

NOTES

SERIES: Advent 2016 (Gospel Project)

SERMON 2: "Jesus is Born"

TEXT: Luke 2:1-21

DATE: December 17/18, 2016

The key to more merry in your Christmas is in the angel's _____.

1. What's wrong will be made _____.

The birth announcement of a Savior who is the Christ, is an announcement that God _____, we _____, everybody can _____.

Are you having trouble finding joy this Christmas? If so, it's the _____ we have Christmas.

2. What's right will be made _____.

"This, I imagine, is how our God sees us—as miserable creatures in desperate need of his help. But rather than asking for what we truly need, rather than desiring what he is able and willing to give, we settle for lesser things." (Skye Jethani in The Divine Commodity)

"Christian hope is about breathing now the fresh air of the ending, tasting the spices and sipping the wine of the feast to come." (Jeremy Begbie)

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Please complete this study on your own, then bring it to your small group for discussion.

1. Looking back over your notes from this week's sermon, what particularly caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?
2. What are your family's Christmas traditions that are most important to you?
3. Read Luke 2:1-21. What did you notice that felt fresh or was a needed reminder?
4. What is the joyful message of Christmas for people suffering very difficult circumstances or deep disappointments?
5. Reflect on the analogy offered by Tim Keller in Prayer: Experiencing Awe and Intimacy with God:

Imagine an eight-year-old boy playing with a toy truck and then it breaks. He is disconsolate and cries out to his parents to fix it. Yet as he's crying, his father says to him, "A distant relative you've never met has just died and left you one hundred million dollars." What will the child's reaction be? He will just cry louder until his truck is fixed. He does not have enough cognitive capacity to realize his true condition and be consoled.

In the same way, Christians lack the spiritual capacity to realize all we have in Jesus. This is the reason Paul prays that God would give Christians the spiritual ability to grasp the height, depth, breadth, and length of Christ's salvation (Eph. 3:16-19; Eph. 1:17-18). In general, our lack of joy is as Shakespeare wrote: "The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars, but in ourselves" (Julius Caesar, Act 1, Scene 2). We are like the eight-year-old boy who rests his happiness in his "stars"—his circumstances—rather than recognizing what we have in Christ.

6. Because Christ is a Savior who is Christ the Lord, the best experiences of this life will be made infinitely better in the New Creation. How can we enjoy this life's blessings without settling for less than what God has in store for us?
7. Looking back over this week's sermon and study, what one thing is most important for you to remember and apply.

FAMILY DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Why do you think God announced Jesus' birth to shepherds?
2. What was the reaction of the shepherds who went to see the baby Jesus?
3. What is it about the birth of Christ that brings joy?

BIG PICTURE QUESTION

Why was Jesus born?
Jesus was born to rescue us from sin.