

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

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SPEAKER

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For All People

PART

5

TITLE

Good News For All People

SCRIPTURE

Luke 2:10-11



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Providence family, it is great to see you. Merry Christmas. If you're a guest with us, we're really glad that you have joined us. If you are at home, I know many are, we are also glad that you joined us.

If you have a Bible, turn with me to Luke chapter two. We're going to look at simply the two verses that we have anchored our thoughts to over the last month, that he is good news and great joy for all people.

I hope that you have had a really good morning. Hope you had a great night last night. The fact is for most of us, it's not going to take very long before our minds return to present realities and present anxieties. Those of you who were lonely yesterday, there may be a brief time when there's people around, but if there's a burden in your heart towards loneliness, the fact is that's going to reemerge pretty quickly.

Some of us, we have been thinking about a big decision, some life course, something that we need to do, something that we need to decide. Perhaps for a few hours or few days we were able to set that aside, but the reality is it's going to return. Some within our church family were even recently diagnosed with a significant sickness, cancer.

There may be a time when the moment of the days when we're celebrating what Jesus did for us, those feelings of fear or anxiety maybe weren't as intense, and yet some of those realities are going to quickly return. That's the reality of the world. We live in a broken world.

The birth of Christ we need to remember is not this mythical interlude in a world of painful realities. The birth of Christ is the reason why we have hope in a world that's full of painful realities. This is what we find in Luke. Before we read it, I want to pray.

Father, we ask that you would be gracious to each one of us and that in these few moments that we spend here this morning, that you would not only remind our hearts of why we can have hope, but God, would you cause these truths to be so real and dense and weighty, Lord, that the very gravity of these truths would have an impact in our heart and in our mind, that you would help us to take our thoughts, our fears, and our anxieties captive and make them obedient to your word?

We ask, God, in particular for those whose present anxieties perhaps have already returned or soon will, that you would give them hope this morning as we look into your word. We pray this in Christ's name, amen.

In verse 10 of Luke chapter two, we read, "The angels said to them, 'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.'" And then you notice in verse 11, he tells us why. He designates with the word for, this is why it's good news, this is why it's great joy. This is the recipients of who it's for. He says, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a savior, who is Christ the Lord."

Why couldn't we have hope? We're just going to look at really this one verse, verse 11. What is the significance

of our hope? Why can we have hope today? I think the first reason that we see is because Jesus came to a real city on a real day. Details within the account of the Bible, they matter. The geography and even the metric of time that is given is there to develop within our hearts a sense of credibility. It doesn't say once upon a time. This is not a fairy tale. It doesn't say once upon a time. He says, "Born this day."

The Bible tells us that God created life to be lived in successive days. We mark those days. Days are simply metrics. They're measurements of time that have boundaries on either side. That day begins and then that day ends. And depending on what happens in that day, they become memorable or forgettable.

For most of us, the majority of our days are common, and so they're forgettable. We might remember something that happened when someone brings it to our attention, but there's some days in our life, that depending on the severity of the pain or the pleasure, we remember it. It stands out above the rest.

I remember receiving my first speeding ticket. I remember the day. I remember it was at night. I remember the road that I was on. I remember the house that I was in front of when I was waiting to receive my ticket. I remember everything about it. It's a fascinating thing. I have driven my car thousands of miles, probably hundreds of thousands of miles, and I don't remember most of those miles, but I remember that mile.

I remember, like many of you, other events. I remember when I asked my wife Tabitha to marry me on the Eiffel Tower. It sounds really romantic. I just totally stumbled into a great story is really how it happened. But it's true. We were on the Eiffel Tower and I asked her to marry me. And you know what? I don't remember what I wore Tuesday, but I remember what I wore on the Eiffel Tower 26 years ago on that day because it became memorable.

I remember my wedding. I remember my grandfather's funeral. Three of my grandparents had died either before I was born or when I was a baby. I didn't know any of them, but the one I knew well. He was heroic. And I remember when he died. I remember the day of his funeral.

I remember the day when our boys were born, and I remember in particular when one of them who we weren't certain if he would walk when he took his first step. I remember where I was sitting in the room when I saw him take his first step.

Every one of us if I asked you, what are those moments, real big pains, real big pleasures, what are the biggest ones you would be able to remember a day? Jesus was born on one of those. And Mary remembered it. She pondered it in her heart. There was a beginning of that day and there was an end of that day. And Jesus was born, as it said, on a day. Not only was he born on a day, he was born in a city, a place, a real place in the city of David. Not Wonderland, but Bethlehem.

