

CHRISTMAS 2009
Luke 1:26-35

Introduction: I love Christmas! I love the decorated streets of the city, the trees, the homes, and the stores. However, I primarily love Christmas because it commemorates the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ. Time was split when Jesus was born. While it is true that many do not acknowledge Him as Lord, He is the most prestigious being to ever walk this earth. No other historical figure, no matter how profound, can even begin to compare with the dynamic effect He has had on the entire world. The blessed Baby of Bethlehem has brought meaning to believers for their existence far beyond any other personality in the history of humankind. We humbly pay homage to our Savior with thanksgiving from the very core of our being.

- I. Jesus was born of a virgin, a fact of history. The Bible declares that God decided His Son would have a miraculous entrance into humanity. Several hundred years before the birth of Christ, the prophet Isaiah said, *"Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: behold the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His Name Immanuel."* Isaiah 7:14. The New Testament bears this prophecy out. Luke 1:26-31. When Mary questioned how this could be since she was a virgin, the angel answered her. Luke 1:34-35. This miracle is the crux of Christianity. John 1:1, 14. Flavius Josephus, a first century Jewish historian and a Pharisee, writes about Jesus and says, *"...He was the Christ."*
 - A. Peace. During the darkest hour in history, Jesus' coming brought peace to the world. John 14:27. Webster says this about peace: *"an undisturbed state of mind; absence of mental conflict; serenity...calm, quiet...tranquility."* We could name a myriad of things that can rob you of your peace, but in all this confusion, God has promised us supernatural peace. Paul assures us that in every circumstance, God is there available to rescue us. 1st Corinthians 10:13. When we accept Jesus' promises to take care of us, we can trust Him to bring it to pass. When Zacharias was beside himself, the Angel of the Lord comforted him. Luke 1:11-14.
 - B. Hope. Hope is an essential ingredient for successful living. Hopelessness brings a lugubrious atmosphere with subsequent depression. Clinical depression can bring on suicide. Webster says hope is *"a person or thing on which one can base hope";* also, *"a feeling that what is wanted will happen..."* Christ's coming brings hope to those who accept Him. David had the secret in Psalm 23:4. Faith in God's promises not only gives hope, but also the *byproduct* – a positive attitude in life. Hope causes you to let go of the past defeats and look ahead to better days. Paul had a grip on this truth in his writings in Philippians 3:13-14. The Bible offers a package deal – hope for the present, and hope for the future. 1st Corinthians 15:19.
 - C. Joy. The joy of the Lord is inviolable and unassailable. The world didn't give it, and the world can't take it away. Nehemiah quiets our anxieties in his 8th chapter, verse 10. Note that *"...the joy of the Lord is your strength."* The psalmist David said, *"...in Your presence is fullness of joy, at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore."* Psalm 16:11. Isaiah promises, *"...with everlasting joy on their heads ... they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."* Isaiah 35:10. In Isaiah 61:3, we are promised *"the oil of joy for mourning..."* Jesus with great candor said in John 15:11, *"These things have I spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full."* 1st Peter 1:8 says, *"...believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory."* 1st John 1:4 says, *"...that your joy may be full."* It is up to us to decide to utilize what God has promised.

Conclusion: This is a blessed season, and "Jesus is the reason for the season!"