"Good Tidings of Great Joy"

Luke 2:10-11

12-24-2022 (Christmas Party at the Dietterich's)

INTRODUCTION:

Illus: How we say "Merry Christmas" without understanding what the word "*merry"* means. It means to be happy, joyful, cheerful, or full of cheer, jubilant, gleeful; to have a lighthearted, optimistic, glad spirit!

The birth of Jesus Christ is a reason for rejoicing!

Why?

I. Because a SAVIOR has come!

II. Because a MESSIAH has come!

III. Because the LORD has come!

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"fear not" - the presence of a holy, glowing angel from heaven would cause fear to shepherds who never saw an angel before. If an angel of the Lord woke you up in the middle of the night or came into this building today, we would have cause to fear.

"Fear not" - because I am not sent as a "death angel!" I am not sent to execute a judgment for God. But rather, to bring the best message ever heard! The Lord has come!

"Good tidings" - a good announcement; a good message

"Great joy" - not just "joy" but great, enormous, exhilarating joy!

The fact of Christ coming into this world caused much joy.

--Elizabeth was filled with joy, as evident by her words (Lk. 1:41-43)
--John the Baptist leaped for joy while in his mother's womb (Lk. 1:44)
--The Virgin Mary rejoiced (Lk. 1:46-55)
--A multitude of angels rejoiced (Lk. 2:13-14)
--The shepherds rejoiced (2:20)
--Simeon rejoiced (2:28-33)
--The prophetess Anna rejoiced (3:38)

"to all people" - The message of good news is for all people! Christ's birth has influenced the world more than the birth of anyone else who ever lived.

God wants His people to rejoice! EX: the O.T. celebrations.

EX: the Alleluias and exclamation: *"Let us be glad and rejoice"* (of Rev. 19:7)

The birth of Jesus Christ is a reason for rejoicing!

Why?

I. Because a <u>SAVIOR</u> has come!

"Savior" - a deliverer; one who rescues, one who saves

Mt. 1:21 - *"And thou shalt call His name Jesus for He shall save His people from their sins."*

The eternal Son of God became incarnate (became man) to save man!

Have you experienced salvation? Do you know what it means to be delivered from a life of guilt, torment, and vanity?

II. Because a <u>MESSIAH</u> has come!

"Christ" - The anointed One; the promised Messiah. The long-awaited Messiah (Jn. 4:42).

The One whom the Prophets foretold!

National Israel is still awaiting the Messiah, not realizing that He already came almost 2,000 years ago.

A vast portion of the Bible is given to predictive prophecy. It is said that 333 distinct prophecies were literally and exactly fulfilled at the <u>first</u> coming of Christ (the chances of this happening by accident have been computed as 1 in 87,000--plus 90 more zeros).

For <u>every</u> verse speaking of Jesus' <u>first</u> coming in Scripture, there are <u>eight</u> which speak of His second coming.

The World in general is quite familiar with some of the details involving Christ's birth.
Many know of the angels announcement to the shepherds…
Many know of the humble stable and manger…
Many know of the wise men who came to worship him…etc.

Did you know…

1. **The O.T. tells us <u>WHERE</u> the Messiah would be born:**
   Answer: **BETHLEHEM** (Micah 5:2)

   Micah 5:2
   But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.

2. **The O.T. tells us <u>WHEN</u> the Messiah would be born:**
   Answer: **483 YEARS after Artaxerxes' degree to rebuild Jerusalem** (Dan.9:25; Neh.2:5)

   Da 9:25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

3. **The O.T. tells us <u>HOW</u> the Messiah would be born:**
   Answer: **Of a VIRGIN** (Is.7:14; Mt.1:23)

   Isa 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.
   Mt 1:23 Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

4. **The O.T. tells us <u>THE NAMES AND TITLES</u> of the Messiah who would be born:**
   Answer: **Wonderful - Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace** (Isaiah 9:6)

   Isaiah 9:6: For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.

5. The O.T. tells us <u>WHAT</u> the Messiah would be like and <u>HOW</u> He would be viewed and treated when He came into the world:
Answer: **Humble & Rejected** (Isaiah 53:1-3)

Isaiah 53:1-3
Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? [2] For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. [3] He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

6. The O.T. tells us <u>WHY</u> the Messiah would be born:
Answer: **To Suffer & Die for the Sins of the World** (Isaiah 53:4-12)

Jesus stated His purpose for coming with these words:
Luke 19:10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.
Mark 10:45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

Paul stated the purpose for Christ's coming with these words:
1 Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

The writer of Hebrews stated the purpose for Christ's incarnation with these words:
Hebrews 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man.
Hebrews 2:14 ¶ Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;

III. Because the LORD has come!

The *"Lord"* -

1."Kurios" - points to Christ's Deity

YAHWEH of the O.T.

He is *"Emmanuel"!* (Mt. 1:23)

2."Kurios" - points to Christ's sovereignty

He is Lord of lords (meaning Lord over lords)

3."Kurios" - points to Christ's majesty

He is worthy of honor and praise because He is King Jesus - Lord of the universe

All mankind will one day bow! Will you confess Him as your "Lord" today? (Rom. 10:9)

CONCLUSION:

At Christmas time much of the world languishes in misery, hurt feelings, sorrow, and loneliness. Because the true meaning of Christmas is missing

Real joy comes not from presents, family get togethers, food, and Christmas parties but from knowing that your Savior left Heaven's glory to visit this globe for 33 1/s years. All for the purpose that He might save you from your sins.