It didn't look like this at the time, but that's precisely where the town was. It was on that hill. Bethlehem, a

real place, roughly six miles from Jerusalem. Naomi in the Bible, you remember Naomi, she was born there. Boaz and Ruth were married there. Jesse lived there. His son David was born there. He was crowned as king right there. And Jesus was born in a real city of Bethlehem.

We're told in Micah, it says, "O Bethlehem, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel." This is precisely where Jesus is born. Now, why is all this important? Why is it important that he would put these little metrics of a place and a time, a day and a city? Why would he do this? I believe a couple reasons. I think one of the reasons that can give us comfort is that it proves that God keeps his promises. He said that Christ would be born in Bethlehem, and he was.

Not only that, I think it also proves that our faith is built on real events in real places. This is not a mythical world that we've made up. There's a real city and a real time and a real day when a real man was born. It's a remarkable thing. It's all built on reality. And not only that, even skeptics believe, even skeptics of who Jesus is, believe that a man historically born named Jesus who had significant influence was born in Bethlehem at a particular time that they recognize now denotes how we even form our calendar of before Christ and in the year or the day of the Lord.

Not only all of this, I think this is significant because it proves this, and that is that God has the power to turn the tide of your anxiety in a day. He has the power to take your fear away in a day. It's a remarkable power that he has, and it gives us hope.

The second thing why I think this little verse gives us hope is because Jesus came to save us. He came on a mission in order to rescue each one of us. We're told in that verse, "Unto you is born this day a savior, who is Christ the Lord."

Now, all three of these words, they matter significantly. The Christ, it means the promised one, same word, Messiah. He's the promised one. It's not his last name, it was one of his titles. And then all of a sudden you see this word Lord, which means that he's the sovereign one. And then you see the word savior, and the Bible tells us that he's the only one. He is the savior of our life.

We even have a newest member of the Providence family was born last night at three o'clock in the morning. Her parents did not know and do not know the life history or the life purpose of that little girl. So they didn't have the luxury of being able to find a name that fit with her life purpose, but that wasn't the case with Jesus, because the angel came and told Joseph in Matthew chapter one. He said, "You shall call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

Do you remember how he did it? I know most of you do because you're here all the time and we talk about it all the time, is in Philippians chapter two, he tells us how he did it, that he emptied himself by taking the form of a servant. You think about the remarkable nature, Jesus, the son of God, he took on a body, an actual

body with little baby fingers and a soft spot on his head.

You know how babies, they have those erratic movements with their arms. It's just like why they do that? And they hit themselves and their arm just goes up for no reason. The son of God and creator of the universe for a period of time was like that. He needed diapers, he needed to be cleaned, he needed to be swaddled in cloths because he could get cold. He needed food. He was God in flesh.

And then he grew into a man. As he grew into a man, he continued to humble himself. In fact, in verse eight of Philippians, he says "He humbled himself by becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross." We talk about this a lot, that Jesus, he went to a cross to pay the penalty for our sin. He died for our sin and then he rose from the dead because death could not hold him.

This is what we're told of him in response. "Therefore, God has highly exalted him and bestowed upon him a name that is above every name so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow." He goes on to say, "In heaven and Earth and under the Earth and every tongue confessed that Jesus Christ is Lord."

Now, Luke chapter two tells us that it only took one angel to announce this. Jesus sent a whole host of angels, an army of them to celebrate it. What they did was in their response was they said, "Glory to God in the highest and on Earth, peace among those with whom he is pleased." You see that word pleased. People around the entire world, in every civilization, in every century have asked the question, including our own, what does it take to please him?

Everywhere I've ever been, I've met people who wonder if they've done enough to attract the favor of God and to outweigh their sins by their morality. It's the question, the fundamental question of all humanity. It lies within our heart because the Bible says that he's planted eternity in our heart. Also, he wrote his law upon our heart. So we know there is longevity of our soul and we know something called guilt because we've sinned against that law.

Everyone says, I'm going to be around for a very long time somewhere. And what do I do to make him pleased with me to take away the guilt so that I can be with him forever? The Bible says something so remarkable in Hebrews, he says, "Without faith it is impossible to please God." But by default the flip side is also true, and that is by faith, it is entirely possible to please God.

This is how he is pleased and this is whom he is pleased with, it is people who place their faith and trust not in their own morality, but in Jesus Christ to forgive them of their sin and to bring them to heaven. There are billions of people around the world that woke up this morning not knowing the peace of God, wondering, what do I do to please him?

Friends, let me tell you, you don't have to be one of them. If you are, that's how you woke up today. You don't

have to wake up like that again. I urge you today to acknowledge your need of a savior and see that Jesus is the savior, that he came in order to rescue us and to save us as the promised one. He did everything that was necessary by dying on a cross and rising from the dead. Is there any reason you wouldn't do that today? Would you bow your knee, your heart, and confess him Lord?

