



# Christmas Eve 2018

**Forward the message!**

**Luke 2:15-20**

Message #2 of 2

**Sermon given on December 24, 2018**



Christmas Eve Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

# Forward the message!

## *Luke 2:15-20*

### Opening Comments

- Welcome to the Christmas Eve service
- We are glad you are here
- We will be reading out of the Bible today
- If you would like to follow along, there are Bibles around – the page number for the texts we will be looking at will be up on the screen
- If you would prefer to use your electronic device, we will be starting in **Luke 1** – and using the NKJV translation
- Yesterday, we looked at the birth of Jesus
- His birth was a message from God – sent to make a way for us to be in an intimate relationship with Almighty God, Creator of heaven and earth
- For that message to benefit us, we need to open it, believe it and receive it
- This evening, I would like to look at the birth of Christ and what we should do with the message it contains
- Let's pray and ask God to help us hear what he wants to say to us
- **Pray**

### Teaching

- **Forward the message!**
- Christmas is an annual celebration of the birth of Jesus Christ
- It is right for us to celebrate this amazing event in history
- Many people have beautiful traditions connected to this celebration
- As with all things, we have to be careful not to lose the meaning of the celebration – It is all about Jesus!
- Let's look at the story of His birth
- The background of the story is that Jesus' mother Mary is living in Nazareth with her fiancé Joseph
- Before they were married, Mary became pregnant supernaturally
- **Luke 1:30-35**
- We refer to this event as the Immaculate Conception

- Jesus came into the world unlike any other person ever
- Go to **Luke 2** – we'll see His birth was different also
- **Luke 2:1-3**
- Mary and Joseph were living in Nazareth, but the Bible predicted that this special Child would be born in Bethlehem
- And so, God arranged for this census to move Joseph and Mary to where the Child had to be born
- **Luke 2:4-7**
- By anyone's definition, Jesus was most influential person ever born
- Whether you believe in Him or not, this world was changed forever the day He was born
- And here He is, born to poor parents in a very humble environment – in a shelter for animals with an animal's food trough as His basinet
- Most of the world was oblivious to this history-changing birth
- But it was too big of an event to go by silently
- **Luke 2:8-14**
- The message is simple – all the world needs a Savior
- And because God loves each and every person on earth, He sent Jesus to be born for us **John 3:16**

**For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.**

- These shepherds, probably sitting around a campfire as they watched over their flocks
- Suddenly the dark night is brighter than the noonday sun as the glory of the heavenly host bursts onto the scene
- After they were gone – things couldn't just go back to the way they were – they had to go check it out
- God still breaks into the reality of humans – He speaks to us through His Word, through His Spirit, and through His people
- When God speaks to us in any way that He does – He is trying to do something in us and through us
- In the response of the shepherds I see three things we ought to do with the message God gives us
- First – **Find out if it is true!**
- **Luke 2:15-16**

- The shepherds confirmed that what the angel said was true
  - They believed what the angel said, but wanted to see it for themselves
  - God is still speaking to people – the message the angel gave to the shepherds is just as important today as it was then
  - We can't go to Bethlehem to see the 'Babe lying in the manger'
  - We go to the Book and see Him there – and we choose to believe
  - The second thing we see the shepherds doing – **Find someone to tell!**
  - **Luke 2:17-19**
  - The single greatest thing in human history has happened and the shepherds heard the message and went to see that it was true
  - The next thing they do is tell someone about it
  - You can tell how excited someone is because they feel compelled to tell others about it
  - The Savior of the world was born – we need to find someone to tell
  - The third thing we see the shepherds doing – **Find someone to share it with!**
  - This is different than find someone to tell
  - **Luke 2:20**
  - The shepherds went back to their fields to tend the sheep
  - But they didn't go back to the way they were
  - They gathered together and glorified God and praised Him for what they had seen and heard
  - They all had the message in common
  - When we gather at times like this, that is what we are doing
  - We all have the same message in common, and we gather to glorify God and praise Him for what He has done
  - That's the story of Christmas – it the story about a miracle
  - The Bible teaches that Jesus existed eternally as God the Son with God the Father in heaven
  - The conception and birth of Jesus is the miracle of God becoming a Man **John 1:14**
- And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.**
- I'd like to take a few minutes and discuss the message of Christmas
  - Why would Jesus leave heaven to come and walk with humanity?

- It is because Jesus and the Father created humans in their own image to be the objects of their love – we were created to be loved by God
- But something happened that prevents God from loving us the way He wanted to – sin entered into the world and into mankind **1 John 4:9-10**

**In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.**

- The message of Christmas is that we can be forgiven of our sins by receiving the gift of salvation through Jesus
- Check out the message for yourself and believe it
- Then find someone to tell
- And as you gather tonight and tomorrow, remember to glorify God and praise Him for all He has done and given you.
- Invite David to come up to close with a song or two
- **Pray!**
- **God bless you and have a radically blessed and joyous Christmas!**