

MAKING THE MOST OF CHRISTMAS

GETTING THE MOST from JESUS' BIRTH



Relationships That Really Matter
Luke 1:39-45; Luke 2:8-20

Introduction: _____ matter to God! Life is all about relationships.

1. Be _____ with People – Luke 1:39-45

³⁹ Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, ⁴⁰ and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³ But why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."

Mary and Elizabeth

What lesson can we learn from the relationship between Mary and Elizabeth? It's quite simple: Be _____ with people.

She traveled "with _____" (Luke 1:39) to visit her cousin. Relationships are _____!

Too often, we are present physically but absent _____ or emotionally.

The Shepherds

It involves _____. The shepherds in that text were doing what shepherds do when the angel of the Lord appeared to them. These individuals were in _____ with one another.

So, what can you and I do this Christmas to make it more about people? I would suggest taking the following steps:

- This Christmas choose to be truly _____ with your loved ones.
- Look into the _____ of those you love.
- Have some meaningful _____.
- Play _____ together.

Remember, “Being _____” is a gift that costs nothing but means everything.

2. Celebrate God’s _____ in Others – Luke 1:45

⁴⁵ Blessed is she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord.”

There is a second lesson in our text, and it comes from Elizabeth’s response. She _____ God’s work in Mary. Elizabeth said,

“Blessed is she who believed...”

Elizabeth _____ in what God was doing in Mary’s life.

Too often at Christmas, we focus on _____. We compare our homes, our gifts, our traditions.

As believers we need to be thankful that God is at _____ in the lives of those we know.

Hear me: Don't _____ up on people!

We can: (Write verses down)

- We can speak words of _____.
- We can celebrate the _____, the gifts, and the victories of others.
- We can focus on what God is _____ in the lives of those around you instead of comparing or competing.

It has been said that JOY at Christmas stands for:

- _____ – **Matthew 1:21**
- **OTHERS** – **Philippians 2:3-4**
- _____ – **Mark 12:31**

What is a _____ way to make relationships matter this Christmas?

3. Invite _____ into Your Relationships – Luke 2:15-20

¹⁵ So it was, when the angels had gone away from them into heaven, that the shepherds said to one another, "Let us now go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has come to pass, which the Lord has made known to us." ¹⁶ And they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the Babe lying in a manger. ¹⁷ Now when they had seen Him, they made widely known the saying which was told them concerning this Child. ¹⁸ And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. ¹⁹ But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰ Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told them.

We can learn about _____ Jesus into our relationships through the shepherds.

Here is what I see from the text:

- **They _____ together (Luke 2:8).** We read, “living out in the fields” which indicates community among the shepherds.
- **They _____ the “Good News” together (Luke 2:15).** They did it as a group.
- **They _____ and praised God together (Luke 2:20).**

Relationships, when grounded in Christ, become _____ for God’s love and grace. I would dare to say that Jesus Christ is the HEALTH of every Relationship.

This Christmas why don’t you...

- Take the _____ to reconcile with someone you’ve been at odds with. Be the first to reach out to them.
- Include someone in your Christmas who might otherwise be alone this Christmas — a neighbor, a coworker, or a single person in your church family. People long to be loved.
- _____ with your family before meals, read the Christmas story together, and make Christ the center of all interactions.

Conclusion – As we close, I want to leave you with a simple _____ Christmas Challenge.

First – Be _____ Show up fully — physically, emotionally, spiritually.

Second – Celebrate God’s _____ in them — speak words of affirmation and joy. Make your time with them about them. They should walk away feeling good.

Third – Invite _____ into every relationship — through an invitation, through prayer, through service, and through extending the love of Jesus Christ.

The Christmas Tree

