

CHRISTMAS 2016—SERMON STUDY NOTES

Quidnick Baptist Church † Michael Gavigan, Pastor

LESSON 1: Messiah in the Old Testament (Sunday, December 11, 2016)

Key Scripture: Is 7:14; 9:6; Gen 3:15; Heb 1:1-4; Rev 5:6-14

- We will miss the videos of Messiah in the OT, the snapshots of His glory there, if we don't know Him well enough to recognize Him when He appears.
- We have a manger with a rock feeding trough acting as a bassinet for a sleeping child and the anxious hearts that come to worship and kneel before this amazing wonder, Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, born this day.
- That's not only true of the physical, but it's true of all other forces and powers in the universe: psychological, social and spiritual; Jesus Christ is in charge of them all.
- Jesus came to solve the unsolvable problem and wash away the indelible stain of sin.
- The good news of Christmas is that every one of us who has come to Christ, keeps on realizing that He has the power to cleanse us.
- That is the closing scene of time, the one great event toward which God's creation moves.
- Christmas is an opportunity for the love of Christ to flow in our families, with our friends, wherever we are.
- Christianity has a truth claim that is completely different from all other faiths because it's infinite and eternal, yet received by finite human beings confined by time and space.
- The irony is that many people don't want any mention of Christmas, but they want to celebrate, give gifts, have parties and get paid for not working on December 25.
- In the Greek NT and the Septuagint, *Christos* is the Greek translation of the Hebrew *Mashiach* translated Messiah, the anointed or appointed one.
- This is a prediction that at some time, Messiah the Prince will come and He will be cut off, indicating that He will be killed or destroyed in some manner.
- He's not only called the Messiah; He's the Branch, the Holy One, Adonai, the Servant of the Lord and the Son of Man.
- The only people who can understand the OT are those who know and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, for in Christ, the veil is taken away.
- So, there is narrative and history, then a poem that focuses on the end times and the promise of a coming King.
- That's what the genealogies are all about; tracing the line of *the Seed*, so that He can be clearly identified as the Messiah when He arrives.
- One of the major themes of the Torah is the promise, the lineage and the predictions for identification of this end-time Ruler who will bring glory to God's people.
- Redemption not only applies to the relationship of man to God, but it will also affect creation.

- Today in modern Judaism, they don't believe in Satan as a fallen angel, just an adversarial mind-set toward God but not a demonic person.
- When animals talk (like Balaam's donkey), it's because another power has taken over the animal and is speaking through it.
- In reference to time, it's going to be quite a while before the *Seed of the woman* enters the picture and that particular serpent, isn't going to live for 4,000 years!
- *Genesis 3:15* is predicting that *the Seed of the woman* will destroy the serpent through His own death—which fits the pattern that we see in the fulfilment of Scripture, that it's through Christ's death on the cross that He defeats and destroys Satan.
- Evil is defeated through the "*Seed of the woman*" indicating humanity.

LESSON 2: The Grinch who couldn't steal Christmas (Sunday, December 18, 2016)

Key Scripture: 2 Cor 9:15; Phil 2:5-11; Heb 10:5-6

- The choices we make determine the life that we live.
- Our special Guest Star is none other than; The King of Kings, The Lord of Lords, The Bright Morning Star, The Son of the Living God in all His splendor appearing this morning in a cameo role.
- There are people including believers who fall apart at Christmas because Christmas has to do with our scale of values or priorities.
- Happiness does not depend upon the circumstances of life; happiness depends upon the condition of the soul.
- The proper focus of Christmas is the Gift that God has given to us.
- We are most like God when we give of ourselves: voluntarily, sacrificially and joyfully.
- People without capacity for life, love and happiness lack appreciation.
- Gratitude is generously expressed by those who truly follow Christ.
- If you are not thankful to God for anything, you have no capacity to experience blessing.
- As the God-man, Jesus Christ is different from the Father and the Holy Spirit as man and different from all mankind as God!
- The God-man is our first and only important Christmas gift package; Have you unwrapped your gift?
- The Lord Jesus Christ is the greatest and most marvelous Christmas gift.
- The true meaning of Christmas is to think like Jesus with humility over arrogance and emotion.
- Our Christmas gift is the baby Jesus "wrapped up" in swaddling (death) clothes, the man Christ Jesus "wrapped" in truth and our dying substitute "wrapped around" a Cross of shame!

