

Christmas Is Joy To The World

Text : **Luke 2: 26-45**

INTRODUCTION :

A. What's the first word that comes to your mind when you hear the word "Christmas."

1. Presents under a beautifully decorated tree
2. Cookies and feasting with family
3. Colorful lights, Decorations, Christmas music

B. The word that is most closely related to the Christmas story is "JOY."

1. Though we have no way of knowing the exact day when Jesus was born (**Rom 14:6**), the occasion of His birth is a cause of great joy for all the earth.
2. It marks the beginning of the completion of the fulfillment of the very first prophecy.
 - a. **Gen. 3: 15- I will put enmity Between you and the woman,
And between your seed and her seed;
He shall bruise you on the head,
And you shall bruise him on the heel. (Defeat our enemy – Satan)**
 - b. This is the pivotal verse in the bible; it sets the theme of for the entire bible.
3. This prophecy could not be fulfilled by any ordinary man.
 - a. All people sin and in so doing fall victim to the curse of death. (*defiled*)
 - b. No mere man could atone for the sins of others. (**Psa. 49: 7**)

I. Thus, the coming of the one who would fulfill it was cause of JOY for the world.

A. His coming was a cause of joy even before He was born.

1. When the forerunner was announced it brought joy.
 - a. **Luke 1: 14 - You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.**
 - b. God chose a righteous couple.
 - c. He brought about the birth in a miraculous way. (*parents were "aged"*)
2. When the unborn forerunner was approached by Jesus he rejoiced at His presence.
 - a. When the mother of John saw Mary coming with Jesus in her womb
"she cried out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your womb!" **Luke 1: 42**
(*Not meant to become a "Hail Mary" chant. The veneration of Mary is sin.*)

- b. Elizabeth recounted :
 “when the sound of your greeting reached my ears,
 the baby leaped in my womb for joy.” **Luke 1: 44**
- c. *Today* both John and Jesus might have been aborted. (*56-59 mil. = Rowe vs Wade*)

B. The incarnation of God the Son on earth brought joy for all mankind.

1. The angel told the shepherds not to be afraid, they were about to receive good news.
 - a. Fear is a natural response when sinful men meet a holy being.
 - b. Adam was afraid of God after he sinned. (*Children fear when they do wrong.*)
 - c. Zacharias was afraid when the angel appeared to him. (**Luke 1: 12-13**)
 - d. The angel (*Gabriel*) told Mary “**Do not be afraid.**” (**Luke 1: 30**)
2. The **shepherds** represented the common people, the lower classes and the Jews.
 - a. If you were a king, who would you use to announce the birth of your son?
 - b. Shepherds were lower class and so ill-reputed that they weren’t allowed to testify.
3. The **Magi** represented the gentiles and those of the upper class. (**Matt. 2: 1-12**)
 - a. They received the news with “**Great JOY.**” (**Matt. 2: 10**)
 - b. They understood the star, so they must have been familiar with O.T. prophecy.
4. The only class that was not represented was the **religious ruling class**.
 - a. The Pharisees, Sadducees and scribes knew the Law of Moses better than anyone.
 - b. They were called in when the Magi were interviewed by the king, but did not go.

C. The gospel is the for everyone ... not just Jews.

1. **Rom. 1: 16** - **For I am not ashamed of the gospel,**
 for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes,
 to the Jew first and also to the Greek.
2. Compare ... **I Cor. 1: 18-24**

II. The joyous “good news” about Jesus was at the heart of all N.T. preaching.

- A. The Angel Gabriel was sent to proclaim good news to Zacharias. (**Luke 1: 19**)
- B. “**So with many other exhortations he (John) preached the gospel.**” (**Luke 3: 18**)
- C. Jesus went about preaching the gospel. (**Luke 4: 18-21**)
- D. When Jesus sent out the 12 it was to preach the gospel. (**Luke 9: 6**)

- E. **Luke 16: 16** - The Law and the Prophets were proclaimed until John;
since that time the gospel of the kingdom of God has been preached,
and everyone is forcing his way into it.
- F. The gospel, the good news of Jesus the Christ was set forth as the standard.
 - 1. The Apostle defined the gospel as being the story of Jesus. (**I Cor. 15: 1-8**)
 - 2. He proclaimed the message to be unchangeable. (**Gal. 1: 6-9**)
 - 3. Obedience to it is declared to be essential to salvation. (**II Thes. 1: 6-10**)

