

Graceful Generosity

Published to help you grow as a steward of God's grace.

Sharing the Christmas Story

The season of Advent has provided opportunity for us to reflect on God's great love for us fallen sinners that has caused him to send his very own Son who came for the ungodly, even for those who will never acknowledge his sacrifice and who reject his free gift of salvation.

Along with the joy that we have in our Savior, especially at this time of the celebration of his birth, the knowledge that not all experience this joy brings a sorrow to us as it does to the heart of our Lord.

Just as God in his love sent his Son into this world to save the lost, so we are now sent to tell others of that love. Our church's mission is to follow Paul's admonition to Timothy:

"Devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."

1 Timothy 4:13, 16

Together we preach and teach the Word from the pulpit and through our Bible classes. Together we strive to live as Christ would have us live, persevering by grace, in order that we might bring glory to God and extend his Kingdom. We are grateful for this partnership in the Gospel and for your gifts of time, talents, and financial resources that you so willingly share in order to carry out God's work on earth. God's blessings on your Christmas worship and celebration with loved ones.

Giving to Jesus

Christmas is such a wonderful time of the year because we get the opportunity to celebrate the wondrous gift of God's Son, Jesus. Because of God's gift to us on the very first Christmas, Christmas has become a gift-giving season. With so many people to give gifts to such as sons and daughters, moms and dads, aunts and uncles, grandmas and grandpas, etc., it is difficult to find the right gift for everyone. God has no such problems. He knew exactly what each person needed. In fact, he knows our needs better than we know them, and he knew them before we were ever born. And the timing of his most indescribable gift was perfect.

"When the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons." Galatians 4:4

How do we respond to what God has given us? Shouldn't we be asking, "What have I given to him?" Certainly, we don't go to the malls to shop for Jesus. The greatest gifts we can give him are not found there anyway. The best gift that we can possibly give him is our hearts and to show him our love by faithfully and obediently doing what he asks of us. God is pleased when we allow him to work through us as channels of his love to others. We will remain his channels when we stay focused on the most indescribable gift, the gift of Jesus.

May we all keep Christ as the heart of our Christmas and make Jesus the reason for our joy.



Tell the Good News

Here we are, ready to celebrate the birth of Christ – a major event, even for those who don't believe in him. Today this celebration is heralded back in October, or at least November, by merchants filling their shelves with enticing gifts, decorations, cards, and all the trappings of Christmas.

How different from the first Christmas! Mary and Joseph settled down in an inn.

There were no photographers waiting outside to snap the first picture of the new king. No one knew what was happening! No one, that is, except for the parents and the host of Heaven who made the announcement. But to whom was this announcement made? To the powerful who would speed through the towns and villages, spreading the news? No, to shepherds who were outcasts, hired hands who were so low on the social scale that they weren't even allowed to give testimony in a court of law. They weren't even allowed to come into the Temple.

Yet these were the ones chosen by God to tell the good news. These wretched creatures saw the angels with “. . . the glory of the Lord [shining] around them . . .”

They heard the message the angels brought:

“Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord . . . you will find a baby . . . lying in a manger.” Luke 2:9,11,12

They saw, they listened, and then they went to see for themselves. After receiving the Good News, they spread it.

“When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.” Luke 2:17-18

If lowly shepherds could tell the story, can't we as well? “All who heard it were amazed,” Luke writes, but he doesn't say all believed. All we're asked to do is tell the story. How could fear, uncertainty, or apathy hold us back? This is the biggest news mankind has ever received! As stewards of the Gospel, we have no choice but to follow the example of the shepherds and “*spread the word concerning what has been told [us] about this child.*”



Blessings on Your Stewardship Journey!