- Our Christmas gift is to know that we are royal priests, representing ourselves before God.
- How you represent yourself depends on what your scale of values is.
- Our Christmas gift contains the ultimate fulfillment of God's will.
- Non-meritorious faith is how our Christmas gift is received.
- At the cross, Jesus received our sins and we received His righteousness!
- The great exchange doesn't happen after Christmas because something doesn't fit; it happens at Christmas on a one-way street!
- For the believer; life, residence and function inside God's power system, enables God to demonstrate His character, glorifying Him to the maximum.
- And when you understand what the Grinch and his kingdom of darkness doesn't want you to know about your gift, then you can truly celebrate the spirit of Christmas and even tolerate those who don't know how!

LESSON 3: Celebrating Christmas God's Way (Saturday, December 24, 2016)

Key Scripture: Lk 2:8-20; Is 8:20

- One of the best ways to resist the tendency to sleep through a Christmas sermon is to focus on the details.
- What makes something biblical isn't that it conforms to the Bible; it's that it comes from the Bible.
- When Jesus was being tempted by Satan in the wilderness, He didn't quote a Bible commentary or a rabbinical text or something from the Mishna; He quoted word-for-word exactly from the Bible.
- The solution isn't religious or what's on the outside, it's what's on the inside.
- We must be careful not to become impatient with those that don't get it right away because unbelievers don't understand the Gospel and not all believers are committed disciples.
- John was about 6 months older than Jesus, so he would have learned about what happened with cousin Mary regarding her virgin conception and birth.
- Even believers, who have a tremendous amount of knowledge, become confused over one issue or another and that shouldn't surprise us.
- God created man in His image and likeness so that He would be able to communicate to him in a way that he could completely understand.
- If they were writing simply as human beings, they would have changed things to fit it all together.
- We have different people with different roles and different levels of education and yet they agree on some of the most controversial topics that have ever been discussed or debated in human history and they do not contradict each other!

- But in Christianity, we have Jesus, the eternal second person of the Trinity, very God with the same attributes as God, who willingly gives up the use of His divine attributes, to take on the limitations of humanity for the purpose of fulfilling the plan of salvation.
- This sign is a huge billboard with flashing neon lights to alert not only the shepherds but everyone that something extremely significant and unusual has taken place.
- It was in this area that young David cared for his father's flock of sheep.
- David was great, not because of what he did in later life, but because of the Word of God in his soul applied to extreme circumstances as a young man.
- Mishnah reports that these men were not ordinary shepherds and the sheep were not ordinary sheep.
- These men are performing the valuable task of protecting the sacrificial lambs for the Feast of Dedication and for their service, they were ostracized by the very religion for which they were guarding them!
- *1 Samuel 16:7: "But the Lord said to Samuel, "Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart."*
- David lived with the sheep and he fulfilled the OT spiritual life as well as anyone who ever lived.
- These shepherds actually celebrated the first Christmas the right way, God's way, in their souls with the Word of God circulating in their stream of consciousness.
- Because they had biblical truth in their souls, when they heard the angelic announcement, they knew exactly where to go.
- Because they were filled with the Word, they were able to drop their fear and pay attention, as no one ever learns the truth of God while in an emotional state of fear.
- The question for you this Christmas is whether you have true happiness or not.
- Christmas has meaning for these shepherds and everyone else that has believed on Jesus Christ and has chosen to rely on God's grace provision alone.
- There is no understanding of life apart from biblical truth in the soul and if you don't have it, you don't have anything.
- Celebrating Christmas God's way is an everyday occurrence whereby intimacy with God precedes intimacy with people.
- Only God can replace great fear with great joy (cognitive reality)!
- The Christmas 'sign' in *Luke 2:12* tells us that something important must be known in relation to Jesus Christ as the God-man at His incarnation.
- The sign of the birth of Jesus Christ given to these prepared men was that Messiah was identified with death as the true Lamb of God.
- Celebrating Christmas God's way is recalling our initial meeting with Jesus Christ.