

Church Part 11 - A Place of Renewal (12-12-2021)

Introduction: Christmas - a time of renewal (rediscovering something lost, a return to childhood, etc.)

1) Renewal - Jesus' Purpose (thru His Death & Resurrection)

Jesus' birth - Shepherds come & celebrate. 2 others a few days later @ the Temple presentation worship him!

Simeon - "my eyes have seen Your salvation . . . a sign that will be opposed . . . (to Mary) a sword will pierce through your own soul also" (from Luke 2:25-38)

The Magi following the star bringing gifts for the "one born king of the jews" . . .

Matthew 2:11 (ESV)

And going into the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh.

Note: Myrrh along with the other "kingly" gifts - was for Jesus burial

The night Jesus died, Nicodemus brings the mixture of myrrh for embalming . . .

John 19:39-40 (ESV)

(39) Nicodemus also, who earlier had come to Jesus by night, came bringing a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about seventy-five pounds in weight. (40) So they took the body of Jesus and bound it in linen cloths with the spices, as is the burial custom of the Jews.

Jesus understood & communicated his purpose . . .

Mark 9:31 (ESV)

For (Jesus) was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise."

Peter preaching in Acts 2 (the Birth of the Church) . . .

Acts 2:22-24 (ESV)

(22) "Men of Israel, hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works and wonders and signs that God did through him in your midst, as you yourselves know— (23) this Jesus, delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. (24) God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it.

Note: Peter is repeating what he had heard from Jesus & seen with his own eyes. From Jesus birth, life, death, & resurrection - there were always witnesses to who Jesus was & what He had done.

- **The significance of Christmas** (and Easter, & every time we gather!) is to "**Encounter the Christ!**"
- **So even at a funeral its an opportunity for the Reality of who Jesus is to be experienced . . .**

John 11:25a (ESV)

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life."

Note: Jesus communicates who He is and then demonstrates it. This leads to our 2nd point this morning . . .

2) Renewal - Jesus Purpose in our Lives (thru His Death & Resurrection - and ours!)

Jesus resurrection now calls us out of death - hear the message & receive new life!

John 11:25-26 (ESV)

(25) Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, (26) and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

Note: He calls us to make a decision about who he is, and the offer is eternal life!

This is what Peter is preaching about in Acts - He declares who Jesus is, & then calls us to act . . .

Acts 3:19-20 (ESV)

(19) Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, (20) that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus

Note: Repent (change course) and the result is - death to sin / new life in Jesus!

John 11:43 (ESV)

When (Jesus) had said these things, he cried out with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out."

Note: He then raises Lazarus from the dead - and friends he will do that for us too! Will you & I come out?

- **It is central that we live in the reality of the once & for all death & resurrection of Jesus!**
- **We are invited to live the "eternal life" now** - embrace it, & accept this as a way of life
- **Our life in Christ is a death & resurrection (Jesus - take up your cross & follow me!) . . .**

Paul unpacks this really well in Romans 6 (and onward through the letter). Here is a sense of it . . .

Romans 6:4-5 (ESV)

(4) We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (5) For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Romans 6:11-12 (ESV)

(11) So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus. (12) Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions.

Live daily in the reality of this new life - let's see now Paul's letter to the Colossians . . .

Colossians 3:1-5 (ESV)

(1) If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. (2) Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. (3) For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (4) When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. (5) Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry.

- **The way of Jesus is hard** (Death - a daily picking up of the cross)
- **The way of Jesus is good** (Life - daily renewal as we die to what kill us, & enjoy new life in Him!)

Now this leads to our 3rd and final point this morning - the Church's role in this process . . .

3) Renewal - The Church's purpose (assist one another in moving from Death into New Life)

Back to the resurrection of Lazarus . . .

John 11:43-44 (NKJV)

(43) Now when Jesus had said these things, He cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come forth!" (44) And he who had died came out bound hand and foot with grave clothes, and his face was wrapped with a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Loose him, and let him go."

- **Jesus' job** - resurrection power (unique to Him!) he brings us from death to life
- **Our job** - Loose him & let him go!

Back to Colossians 3 - after reminding us of the new life we have in Jesus, Paul encourages us to walk this out **Together!**

Paul describes what we need to "take off" (vs. 8) & what we now "put on" (vs. 12)

Colossians 3:8-11 (ESV)

(8) But now you must **put them all** away: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth.

(9) Do not lie to **one another**, seeing that you have **put off the old self with its practices** (10) and have **put on the new self**, which is being **renewed** in knowledge after the image of its creator. (11) Here there is not Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, free; but Christ is all, and in all.

Colossians 3:12-14 (ESV)

(12) **Put on then**, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, (13) bearing with **one another** and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving **each other**; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. (14) And above all these **put on love**, which **binds everything together** in perfect harmony.

How can we do this together? We do our job, and let Jesus do his . . .

Colossians 3:15-17 (ESV)

(15) And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in **one body**. And be thankful. (16) Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing **one another** in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. (17) And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Conclusion: Jesus came to bring renewal - in our lives individually & to create an "eternal" community here & now where we help each other to remove grave clothes & walk in new life!