The third thing and last thing is Jesus came to be with us. This should bring us hope. All of these little words, they all matter. You see in verse 11, when it says, "For unto you is born this day," we've looked at this day, we've looked at city of David, we've looked at Savior, Christ and Lord, but notice there's a direction that he came. It was in your direction.

This is so significant that you understand that when Jesus, they gave him the title, God gave him the title Emmanuel, which means God with us, it was ultimately a demonstration of his desire to take all of who he is and to make him available to us. You notice the words for unto you, they resemble the words at the beginning of Isaiah chapter nine when it says, "And to us, a child is born. To us, a son is given."

We talked about some of the attributes that we see in Isaiah 9 last night, if you were here of who he is. What that means is that who he is available to us, to our life, that there are some in this room today who needs somebody to help them with their confusion. One of his titles is wonderful counselor.

The fact that he's a mighty God is really good news to someone who is weak. And the fact that he is everlasting Father is really good news to somebody who is frightened and has no protector. The fact that he's prince of peace is really good news for people who are anxious.

Of course there's other titles. The fact that he's the light of the world is really good news for people who live in a dark world. The fact that he says that he's the bread of life is really good news to people whose soul is dissatisfied. The fact that he is the cornerstone is really good news for people who are looking for a sturdy foundation upon which to build their life.

The fact that in the Book of Revelation, he's called faithful and true is really good news for people who are looking for people who keep their word. And the fact that his name is Emmanuel is really good news because it means that all that he is available to you. This is the hope that we have in all of these things, that he is good news of great joy for all people.

So let me close. It wouldn't be a sermon without a few let us statements. Let me encourage you in three things. Maybe you can do them today. At first, you're going to look at them and go, "That's a bunch of words," but only a few of them are going to change each time.

First, let me encourage you to fortify your hope by thinking of who he is. Maybe just take some time and think about some of these titles or maybe some of the other titles and names that are written in the Bible,

son of God, son of man, all these beautiful realities of who he is. And just think about him as a way to fortify your hope. That is who wants to be with you.

And then let me encourage you to fortify your hope by thinking of what he did. If you need help over the next week for all of us, let me encourage you to read one of the gospels. See what he did. See how he treated people. See what he said. See what he did when he went to a cross and rose from the dead.

The last thing is, let me encourage you to fortify your hope this year as you face new or old anxieties by thinking of what he said. There are many promises that he has made that he has not yet fulfilled. Do you know the reason we have every confidence that he's going to? Because of all the promises that we read and stories in the accounts like Christmas that tells us that he goes out of his way seemingly. As other people go out of their way in order to bring people to specific cities to have their baby because he promised that he would be born there. There's hope for all of us when we think about who he is, when we think about what he's done and what he's said. So let's pray. Father in heaven, we bow before you, our maker, and we thank you for sending Jesus. We thank you that our faith, every part of it is built in reality. We thank you that you came to a real city, you came on a real day, that you took on real flesh, real flesh that could get cold and dirty and hungry and thirsty.

We thank you that you invited real people to come and behold, see what you had done. We thank you that you invited real people who had real problems, real anxieties, that everyone who was there apart from Jesus was imperfect, really imperfect. We know that all of these realities are written down for us in order to propel in our own hope, to fortify our own joy, and to give us hope in our real anxieties.

Jesus, thank you that you came to deal with a real problem within us of guilt. And thank you that you humbled yourself in remarkable ways, not only physically, but you would become obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross to save us from our sin. I thank you that you really did rise from the dead.

We thank you that all that you are, your goodness, your kindness, your mercy, your grace, your generosity, your justice, your righteousness, your holiness, your protection, your provision, the fact that you are the son of God, the son of man, our mediator, shepherd, and the lover of our soul, that you are our counselor and keeper, that you are the mighty one, the majestic one, the everlasting Father, and the prince of peace.

I thank you that you're the bread of life. You're the Lord of the world. We thank you that you are faithful and true. We thank you that you are the cornerstone, and we thank you that you are Emmanuel who came to bring all of who you are to be with us.

Father, I ask that you would help us to cultivate a sense of amazement at your grace that gives us peace. And in doing so, Father, that you would help us to be more inclined to be at peace with one another. We pray also that as you cultivate that sense of amazement that gives us peace with you, that you would incline our hearts

to be active in sharing the good news that brings peace to all people.

We sing to you now in gratitude, in love, and courage in a world that doesn't see you as we see you. We thank you that you are with us forever, and we sing to you now because of it. We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Would you stand? Let's sing together.



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