

# The Hope of Christmas

Luke 2:1-20

## Intro

Over advent, hope – joy, peace, uncertainty, light

## Refresher:

Hope is “Confident Expectation” (slide – mouse)

- Different from “wishful thinking” – test
- Prob. – honest, might use WT over CE
- Of all people, Christians are to be most h.  
no matter what the situation, we are to be!

**Illustration:** Bake N Take, prep, shut ins, don't tell them, confident God will do something – one lady – stories/how she learned to knit, how she spent 51 years volunteering (they should too), how she found our church and is so thankful – they will never forget her! God speaks through the unexpected!

## Hope in the Christmas Story (slide)

### 1. God brings hope through the unexpected

- Divine announcements (1:26-38, 2:8-20)
  - Here – shepherds, normal life, blue collar, rough – God brings the unexpected announcement - “glory, good news, all people, savior, Messiah, Lord, to you” (9-11 - slide)
  - 1:26-38 – Mary, engaged, secure, man to care for her, waiting – God brings the unexpected – 1:28-33 (slide)
  - “do not be afraid” – Impact!

- To men whom religion out of their reach, not good enough, he comes into the world for all people and for THEM – they are the first to hear Gods ann.
  - To a young mother – God chooses her of all people to bear His son
- Divine qualifications of Jesus
  - “great, son of the most high, Throne, reign, eternal kingdom”, “Saviour, Christ, Lord”
  - They have a choice – to doubt or to submit to God’s plan in the unexpected
- Doubt vs. submission
  - Unexpected was still difficult for them
    - Mary – people’s unbelief, looks, “should be ashamed” ...r/t greatness!
    - Shepherds – God visits/reveals to them? How can they be trusted?
  - They chose to submit – Mary: “may it be as you have said” (1) and treasured (2), Shepherds: “They hurried off...spread the word” = this brought hope to them
  - God speaks to us, brings hope to us in the unexpected
  - When the unexpected happens, understand that hope lies in submitting to the lordship of God

*Life Lesson:*

*What “divine announcement” has God given me? How can I respond to it?*

- How has God surprised you? Maybe not angelic, but maybe through circumstances. Health, job, life challenge... understand that God may be speaking to you to bring you hope
- How have I /can I respond to it? Fear? Despair? Doubt? Responding with hope, confident expectation that God is at work, bringing deeper faith

2. God inspires hope through His faithfulness

- Jesus is identified as “The Anointed One” (2:11) – God promised centuries ago and delivered – savior
- All characters are amazed
  - Shepherds are amazed enough to leave flocks to investigate, find Jesus, Mary Joseph,
  - then tell all people who in turn are amazed.
  - Mary also amazed, treasured

Amazement” at the proclamation of the Messiah (theme in Luke 12x)

- 1:21 – people/Zechariah/Angel/Temple
- 1:63 – people/Zechariah/tablet/“John”
- 2:18 – people/Shepherds re: Jesus’ birth
- 2:33 – Mary/Joseph at Simeon’s words
- 4:22 – people/Jesus’ teaching, words
- 8:25 – disciples/storm/where is faith?
- 9:43 – people/Jesus heals boy/evil spirit

- 11:14 – people/Jesus heals mute man
  - 11:38 – Pharisee/Jesus not wash hands
  - 20:26 – spies/Jesus answer to their trap
  - 24:12 – Peter/empty tomb
  - 24:41 – disciples/Jesus res./hands/feet
- Human Response to the faithfulness of God should be amazement!

Shepherds - “glorifying & praising God”,  
 “spreading the word” (20) – “all they had  
 seen & heard were just like they were told”

Mary – Treasured in her heart

- God is faithful! We should be amazed!

*Life Lesson: How has God revealed His faithfulness to me? How can I respond to it?*

- Have we lost some of our amazement about God?
- Have we forgotten that the same God who fulfilled so many prophecies with the coming of Jesus (according to scripture.com 353) is still keeping his word to us?

Illustration: “The dying boy”

- Our hope, confident expectation, is found in the faithfulness of God – we can trust Him! He is...

Faithful in his provision for us: Philippians 4:19 – “And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”

Faithful in his presence with us: Matthew 28:20 – “I will be with you always, even to the end of the age”

Faithful in his preparation for those who trust in Him:

John 14:1-3 – “Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> My Father’s house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.”

God is Faithful. That is why we should be the most hopeful of all people!

This Christmas, allow the Hope that God brings, in the unexpected, out of His faithfulness, to change us!

### “The dying boy”

The school system in a large city had a program to help children keep up with their school work during stays in the city’s hospitals. One day a teacher who was assigned to the program received a routine call asking her to visit a particular child. She took the child’s name and room number and talked briefly with the child’s regular class teacher. “We’re studying nouns and adverbs in his class now,” the regular teacher said, “and I’d be grateful if you could help him understand them so he doesn’t fall too far behind.”

The hospital program teacher went to see the boy that afternoon. No one had mentioned to her that the boy had been badly burned and was in great pain. Upset at the sight of the boy, she stammered as she told him, “I’ve been sent by your school to help you with nouns and adverbs.” When she left she felt she hadn’t accomplished much. But the next day, a nurse asked her, “What did you do to that boy?” The teacher felt she must have done something wrong and began to apologize. “No, no,” said the nurse. “You don’t know what I mean. We’ve been worried about that little boy, but ever since yesterday, his whole attitude has changed. He’s fighting back, responding to treatment. It’s as though he’s decided to live.”

Two weeks later the boy explained that he had completely given up hope until the teacher arrived. Everything changed when he came to a simple realization. He expressed it this way: “They wouldn’t send a teacher to work on nouns and adverbs with a dying boy, would they?”

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The Hope of Christmas  
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Hope is “\_\_\_\_\_”

Hope in the Christmas Story

1. God brings hope \_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_
  - Divine \_\_\_\_\_ (1:26-38, 2:8-20)
    - “do not be \_\_\_\_\_”
  - Divine \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus  
“\_\_\_\_\_, son of the \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
kingdom, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_”
  - Human Response
    - \_\_\_\_\_ vs. \_\_\_\_\_

*Life Lesson: What “divine announcement” has God given me? How can I respond to it?*

2. God inspires hope \_\_\_\_\_ His \_\_\_\_\_
  - “The \_\_\_\_\_ One” (2:11)
  - “\_\_\_\_\_” at the proclamation of the good news of the Messiah (12x in Luke)
  - Human Response (2:20)
    - “\_\_\_\_\_ & \_\_\_\_\_”
    - “\_\_\_\_\_”

*Life Lesson: How has God revealed His faithfulness to me? How can I respond to it?*