

Kenmore Baptist Church Message Outline December 20, 2015 (Jo Leutton)
Christmas Through Heaven's Eyes #3
What Jesus Offers...

The Promise of Jesus

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.
For those who lived in a land of deep shadows— light! sunbursts of light!

You repopulated the nation, you expanded its joy.
Oh, they're so glad in your presence! Festival joy!
The joy of a great celebration, sharing rich gifts and warm greetings.

The abuse of oppressors and cruelty of tyrants—
all their whips and cudgels and curses—
Is gone, done away with, a deliverance
as surprising and sudden as Gideon's old victory over Midian.

The boots of all those invading troops,
along with their shirts soaked with innocent blood,
Will be piled in a heap and burned,
a fire that will burn for days!

For a child has been born—for us!
the gift of a son—for us!
He'll take over the running of the world.
His names will be: Amazing Counsellor, Strong God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Wholeness.

His ruling authority will grow, and there'll be no limits to the wholeness he brings.
He'll rule from the historic David throne over that promised kingdom.
He'll put that kingdom on a firm footing and keep it going
With fair dealing and right living, beginning now and lasting always.
The zeal of GOD of-the-Angel-Armies will do all this.”

(Isaiah 9:2–7 MESSAGE)

Imagine then, what it was like for the Jews to finally meet Jesus:

“For he grew up before him like a young plant, and like a root out of dry ground;
he had no form or majesty that we should look at him,
and no beauty that we should desire him.

He was despised and rejected by men;
a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;
and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised,
and we esteemed him not.”

(Isaiah 53:2–3 ESV)

The real power of Christmas

Jesus came for many reasons

If we focus just on the baby, we miss the power of this time

The Result

We are a new creation

¹⁹For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, ²⁰and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

²¹And you, who once were alienated and hostile in mind, doing evil deeds, ²²he has now reconciled in his body of flesh by his death, in order to present you holy and blameless and above reproach before him, ²³if indeed you continue in the faith,

stable and steadfast, not shifting from the hope of the gospel that you heard, which has been proclaimed in all creation under heaven, and of which I, Paul, became a minister.

²⁴Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church, ²⁵of which I became a minister according to the stewardship from God that was given to me for you, to make the word of God fully known, ²⁶the mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to his saints. ²⁷To them God chose to make known how great among the Gentiles are the riches of the glory of this mystery, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. ²⁸Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ. ²⁹For this I toil, struggling with all his energy that he powerfully works within me.

(Colossians 1:19-29 ESV)

Christ *in* us – the hope of glory – the joyful expectation of something weighty, real, of absolute eternal substance.

The Response

If wise men and angels could fall to the ground in adoration of a baby boy, before he ascended to glory, how much more should we echo the cries of the angels, "Holy! Holy! Holy!"

The Change

That the change He has wrought in us would be wrought upon the world.

Conclusion

The whole thing is about Resurrection Life. We live in the light of the resurrection now! The resurrected Christ dwells in us. We have access to all that He desires for us, so that those around us would know who He is.

Questions to consider of this Christmas period:

1. If Christ is in me, and there is hope, how does that change my approach to meeting with family and loved ones this Christmas time?
2. If Jesus came to earth as a man, so that He would know the trials and troubles that we go through, and yet be able to overcome them, how could His presence in my life change my perspective on the season ahead?
3. “Christ in us is the hope of glory” – that hope is the joyful expectation of good. Is there an area of life where you need to experience that joyful expectation of good? Present it to God, to get His perspective on that situation.
4. Isaiah 9 tells us that the “increase of His government will know no end.” What areas of your life, and the lives of those you care for, need to experience that in-breaking government of King Jesus? Pray and ask God how you can be His means of bringing that transformation to those people and situations.