirming in that passage that this is the purpose for His coming.

Luke 4:18-19 - "The Spirit of the LORD [is] upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to [the] poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to [the] captives And recovery of sight to [the] blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; 19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD."

Why is this important for me to remember?

Multiple aspects of this come to mind as being necessary to remember and apply to my life.

1. This message was brought so that I, along with the rest of the world, might have great joy. Does this "good news" still fill me with joy or have I become so accustomed to hearing it that I no longer count it joyful? When something has brought me joy, I want to share the joy with others. The contagious joy of the shepherds who bounded throughout the region of Bethlehem proclaiming what they had seen and heard, is a good example to me of what my life should look like in response to what God has done.
2. God sent Jesus to be the Savior because I needed a Savior. I can't redeem myself or "pull myself up by my bootstraps" and meet God's requirement for perfection. Scripture is sufficiently clear on this point; I can't do it. Not only do I need a Savior to atone for my sin once and for all (something He has already done) but I need His help every day in the process of sanctification and walking in the Spirit. I can't do it on my own and in my own strength.

Prophecy of Simeon | Luke 2:29-32

Jesus brings salvation to Jews and Gentiles.

The inclusion of the Gentiles in salvation was part of God's plan since the fall of man. This was not something that He left out or was an after-thought when the Jew's rejected Christ. God wants to redeem all men as apart of His plan of redemption as is evidenced in many Old Testament passages. Here is one:

Isa 60:1-3 "Arise, shine; for your light has come, And the glory of the LORD has risen upon you. For behold, darkness will cover the earth And deep darkness the peoples; But the LORD will rise upon you And His glory will appear upon you. Nations will come to your light, And kings to the brightness of your rising."

God's desire and purpose in sending Christ is that all men would be reconciled to God and be sheltered under His mercy and grace.

Why is this important for me to remember?

Sometimes, I have a problem loving certain people. This is such a needed reminder for me because I recognize that every person is created in God's image and is a person who God loves deeply. It is His desire that they should come to know Him and it should be my desire as well. It's easy to let a person's physical appearance, their characteristics or mannerisms to dictate how I respond to them, but Christ has given me a higher calling. No person is excluded from the invitation that Christ gives or from the joy that is found in the Good News of Christ's Redemption.

Conclusion

In her article that appeared in Crossway, Lydia Brownback writes this:

“Are we characterized by the wonder of what Christ has done? If not, perhaps it’s because we are busy trying to solve our problems in our own way on our own terms. Why look for what God will do if we can simply figure out how to do it ourselves? Self-sufficiency in the Christian life will never bring joy, and it checks hope at the door. We have little wonder because much of the time we don’t really want a savior; we want autonomy, self-sufficiency, and for life to work as we think it should. But the promise is that the God of hope will fill us with joy and peace in believing, not in getting it all figured out ourselves.” - Lydia Brownback in “The Joy of Wonder”

The question I want to ask myself every day going into this new year is this: If Christ, the Son of God, coming to this earth as a little baby (Immanuel - God with us) is as earth shattering, hopeful, and exciting as the Bible proclaims it to be, then how is it going to impact my everyday life?

I need to celebrate and rejoice in the fact that:

Jesus turns people back to God.

Jesus is King and His reign will not end.

Jesus brings Mercy and Justice.

Jesus fulfilled prophecy by bringing hope through salvation and redemption of men.

Jesus is the promised Messiah who destroys the power of sin.

Jesus brings salvation to Jews and Gentiles.

If I were to celebrate that everyday, what would my life look like?