



Hope Delivered!

Luke 2:1-20

Sermon given on December 27, 2020

Calvary Chapel French Valley

Christmas Service

Pastor Rick Lancaster

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Opening Comments

- Turn in your Bible to **Luke 2** – the Christmas Story
- On Christmas Eve I said the Christmas story is a story about hope
- God made promises to each and every one of us
- Based on those promises we can have a permanent hope
- A hope that is not broken by our mistakes or the mistakes of others
- A hope that is secure even in the storms of our life **Hebrews 6:17-20**

Thus God, determining to show more abundantly to the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed *it* by an oath, that by two immutable things, in which it *is* impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the hope set before *us*. This *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which enters the *Presence* behind the veil, where the forerunner has entered for us, *even Jesus*, having become High Priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek.

- We defined hope:

Hope: the confident expectation of coming good.

- The chain that holds us to anchor of hope is biblical faith

Biblical Faith: what you believe to be true about God and His Word

- The stronger your chain of faith is, the greater is your hope
- God is infinitely bigger than our faith
- On Thursday I also mentioned the connection between faith and hope
- Apostle Paul said **1 Corinthians 13:13**

And now abide faith, hope, love, these three; but the greatest of these *is* love.

- Faith is what you believe about God and His Word
- Hope is how you view the future based upon what you believe about God and His Word
- Love is what you do based upon how you view the future based upon what you believe about God and His Word
- Hope was promised to anyone who will believe God and His Word
- It is appropriated by faith and expressed in love and results in peace and joy
- If you missed that message, you can watch it online
- The Christmas story is a story of hope
- And right now, the world needs hope

- And the best place for them to find hope is in the Person of Jesus Christ
- The next best place is within someone who is living in the hope of Christ
- As the Jews were exiled to a foreign land – a plot arose by a wicked man to destroy them
- Through God's providence a Jewish woman became queen of that foreign land
- While struggling about what to do about the plot Mordecai said this to **Esther 4:14b**

Yet who knows whether you have come to the kingdom for such a time as this?

- Let's read the Christmas Story and see how God may have stirred up hope in your heart for 'such a time as this'
- First, let's pray and then we will get into that

Teaching

- **Hope Delivered!**
- Read along with me as I read the Christmas Story
- **Luke 2:1-20**
- Mary was one of the least likely people in Israel to be called upon to deliver the hope of humanity into the world
- She was young, she was poor, she came from a nothing town
- But what she did have was a humble faith in the living God
- When Gabriel told her that she was going to conceive of a Son miraculously she responded **Luke 1:34**

Then Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I do not know a man?"

- Based on Gabriel's response we can see that she was willing – she just didn't understand how it was going to happen
- Once she understood **Luke 1:38**

Then Mary said, "Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word." And the angel departed from her.

- And just as Gabriel said she conceived
- This was a problem for her fiancé who struggled to believe her story of an angel and immaculate conception
- Gabriel speaks with him and then nine months later she delivers Jesus
- Hope was now in the world in the life of this helpless babe in a manger

- The heavenly host praised God for this glorious event **Luke 2:14**
Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!
- There is very little known about the first thirty years of Jesus' life
- Then, Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist and begins teaching people about the kingdom of God
- And as a witness to His authority, Jesus performs countless miracles
- The teaching and the miracles were not why Jesus was born
- After Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden and brought the curse upon humanity hope has been distant and uncertain
- The curse created a separation between God and His highest creation
- And there was and still isn't anything anyone can do about that separation
- Only God could make a way for mankind to get back into a right relationship with God
- On the night before He died Jesus said **John 14:6**
Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me."
- We celebrate the birth of Christ – not because of His miraculous birth
- Not because of His teachings – not because of His miracles
- We celebrate His birth because His life made a way for us to be reconciled to God – made a way for us to be freed from the curse

Galatians 3:13

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "*Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree*")...

- We celebrate the birth of Christ because His birth was the promise of hope that would be given in His sacrificial death upon the cross and resurrection from the dead
- And that hope becomes a reality by faith **Romans 10:9**
...that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.
- There are three aspects of that hope that I would like to share with you this morning
- First – **Hope of Heaven**
- The consequence of sin in the world is death **Romans 6:23**
For the wages of sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

- The hope of heaven is powerful – it allows someone, by faith, to look beyond any circumstances they find themselves in
- Because no matter what is going on in the world around – there's heaven
- And the better we understand heaven as it is revealed to us in God's Word, the more hope it gives us = peace and joy
- The second aspect of hope - **Hope of Help**
- The hope of heaven allows us to see past our circumstances but through faith we also have hope in our circumstances
- It is in the midst of difficult circumstances that hope and faith are tested and rewarded **Hebrews 11:6**

But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.

- God's grace is free and undeserved, but His help comes through faith
- James says something along that line **James 4:2-3**
Yet you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.
- One of the great mysteries of faith is that we can ask God to help us and He will respond to us – sovereign, Almighty Creator of heaven and earth will respond to us
- Here's how faith gives hope of help
- In your circumstance – faith tells you that God can do anything **Mark 9:23**

Jesus said to him, "If you can believe, all things *are* possible to him who believes."

- Until God acts, my hope is not in what He will do but in what He can do
- And when we ask God for help, we shouldn't tell Him what to do
- He is God and is probably already providentially working on the answer to your prayer
- But we are called to pray, none the less – to express our faith in prayer
- We can pray and ask God to deliver us from our circumstances **Psalms 18:17-19**

He delivered me from my strong enemy, from those who hated me, for they were too strong for me. They confronted me in the day of my calamity, but the LORD was my support. He also brought me out into a broad place; He delivered me because He delighted in me.

- Pray, ask God to take it away

- But, understand – that might not be what He is planning to do
- We should pray and ask God to deliver us out of our circumstances but understand that He might be planning to deliver you through your circumstances **Psalm 23:4**

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me.

- David is saying, ‘Even though I am going through this thing that feels like death, I’m okay because You are with me.’
- That is hoping in God’s deliverance through the hard parts of life
- My hope is that through faith in God and His Word and the power of the Holy Spirit that God is going to help me out of or through whatever is going on in my life = peace and joy
- Third aspect of hope – **Hope for Him or Her**
- Jesus didn’t come to save me or you – He came to save everyone **1**

John 2:2

And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

- God created every human being as one of His image-bearers
- To be the objects of His love and grace
- Just like we were before Christ, they are separated from God by their sin – they need the hope that is found in Christ
- I believe that God is sovereignly, providentially working to bring them to faith in Jesus so that they have the same hope we have
- And I believe our hope is one of the things God will use to give them hope
- Hope is contagious – you live out the hope that is in you and others will be affected by it
- God might even use it cause them to seek out the source of your hope
- But for that to happen, they need to see your hope
- And that will happen as you grow in your faith and walk in faith and obedience to God and His Word through the power of the Holy Spirit and in the name of our blessed Savior Jesus Christ
- The Christmas story is a story of hope
- The hope of heaven – eternal life with God in heaven
- The hope of help – God is doing something to help – believe!

- Hope for him and her – The same hope that saved you will save those you care about
- And God will use your hope to reach them
- Hope: the confident expectation of coming good.
- Jesus is the hope of the world – my hope is in Him – Merry Christmas
- **Pray!**