

12/18/22 Message

Part of Lights of Christmas

December 17, 2022

Message: A Present for You

Series: Lights of Christmas

A good song for this message would be Casting Crown's, "While You Were Sleeping." Listen to it and let it remind us of what we miss...

On the other hand, here's what you'll find this Christmas... here's a guarantee...

- You'll ONLY find what you're looking for!

Luke 2:8-20 (NLT)

8 That night there were shepherds staying in the fields nearby, guarding their flocks of sheep.

9 Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord's glory surrounded them. They were terrified,
10 but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people.

11 The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!

12 And you will recognize him by this sign: You will find a baby wrapped snugly in strips of cloth, lying in a manger."

13 Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others—the armies of heaven—praising God and saying,

14 "Glory to God in highest heaven, and peace on earth to those with whom God is pleased."

15 When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, "Let's go to Bethlehem! Let's see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

16 They hurried to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger.

17 After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child.

18 All who heard the shepherds' story were astonished,

19 but Mary kept all these things in her heart and thought about them

often.

20 The shepherds went back to their flocks, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen. It was just as the angel had told them.

And the angel told them about a very special gift God was giving them this first Christmas, and this very special gift that God wants you to have this Christmas!

- This Christmas, God wants you to have the gift of JOY (v10)

1 Peter 1:8 (NLT)

You love him even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy.

Life isn't easy – but with Jesus, it's better! He wants your life to be filled with joy this Christmas! If you're looking for joy – you will find it!

- This Christmas, God wants you to have the gift of PEACE (v14)

To have peace, you should do these things:

- Make amends (with those you've offended, and who've offended you)
- Make good (on commitments or promises)
- Restore (broken relationships, trust, love)

Jesus brings you peace, but He doesn't give it to you on a silver platter. Instead, He gives you the power and the ability to do things you might not do otherwise. Through Him, you are compelled to make amends, make good, and restore! Through him, you have the ability to make amends, make good, and restore!

And one thing I've found out in life, if you're looking for peace, you will find it! Jesus wants your life to be filled with peace this Christmas!

- This Christmas, God wants you to have the gift of FORGIVENESS (vv8-20)

People have to forgive themselves. Then people have to forgive one another. But that only fixes things on this earth. That only offers a temporary fix.

Your eternity... your future... your forever – depends on one thing and

one thing only. Whether or not you've been forgiven by the One who came to earth as a baby over 2000 years ago, died on a cross 33 years later, so that you could be forgiven and have a personal relationship with God.

Jeremiah 29:13 says:

If you look for me with all your heart, you will find me.

1 John 5:20 (TLB)

And we know that Christ, God's Son, has come to help us understand and find the true God. And now we are in God because we are in Jesus Christ His Son, who is the only true God; and He is eternal life.

This Christmas, Jesus wants you to have:

- forgiveness for your PAST
- peace for your PRESENT
- and joy for your FUTURE

Those are His gifts for you!

You're never going to be offered a better present than Jesus!