

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE
Andy Deane · 12/24/2022 · Luke 2:1-18

Christmas Eve is a day full of anticipation (especially for kids waiting for presents). The original Christmas story had plenty of anticipation as well: a nation awaiting their messiah and a woman waiting to give birth. As we read the Christmas account in Luke chapter 2 we'll be reminded how good life can be when God is with us.

#1 THIS CHRISTMAS: Trust the PROVIDENCE of God in your life!

Luke 2:1-5, ¹ *In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.* ² *(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)* ³ *And everyone went to their own town to register.* ⁴ *So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.* ⁵ *He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child.*

- Caesar Augustus issued a decree (v.1) - he felt in charge
- And everyone went (v.1) - it seemed like he was in charge
- But this inconvenience was actually God fulfilling prophecy: Micah 5:2
- I wonder how God is using inconvenience, difficulty & pain in our lives, to bring about something good for us?
- Proverbs 16:9, *A man's heart plans his way, the Lord directs his steps.*
- Romans 8:28, *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him...*

#2 THIS CHRISTMAS: Dream about the POTENTIAL of God in your life!

Luke 2:6-7, ⁶ *While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born,* ⁷ *and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.*

- This story doesn't seem like a setup for great potential (a poor boy born in a manger).
- Mary and Joseph were told by an angel who Jesus was, but they had no idea how much more that manger held.
- It held all the potential of what God will do in your life!
- Ask yourself: What does God want to do in your life?

#3 THIS CHRISTMAS: Ask for the POWER of God in your life!

Luke 2:8-14, ⁸ *And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.* ⁹ *An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.* ¹⁰ *But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.* ¹¹ *Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.* ¹² *This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."* ¹³ *Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,* ¹⁴ *"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."*

- The shepherds were repeating mundane tasks, until God burst into their life with power to change it all.
- Imagine suddenly realizing this truth: God has a message for you (v.9), so powerful it turns darkness into light (v.9), changes boredom to joy (v.10), and transforms anxiety to peace (v.14).
- Life just doesn't work well without God's power. You'll feel weak and exhausted without Him.
- 2 Corinthians 12:9, *...My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness...*
- Power comes from relationship with Jesus through the Holy Spirit. We have to humble ourselves to ask for Him.
- Luke 11:10-13, ¹⁰ *For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.* ¹¹ *If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent instead of a fish?* ¹² *Or if he asks for an egg, will he offer him a scorpion?* ¹³ *If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!"*

#4 THIS CHRISTMAS: Run after the PURPOSE of God for your life!

Luke 2:15-18, ¹⁵ *When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."* ¹⁶ *So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.* ¹⁷ *When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child,* ¹⁸ *and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.*

- The shepherds had a choice: continue on as normal, or believe and respond!
- *Let's go to Bethlehem & see...so they hurried off* (vv.15-16) – They responded quickly
- *found Mary/Joseph/the baby* (v.16) - They were rewarded in seeing the Messiah
- *they spread the word* (v.17) - Their purpose changed to be witnesses
- *all who heard it were amazed* (v.17) - Christmas is amazing because it shows God pursues a relationship with us!

On CHRISTMAS DAY visit www.go2cornerstone.com anytime to watch a special online service that was recorded with Pastor Andy's family in their living room.