

The Thrill of Hope- Part 4, Luke 2:1-20

Icebreaker: What is one Christmas present that you hoped for as a child or young adult? What are you hoping for now?

Introduction: In the introduction to this sermon, Pastor Dave said, “Your desires are a window into your soul. They reveal what you really value, what you hunger and thirst for.”

Background:

The Birth of Jesus was foretold in many passages in the Old Testament.

Genesis 3:15 ...he (seed of the woman) will crush your (Satan's) head, and you will strike his heel.

2 Samuel 7: 12-14 (900 BC) 12 When your days are over and you rest with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring to succeed you, who will come from your own body, and I will establish his kingdom. 13 He is the one who will build a house for my Name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. 14 I will be his father, and he will be my son.

Isaiah 9:6-7 (760-680 BC) 6 For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. 7 Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and holding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the Lord Almighty will accomplish this.

Micah 5:2(750-686 BC) But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old,

from ancient times.

1. What does the fact that God had predestined the Messiah to come from Bethlehem, 700 years prior to Caesar Augustus issuing his decree, indicate to you about governments relationship to God?

2. What does the birth of Jesus as a baby, rather than as arriving as a conquering King, tell us about God's plan of salvation?

Note: The purpose of the registration was so each person could pay taxes to the Roman government.

Here's why you need this sermon: Your hopes and fears are met in a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Luke 2: 1-7

The Birth of Jesus

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.

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.

- **Mary and Joseph had the burden of Roman expectations.**

3. What fears do you think that the Jewish people may have had with paying taxes to the Roman government?

4. What is the significance of the fact that, this was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria? (Micah 5:2)

Note: This census first = the Greek indicates that this was the first of such censuses (not just the first in Quirinius' governorship). (Mills, M. S. The Life of Christ: A Study Guide to the Gospel Record. Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries, 1999.)

Luke 2: 8-14

The Shepherds and The Angels

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."

• Your hopes and fears reveal a "not-yet-ness" in our world.

5. Why do you suppose that God revealed the appearing of the Messiah to shepherds and not to the priests or other people?

6. What does this indicate to you about God?

7. How do you think that you would react if you were standing on top of a hill, watching sheep in the middle of the darkest night, and an angel suddenly appears, with a bright light, gives you the message that the Messiah your people have been waiting for for

centuries has been born in Bethlehem; then the night sky is filled with angels singing praises to God?

8. What do you suppose were the hopes and fears of the Jewish people for the Messiah?

9. How has God brought peace “to those on whom his favor rests”? Why do you think we do not experience the final peace of God?

Note from Dave’s Sermon: Christ has come, he has defeated sin and death and the evil one on the cross. Yes! Jesus has risen from the dead and reigns as Lord over all! But we know there is more to come. So, we wait for the day when Jesus comes again.

Luke 2: 15-20

The Shepherds Go to Bethlehem

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. 19 But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

20 The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

10. Why is it significant that Mary treasured these things and pondered them in her heart?

11. What do you suppose were Mary’s hopes and fears at this point?

12. What experiences have you had in your faith that you treasure up and ponder in your heart?

- **Knowing Christ's second coming is as important as His first coming when all your hopes are satisfied, and your fears are calmed.**

Titus 2:11-14

11 For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people. 12 It teaches us

to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and

godly lives in this present age, 13 while we wait for the blessed hope—the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, 14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

13. What are your biggest hopes to be satisfied when Jesus comes back?

14. What are your biggest fears to be calmed when Jesus comes back?

15. How does the knowledge of Jesus' return affect how we live today?