

Greetings:

The study that Pastor Pat brings on Sunday mornings is a reflection of the study for that week. It represents a lot of research. Not all of what he has prepared is communicated. In an attempt to continue the learning process, he is making available his study notes to the congregation.

They are edited, but not “book” ready. To the critical eye mistakes can be found. So he asks that you take the material with humility, teach-ability, and charity.

Enjoy and if you should have any questions or corrections, please do not hesitate to email him at pastorpat@waukeshabible.org.

Date: December 27, 2009 - First Sunday after Christmas

Title: “Come and See; Go and Tell.”

Text: Luke 2:1ff

Theme: The Christ has come and life as we know it will never be the same.

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Waukesha Bible Church is a family of families seeking to live in **the Storyline of the Bible**. She is determined by design to have a **God-centered, Christ-exalting worship; a Word-centered teaching** focused on personal **discipleship** through intentional and systematic instruction; a **Global-impacting mission** that resolves to be a **church planting church**; and a **Grace-based fellowship** where disciples are invited to live under a **reigning grace** characterized by a **Gospel-driven sanctification** that celebrates a divine **monergism** to the Christian life.

Date: December 27, 2009 – First Sunday after Christmas
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 Text: Luke 2:1ff
 Theme: The Christ has come and life as we know it will never be the same.

Introduction:

Inside of eight days, the child Jesus is visited by several shepherds. Then, in fulfillment of the Law, Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the temple for the purpose of circumcision. Surrounding this event are two affirmations of the child’s identity, the first by Simeon and then by Anna.

What if someone saw your child and began to speak of him as the fulfillment of all the promises and pictures made to a nation? How would you respond? How do we capture all this part of the Story contains? Why shepherds? Why Simeon? Why Anna? All of this happens within an eight day window of time. Verse 22 “refers to the provisions of Leviticus 12. A woman was regarded as ceremonially impure for forty days after the birth of a son. After the forty days two ‘purification’ sacrifices – a lamb as burnt-offering and a pigeon as sin-offering – had to be brought. But in the case of poor persons a pigeon could also be sacrificed in the place of the lamb. Because Joseph and Mary were poor, they brought two pigeons to be sacrificed in the temple at Jerusalem.”¹

The promises are fulfilled; the picture is clear. Here lies in flesh, “Immanuel, God with us!” “This story excels by reason of its unaffected simplicity. In it we hear throughout the sound of sober, historical truth. In this narrative Luke recounts in a sober and life-like manner, events of a beautiful and miraculous nature, but at the same time actual history.”²

Advent Prayer: The Book of Common Prayer

First Sunday after Christmas Day

Almighty God, you have poured upon us the new light of your incarnate Word: Grant that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine forth in our lives; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

The Storyline:

“Throughout the centuries God had so led the course of history that everything was now prepared for the coming of His Son. The preparatory Old Testament revelation had been completed long ago; the weary, longing spirit of mankind was in dire need of His coming; His forerunner, John, had already been born; the ‘fullness of time’ had arrived. And at last the promised Redeemer, whose coming had been looked forward to with so much heartfelt yearning, is born.”³

The Problem:

Somehow in the routines of life, we fail to remember and retell the Story. It is the Story that will change our lives forever.

Questions:

1. Is the event of His birth attested to by various sources?
2. What if someone saw your child and began to speak of him as the fulfillment of all the promises and pictures made to a nation? How would you respond?
3. How do we capture all this part of the Story contains? Why shepherds? Why Simeon? Why Anna?
4. What does the incarnation mean to you?
5. How can we keep the remembering and retelling of the Story in the forefront of our lives?
6. How might we remember and retell the Story to our children and grandchildren?

I encourage you to use some “sanctified imagination” in considering the following questions.

7. When the angels appeared in Luke 2:14, what do you think they thought about this event?
8. What do you think those who heard Simeon’s proclamation thought?
9. What do you think those who heard Anna’s proclamation thought?
10. Based on the text, I would suppose that only the shepherds have a chance of being present when Jesus began His earthly ministry leading to His death, burial and resurrection. I believe both Simeon and Anna would have since passed on to their eternal rest. What do you think the shepherds would have thought? Do you think they followed His development? Do you think they listened with attentiveness to anything that might have circulated concerning this unique child? Do you not think word of Mary’s virgin birth made the rounds? What about His temple encounter at the age of twelve? I do not doubt for one moment that word circulated and those who were “looking” listened attentively to all that was in circulation.
11. What do you think were the thoughts of the priests (vv. 21-25) when they heard the utterances of Simeon and Anna? I would argue that some who heard these statements were young enough to be present thirty years later when Jesus would begin His earthly ministry culminating in His death, burial and resurrection.
12. How does the fulfillment of the promises change your life?
13. What makes ADVENT special to you and your family?

The Holy Spirit is calling to us from this passage to consider three ideas.

To Know: The Holy Spirit desires for us to know the Christ has come.

To Choose: The Holy Spirit desires for us to choose to believe Him above all else.

