

The birth of Jesus

Hello, I am Zii Wen from Singapore, I bring you greetings from Bukit Panjang Methodist Church. Today I would like to share with us a message on Luke 2, the birth of Jesus.

Every Christmas, Christians all over the world celebrate the birth of Jesus. Why? What is the significance or what is so special about this account? People are born every day, every minute, even as we speak somebody is born. Maybe we need to ask who was this Jesus and what about Him that is so special.

The story mentioned that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the saviour of the world. We read in the Bible, Philippians 2 that Jesus Christ is God. But He did not think that being God was something to hold onto. He emptied himself, he became human to walk among us, to live like us and to save us by dying on the cross for us. God wanted to come to us because He knows that we cannot go to Him. God meets us where we are at and brings us to where He is.

Why would God do that? A simple answer is Love.

God loves each one of us. He loves us so much that He would give up everything to die on the cross so that He can reunite us with Himself.

Isn't that amazing, that God would reach out and adopt us into His family even though we are undeserving of it.

The next part of the story was angels appearing to shepherds. telling them about this Good News, that Jesus Christ, the saviour of the World is born. We notice two things

The first, the angels appeared to tell Good News - the saviour of the world is here.

The birth of Jesus is Good News, because the world that God has always intended to have is here! The brokenness of this world will soon be a thing of the past. Later we read in Luke that Jesus came to give freedom to all who need it. He came to bestow honour to those who need it.

Second they appeared to shepherds. Shepherds in those days were ordinary people, maybe even less than ordinary. They stayed out in the field long nights to take care of the sheep, yet the angels appeared to them to tell them this Good News. Sometimes we think that only a certain kind of people are given access to God. No, in this story it shows that everybody, especially the lowly people are welcomed and invited to be a part of God's kingdom. They would even be considered the first of all to enter God's kingdom. Upon hearing what the angels said, these shepherds put down everything they were doing and went to see Jesus and told everybody about it. God wants us to know that the Good News, is not reserved for the smart, or the rich. It is for everybody. A message that everybody can understand, God did not come for a selected few people. God came for all.

I used to think that I had to be perfect in order for God to accept me. Every time I did something wrong, I would beat myself up. I would feel so guilty and shameful. Even though I knew in my head that God forgives, somehow He would hang wrong doings over my head. No, God is not like that. We do not need to do any fancy rituals or offer big sacrifices to Him so that He will hear or respond. He is already waiting for us to reach out, even if it is just a small cry for help. It is our human nature that feels like we need to make up for all that we do. We somehow have to work for God to notice us or work for God to forgive us. That is not how God works, if Jesus who is God, can say that we are more important to Him than being equal with God would He not meet us where we are at. If God choose shepherds who were regarded as ordinary or even lowly, would he not reach out to you?

This story speaks to us on many different levels.

Are we in need of God's love? This love that never puts us to shame but lifts us up out of all our shame and dishonour. A love that reconciles, a love that forgives all wrong, a love that accepts us, a love that meets us in whatever situation we are in. This love, is extended to you now.

Do we need to tell somebody about the birth of Jesus? The shepherds barely knew Jesus, yet hearing what the angels said and seeing Jesus, they went into the town, telling everybody about this Good News. The message was simple enough for shepherds who were not educated to share. We too can share this Good News, that Jesus came into the Earth to save the world.

We might think this story is crazy, and it is, the more I think about it it just seems impossible that this story is true. However, in the same way the Angel told Mary, I would tell you that Nothing is impossible with God. God's Word never fails. God uses the simple gospel to share His love to us. My prayer for us is that we do not miss it.

Let us pray, God, we thank You for the simple gospel. Thank you that we do not need to anything but just receive You and Your message of salvation. God, I pray for everybody here that they would open up their heart to you and allow Your gospel to wash over them. Amen.