III. The Christian life is about Joy – or – it's really not the Christian life.

- A. Joy is one of the most often repeated themes in the N.T.
 - 1. When the Ethiopian treasurer obeyed the gospel,
he went on his way rejoicing ... **Acts 8: 39**
 - 2. JOY is at the very heart of Christianity.
Rom. 14: 16-17 Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of
as evil; **17** For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and
drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,
 - 3. Joy is part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit.
Gal. 5: 22 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,
 - 4. The Apostle John wrote a letter to the churches with a view toward reinforcing joy.
 - a. **I John 1: 4** - These things we write, so that our joy may be made complete.
 - b. Our joy grows out of our confidence in our Lord Jesus Christ.
I John 5: 13 - These things I have written to you who believe in the name of
the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life.
- B. The joy that the Christian has is not based in physical things.
 - 1. Physical things can bring only a temporary happiness ... never true joy.
 - a. The fan is elated when his team wins, but the next week his joy may end.
 - b. David Dopp was overjoyed when he won a 380-thousand-dollar Lamborghini.
He wrecked it that afternoon and had to sell it to pay the taxes.
 - 2. The Christian's joy is not based on circumstances.
 - a. **I Pet. 1: 3-9** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who
according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to
a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the
dead, **4** to obtain an inheritance *which* is imperishable and undefiled
and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, **5** who are
protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready
to be revealed in the last time. **6** In this you greatly rejoice,

even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, **7** so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; **8** and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, **9** obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

- b. The Christian can be joyous even in the face of trials because of His assurance.

IV. The gospel is centered around the person whose birth many celebrate today.

A. It is not about a code of ethics.

1. It is not about a new religion to replace Judaism or heathenism.
2. It's not even about reforming one's life.

B. It is about coming to know Jesus the Christ.

1. It is about bowing the knee to Him in humble service.

Phil 2: 9-11 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in Heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

2. The day is coming when you will bow before Jesus, why not do it now before you are forced to do it in judgment.

INVITATION :

- A. The angel told the shepherds : “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; **11** for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ” **Luke 2: 10-11**

1. **Savior** ... He will rescue you and save you from your sins. (*Joshua = Jehovah saves*)
2. **Christ** ... He is the Messiah, the anointed one, King of all the earth ... (**Psa. 2: 10-11**)
3. **Lord** ... He is the one who rules Heaven and earth eternally (**Eph. 2: 20-21**)

B. We have this same good news today ... Jesus is born in hearts by faith.

1. He left Heaven to become your Savior and your Lord ...
2. Will you allow Him to save you ? **Surrender to His lordship today.**

Lesson Texts :

Luke 1: 26-39

26 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, **27** to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. **28** And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord *is* with you."
29 But she was very perplexed at *this* statement, and kept pondering what kind of salutation this was. **30** The angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; for you have found favor with God. **31** And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name Him Jesus. **32** He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David; **33** and He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and His kingdom will have no end." **34** Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I am a virgin?" **35** The angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy Child shall be called the Son of God. **36** And behold, even your relative Elizabeth has also conceived a son in her old age; and she who was called barren is now in her sixth month. **37** For nothing will be impossible with God." **38** And Mary said, "Behold, the bondservant of the Lord; may it be done to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

39 Now at this time Mary arose and went in a hurry to the hill country, to a city of Judah, **40** and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. **41** When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. **42** And she cried out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed *are* you among women, and blessed *is* the fruit of your womb! **43** And how has it *happened* to me, that the mother of my Lord would come to me? **44** For behold, when the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby leaped in my womb for joy. **45** And blessed *is* she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what had been spoken to her by the Lord."

Francis of Assisi

O Lord, make me an instrument of Thy Peace!
Where there is hatred, let me sow love.
Where there is injury, pardon.
Where there is discord, harmony.
Where there is doubt, faith.
Where there is despair, hope.
Where there is darkness, light.
Where there is sorrow, joy.