To Feel: The Holy Spirit desires for us to feel the joy of resting in the truth of His arrival.

Outline:

- I. Notice the Revealers of the Hero’s Arrival

I will hold my comments concerning the inn keeper. I believe he never intended to keep the Christ-child out. I believe it was simply a consequence of his circumstances and yet the good

of an overcrowded inn took the place of the best. Let us consider three noted figures within this short narrative.

I would offer you that the information disclosed by the angelic messengers was “good news of great joy” (Luke 2:10).

A. To faithful shepherds, this child is “Christ the Lord” ([v. 11] vv. 8-20).

“The name ‘Christ’ refers to Him as the Fulfiller of the promises of God and as the One who has been anointed by God as the Great Prophet, Priest and King – the divine Savior.”⁴

“This combination occurs nowhere else in the N.T. and it is not clear what it really means.”⁵

Their awakening is met with a celestial explosion of joyous rapture, “Glory to God” What do you think the angels were thinking? Do you not believe their joy was volcanic?

B. To righteous Simeon, this child is “the consolation of Israel” ([v. 25] vv. 25-36).

When Simeon cradled the Christ child, do you not think that such an utterance would cause no small stir among the Temple inhabitants? Do you not think that Simeon was putting his reputation on the line?

“It is full of rapture and vivid intensity (Plummer) like the best of the Psalms. The verb *apoluô* was common for the manumission of slaves.”⁶

“The thought underlying its wording is of a slave who is instructed by his master to keep watch through the long, dark night on a high place to wait for the rising of a special star and then to announce it. After wearisome hours of waiting he at last sees the star rising in all its brightness. He announces it and is then discharged from keeping watch any longer.”⁷

Notice the inclusive language of verse 31, “which you have prepared in the presence of all peoples.” What God has done is no secret and is knowable by all.

C. To patient Anna, this child is “the redemption of Jerusalem” ([v. 38] vv. 36-38).

Whatever we can say of Simeon can also be said of Anna. Here is a woman of great age and whom many respected. She equally, like Simeon, identifies this child as the Christ the Lord.

Based on the text, I would suppose that only the shepherds had a chance of being present when Jesus began His earthly ministry leading to His death, burial and resurrection. I believe both Simeon and Anna would have since passed on to their eternal rest. What do you think the shepherds would have thought? Do you think they followed His development? Do you think they listened with attentiveness to anything that might have circulated concerning this unique child? Do you not think word of Mary’s virgin birth made the rounds? What about

His temple encounter at the age of twelve? I do not doubt for one moment that word circulated and those who were “looking” listened attentively to all that was in circulation.

All three parties would have, must have, been significantly altered in every way after such an encounter. Let us not assume they were the only ones who “got it” when the Christ arrived.

II. Notice the reaction to the Hero’s Arrival

A. There was nervous fear (vv. 9, 10).

Their fear is described as “great [**megas**].” “Overcome by the unexpected and supernatural occurrence, fear came upon the shepherds.”⁸

B. There was joyous energy (vv. 15, 16, 20).

They were stunned and repetitive in their communication with one another. They were literally beside themselves with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Immediately they took off in pursuit of the Christ child. Within a short span they “found their way to Mary and Joseph, and the baby as He lay in the manger.”

C. There was public proclamation (vv. 17, 18, 38).

All who were present heard the dramatic proclamation. Many were impacted by the good news of great joy.

D. There was continued mystery (vv. 18, 19, 33-35).

What do you think were the thoughts of the priests (vv. 21-25) when they heard the utterances of Simeon and Anna? I would argue that some who heard these statements were old enough to be present thirty years later when Jesus would begin His earthly ministry culminating in His death, burial and resurrection.

E. There was stunning transformation

I cannot believe life would ever be the same for all those involved or that this truth only impacted the individuals noted in our text. I believe many were present who are left unidentified, but they too were forever changed.

When John began his work of preparing the way, there must have been significant build up and electricity in the air. When Jesus was baptized and John identified Him as the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world there was a great guttural groan of buried ecstasy.

Shepherding the Sheep: (What's the NEXT STEP?)

1. Who do you most identify with; Shepherds, Simeon, Anna or the inn keeper?
2. Have you been waiting for the Christ-child? He has arrived, what has been your response to this monumental event?
3. How has ADVENT changed your life?

The Revised Common Lectionary (a service of the Vanderbilt Divinity Library)

¹ Norval Geldenhuys, NICNT, *The Gospel of Luke*, 117, 118.

² Norval Geldenhuys, NICNT, *The Gospel of Luke*, 110.

³ Norval Geldenhuys, NICNT, *The Gospel of Luke*, 99.

⁴ Norval Geldenhuys, NICNT, *The Gospel of Luke*, 111.

⁵ A.T. Robertson's *Word Pictures* on Luke 2:11.

⁶ A.T. Robertson's *Word Pictures* on Luke 2:29.

⁷ Norval Geldenhuys, NICNT, *The Gospel of Luke*, 119.

⁸ Norval Geldenhuys, NICNT, *The Gospel of Luke*, 111.