



December 20, 2009

Message: Story of Peace

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MESSAGE NOTES

Once upon
a time...

The Story of Christmas

December 24th

Christmas Eve Service

6:30pm

HOPE FLOW...LETTING GOD'S LOVE FLOW THROUGH US EVERY DAY!

Start each day with a prayer that God will give you understanding and wisdom and show you how it can be useful in your life.

DAY 1 GOD IS WITH US

Over the past few weeks, we have been studying God's Timeless Story of Christmas, as told in the Book of Matthew. Read Matthew 1 and 2 again.

The story begins with the Genealogy of Jesus, which we found is full of persons who were far from perfect. Yet, despite their sins before/against God, God's FAITHFULNESS to send His SON, keeping His redemptive promise to save a broken world.

As the story of Christmas continues to unfold with the glorious birth of Jesus, it not only tells about angels and shepherds and wise men who come with gifts, but also tells about the evil in this broken world in Herod and his hatred, of soldiers and of little children being murdered.

The picture of reality is that there is anguish and suffering in this world, but we have HOPE because GOD came to bear it with us!

Matthew 1:23

"The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel"—which means, "God with us."

The holiday's can be a time of great joy, but also can also be a time of pain and suffering for some. Is there something in your life that makes this a not so joyous time, or maybe someone you know is having a difficult time.

- ◆ How can God's gift give you HOPE?
- ◆ Pray how you can help bring the hope that God is with Us to someone else!
- ◆ Is there someone you can reach out to and pray with or bring a little light into their life during this time? Please don't hesitate...go for it!

DAY 2 GOD IS FOR US - God's Sovereignty

Proverbs 16:1-4 *To man belong the plans of the heart, but from the LORD comes the reply of the tongue. All a man's ways seem innocent to him, but motives are weighed by the LORD. Commit to the LORD whatever you do, and your plans will succeed. The LORD works out everything for his own ends— even the wicked for a day of disaster.*

Isaiah 40:26 *Lift your eyes and look to the heavens: Who created all these? He who brings out the starry host one by one, and calls them each by name. Because of his great power and mighty strength, not one of them is missing.*

Read Psalm 9 – Dr. Charles Stanley's Daily Devotional on December 16th, "The Good Judge" talks about the struggle people have with accepting God's goodness when there is evil and suffering allowed to continue in this world.

- ◆ What kind of judge is God? Is He a good and loving or is wrathful or both?

Dr. Stanley surmises that in reality he is both and proves His goodness. Because of God's grace and mercy, "He patiently waits for all to repent and accept the forgiveness of sins that is available through Christ alone." But in the final judgment, the Lord will not leave the guilty unpunished."

1 John 5:19-20 *We know that we are children of God, and that the whole world is under the control of the evil one. ²⁰We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.*

DAY 3 GOD IS FOR US - God's Protection

Even though Jesus and his family may have endured suffering, inconvenience, times of trials and obstacles, God protected Jesus Christ from his birth to his appointed death on the cross.

- ◆ Those who believe in Jesus Christ fall under God's protection as well. Do you think you are under God's care?

Romans 8:31-32 *What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?*

READ AND CONTEMPLATE PSALM 37:1-7

Do not fret because of evil men or be envious of those who do wrong; for like the grass they will soon wither, like green plants they will soon die away.

Trust in the LORD and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture.

Delight yourself in the LORD and he will give you the desires of your heart

Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him and he will do this: He will make your righteousness shine like the dawn, the justice of your cause like the noonday sun.

Be still before the LORD and wait patiently for him; do not fret when men succeed in their ways, when they carry out their wicked schemes

DAY 4 GOD IS IN US - God's Provision

John 14: 26-27 *But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*

Say a prayer of thanks to the Lord for sending His Son into this broken world, for His blood shed for our sins. For God's grace, mercy and forgiveness. Thank God for sending the Holy Spirit to teach and guide us while we are on this earth.

DAY 5 Jesus Overcomes the World

John 16:33 *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world."*

Matthew 7:7-8 *Ask—>Receive; Seek—>Find; Knock—>door will be opened*

"Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

- ◆ How can you wake up each day and live a more Christ-centered life?
- ◆ How can you be a part of God's redemption plan for this world?
- ◆ What kind of Inner revolution needs to take place in order to produce an outward transformation?

Pray Matthew 6:9-13 *'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.*