1 Tim. 1:15
This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

Luke 19:10
For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

- **The clearest, most concise statement about the greatness of God's Love for sinners is found in John 3:16**

What did God love do for us?

1. ***God's Love:***
   Made the Greatest <u>SACRIFICE</u>! ***("He gave")***

2. ***God's Love:***
   Was Manifest to the Greatest <u>DEGREE</u>! ***("His Son")***

3. ***God's Love:***
   Was Extended to the Greatest <u>NUMBER</u>! ***("the World")***

4. ***God's Love:***
   Fulfilled the Greatest <u>NEED!</u> ***("not perish")***

5. **God's Love:**
   Provided the Greatest <u>GIFT!</u> ***("eternal life")***

Do you believe on the Son of God? Will you take Him by faith?

THE ART COLLECTOR'S SON
Author Unknown

Years ago, there was a very wealthy man who, with his devoted young son, shared a passion for art collecting. Together they traveled around the world, adding only the finest art treasures to their collection.

Priceless works by Picasso, Van Gogh, Monet and many others adorned the walls of the family estate.

The widowed, elder man looked on with satisfaction, as his only child became an experienced art collector. The son's trained eye and sharp business mind caused his father to beam with pride as they dealt with art collectors around the world.

As winter approached, war engulfed the nation, and the young man left to serve his country. After only a few short weeks, his father received a telegram. His beloved son was missing in action. The art collector anxiously awaited more news, fearing he would never see his son again. Within days, his fears were confirmed. The young man had died while rushing a fellow soldier to a medic.

Distraught and lonely, the old man faced the upcoming Christmas holidays with anguish and sadness. The joy of the season, a season that he and his son had so looked forward to, would visit his house no longer.

On Christmas morning, a knock on the door awakened the depressed old man. As he walked to the door, the masterpieces of art on the walls only reminded him that his son was not coming home. As he opened the door, a soldier greeted him with a large package in his hand. He introduced himself to the man by saying, "I was a friend of your son. I was the one he was rescuing when he died. May I come in for a few moments? I have something to show you."

As the two began to talk, the soldier told of how the man's son had told every one of his, not to mention his father's, love of fine art.

"I'm an artist," said the soldier, "and I want to give you this."

As the old man opened the package, the paper gave way to reveal a portrait of the man's son. Though the world would never consider it the work of a genius, the painting featured the young man's face in striking detail. Overcome with emotion, the man thanked the solider, promising to hang the picture above the fireplace.

A few hours later, after the soldier had departed, the old man set about his task. True to his word, the painting went above the fireplace,

pushing aside thousands of dollars of paintings. And then the man sat in his chair and spent Christmas gazing at the gift he had been given.

During the days and weeks that followed, the man realized that even though his son was no longer with him, the boy's life would live on because of those he had touched. He would soon learn that his son had rescued dozens of wounded soldiers before a bullet stilled his caring heart.

As the stories of his son's gallantry continued to reach him, fatherly pride and satisfaction began to ease the grief. The painting of his son soon became his most prized possession, far eclipsing any interest in the pieces for which museums around the world clamored. He told his neighbors it was the greatest gift he had ever received.

The following spring, the old man became ill and passed away. The art world was in anticipation! Unmindful of the story of the man's only son, but in his honor, those paintings would be sold at an auction.

According to the will of the old man, all of the art works would be auctioned on Christmas Day, the day he had received his greatest gift.

The day soon arrived and art collectors from around the world gathered to bid on some of the world's most spectacular paintings.

Dreams would be fulfilled this day; greatness would be achieved as many would claim, "I have the greatest collection."

The auction began with a painting that was not on any museum's list. It was the painting of the man's son. The auctioneer asked for an opening bid. The room was silent.

"Who will open the bidding with $100?" he asked. Minutes passed. No one spoke.

From the back of the room came, "Who cares about that painting? It's just a picture of his son."

"Let's forget it and go on to the good stuff." More voices echoed in agreement.

"No, we have to sell this one first," replied the auctioneer. "Now, who will take the son?"

Finally, a friend of the old man spoke, "Will you take ten dollars for the painting? That's all I have. I knew the boy, so I'd like to have it."

"I have ten dollars. Will anyone go higher?" called the auctioneer.

After more silence, the auctioneer said, "Going once, going twice. Gone." The gavel fell.

Cheers filled the room and someone exclaimed, "Now we can get on with it and we can bid on these treasures!"

The auctioneer looked at the audience and announced the auction was over. Stunned disbelief quieted the room.

Someone spoke up and asked, "What do you mean it's over? We didn't come here for a picture of some old guy's son. And what about all of these other paintings? There are millions of dollars of art here! I demand that you explain what's going on here!"

The auctioneer replied, "It's very simple. According to the will of the father, whoever takes the son gets it all."

Just as those art collectors discovered on that Christmas Day, the message is still the same - the love of a Father, a Father whose greatest joy came from His Son, who went away and gave His life rescuing others.

And because of that Father's love, whoever takes the Son, gets it all!

Remember: Jesus Christ is to be the *Reason* for the *Season*!

This Christmas be merry! Be glad that you know Christ! Be glad that you found Him!

Rejoice that He has entered your heart!

Be filled with joy because of his gift of eternal life.

Be jubilant and leap with glee because of the load of sin, shame, and guilt He has removed from you!