Christmas Pageant

Sermon December 16, 2018

It certainly couldn't have been for Jesus.

Leaving the glory of heaven to inhabit a body that would get tired and hurt from a hard day working in the carpenter shop wasn't reason for joy. Then to preach the message he'd been sent to communicate, not only to have the majority of folks not believe him, but also to crucify him for it— no, the singing wasn't for Jesus.

It probably wasn't for the angels themselves.

It would give them no joy to watch for the next 33 years the incredible wonder of the Creator of the universe playing with little kids, speaking to the storm and quieting it like a child, watching him restore sight and wholeness to the hurting and life itself to a friend who had died, and to have all that love rejected. No, the angels weren't singing for themselves.

I think the angels were singing for us.

The celebration was because they knew Jesus was the true connection between people and God. They knew Jesus could quiet that empty place in each heart that God created and only He can fill. They knew Jesus came to earth to bridge the gap between God and man by his death on the cross. That's why we have Christmas and the angels sang.

Their song is for you if you know Jesus.

If not, if the place is your heart is still empty and without Jesus, this year consider filling it with him. But think carefully first. Though salvation in Jesus is a free gift, it isn't one without cost. You get it free, but Jesus died to give it to you. Also, if you accept Jesus' gift of salvation, know He takes it very seriously and you won't ever be the same. A new life will start in you, the very life of God.

If you want God's gift in all His fullness, chances are that He might ask for some changes in your life to make room for new things He'll want to bring in. Don't be afraid; you won't be losing out. You'll be gaining a whole way of life that will be more satisfying than you can imagine. You'll want to read the Bible; you'll want to talk to God in prayer; you'll want to go to a church and meet other members of your new family of God. You'll want to grow spiritually and become all your Creator meant for you to be.

It can be scary. You'll be under new management, but whatever you might be tightly clutching now will seem no more important to you than it does to a child who gladly sets aside a toy tricycle when he realizes his parents have a real bicycle for him.

The first Christmas began with a glorious song from angels, but the song isn't over. Did you know the angels want to sing for you?

The Bible tells us that the angels today sing for joy whenever someone accepts the greatest gift of all—Jesus. If you want that gift, wherever you are, out-loud or in your heart, say something like this to him:

Dear Jesus, I want the gift you want to give me. I want to be connected with my God this Christmas. I know that I'm not. I know there are things in my life, my sin, my pride, even some of my good deeds that I thought could take me to God, but I know on my own I won't make it. I realize Jesus came to earth that first Christmas to do what I could not do—to die for me, so I can live with you. I don't understand it all, but I want to ask you anyway to come into my life, to be my Saviour, to be with me now and forever. Help me to learn what I need to learn and to grow and live a life that will be pleasing to you. Amen.

If you prayed that prayer, listen quietly. The angels are singing—you may not hear them with your ears, but a song of joy that will never end has begun in your heart.

Hark! the Herald Angels Sing! but why? At Christmas—did you ever wonder what that joyous singing was about?

If you are considering becoming a Christian…. This is not a decision to be taken lightly. It is not a quick fix, fire-insurance, one more thing to try to make you feel better. It is an eternal commitment to Jesus Christ as Forgiver and Leader of your life.

Please take time to explore these websites:

Who is Jesus? http://www.whoisjesus-really.com/english/menu.htm Lots of questions answered here about Jesus.

Christian Research Institute: http://www.equip.org/ This is the website of the Christian Research Institute and Hank Hanegraff, the Bible Answer Man. It has many resources that answer questions about the Christian faith and other religions in depth. Excellent books and resources are also available on the site.

Ten Reasons to Believe: http://www.rbc.org/rtb/ An excellent site to explore the Christian faith in detail. Contains a number of lists including: ten reasons to believe in life after death; ten reasons to believe in Christ rather than religion; ten reasons to believe in the Bible; ten action steps for a new Christian.

Questions answered about Jesus and the Christian faith by former atheist reporter, Lee Strobel: http://www.leestrobel.com/channels/Christ.php Great writing, videos, excellent books to answer questions about the Christian faith.

Once you become a Christian you are expected to grow in your faith—these sites will help:

Christian Research Institute: http://www.equip.org/ I'm listing this website again because it is also one of the best resources for Christian growth.

The Blue Letter Bible: http://www.blueletterbible.org/index.html A classic site of free Bible study tools: commentaries, maps, all sorts of study guides. This is a wonderful resource for personal Bible study. You can click on concordance and commentaries related to bible verses.

Our Daily Bread: http://www.rbc.org/odb/odb.shtml A wonderful daily devotional for both new and more mature Christians.

Radio Bible Class Ministries: http://www.rbc.org/ There are a wealth of resources on this site for growing in your Christian life. There are Bible reading plans, articles on finding a church, answers to many questions people have about the Christian faith.

Into Thy Word: http://sites.silaspartners.com/intothyword.html A wonderful site that will teach you how to study the Bible, lots of great Bible study articles, fantastic links on their Bible Study Tools page, lots of great information.