

“THE TRUE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS”

LUKE 2:1-20

INTRO: During Christmas time of the year, greeting card companies make BILLIONS OF DOLLARS on Christmas cards that are peppered with all sorts of messages. The first known Christmas card was sent by Michael Maier of England to King James I and His son Henry Frederick, the Prince of Wales in 1611. It said: **“A GREETING ON THE BIRTHDAY OF THE SACRED KING, TO THE MOST WORSHIPFUL AND ENERGETIC LORD AND MOST EMINENT JAMES, KING OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, WITH A GESTURE OF JOYFUL CELEBRATION OF THE BIRTHDAY OF THE LORD.”** The first known commercial Christmas Card was commissioned by Sir Henry Cole and designed by John Callcott Horsley in London in 1843 that pictured three generations of a family sitting at a table eating a meal with the words saying: **“A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR.”** Since that time billions of Christmas cards with various messages have been sent all around the world and today the Christmas Card industry is a 6.9-billion-dollar business. Most people select special cards with specific messages they want to communicate to those to whom the cards are addressed. IT IS A NICE THING TO GIVE AND RECEIVE CHRISTMAS CARDS, particularly those with a Christ centered message. The REAL MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS may be communicated somewhat on the Christmas cards we send and receive, but the **TRUTH OF THE CHRISTMAS MESSAGE IS FOUND IN THE WORD OF GOD IN LUKE 2:1-20 THAT WE MUST ALL TAKE TO HEART AND COMMUNICATE DURING THIS TIME OF THE YEAR.** So today, for a few minutes let’s consider **THE TRUE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS** as recorded in the sacred scripture when the angels appeared to the shepherds outside the town of Bethlehem to announce the birth of Jesus Christ. According to the biblical text, the TRUE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS has six points for us to consider to the GLORY OF GOD regarding this special DIVINE EVENT.

I. THE MESSAGE OF GODLY COMFORT – VS. 10a

“FEAR NOT”

NOTE: You can imagine that when the angelic host appeared to the shepherds on a quiet darkened night revealing the **SHEKINAH GLORY OF GOD**, which was an **INTOLLERABLE BRIGHTNESS**, that was the visible presence of the **ETENRAL ALL-POWERFUL GOD**, known among the Jews, that they were very frightened. In fact, verse 9 says the shepherds were **“SORE AFRAID.”** The terror the shepherds felt was the natural awe ever felt by men when brought into visible communion with that which was **TOTALLY DIVINE.**

A. Such Fear Comes upon the recognition of God’s Holiness and Mankind’s Sinfulness – Note that of Isaiah in Isaiah 6:5

B. Such Fear can only be reduced by the heavenly words **“FEAR NOT.”**

NOTE: Many are afraid of God because of His holiness and glory. But the **right relationship with God through Christ removes that fear with godly comfort.**

II. THE MESSAGE OF GOOD NEWS – VS. 10b

“GOOD TIDINGS”

A. This was Good News from God – God did not send a soldier, or a judge, or a reformer to bring judgment upon mankind. But He sent a **SAVIOR to meet the spiritual needs of all mankind...THAT IS GOOD NEWS.**

B. This was Good News from God for the Whole World – John 3:16 makes that message clear and is applicable to all – Luke 19:10 and 1 Timothy 1:15.

III. THE MESSAGE OF GREAT JOY – VS, 10c

“OF GREAT JOY”

NOTE: The word “JOY” is the Greek word “CHARIS” which means **“cheerfulness, delight, gladness.”** This joy that God offers through Christ is for at least two reasons:

A. The Joy of Fulfilled Prophecy

-Consider: Isaiah 7:14 (742 BC); 9:6 (740 BC); Micah 5:2 (710 BC)

B. The Joy of Sins Forgiven

-Consider: Ephesians 1:7

IV. THE MESSAGE WITH GREAT REACH – VS. 10d

“TO ALL PEOPLE”

- A. Christ’s First Reach for People – The Jews
-Consider: John 1:11
- B. Christ’s Second Reach for People – The Gentles (the whole world)
- Consider: John 1:12; 3:16-18; Romans 1:16

V. THE MESSAGE OF THE GLORIOUS GOD – VS. 11

“A SAVIOR WHICH IS CHRIST THE LORD”

NOTE: Here we see the three-fold description of Jesus

- A. Jesus is the Savior – **The One who delivers from Sin – 1 John 2:1,2**
- B. Jesus is the Christ – **The Anointed One of God (Messiah) to provide salvation – Cp. John 14:6; Acts 4:12**
- C. Jesus is the Lord – **The Eternal God – Cp. John 10:30; 14:9.**

VI. THE MESSAGE OF GLORY TO GOD – VS. 14

“GLORY TO GOD IN THE HIGHEST”

- A. Glory to God for Who He Is – **“IN THE HIGHEST”**
 - 1. The Highest possible manner – **There is no one higher.**
 - 2. The Highest of all – **Higher than all angels (They recognized this).**
 - 3. In the Highest Heavens – **God deserves universal praise beyond earth.**
 - 4. To the Most High God – **There is none higher than God.**
- B. Glory to God for What He offers.
 - 1. Peace on Earth (Well-being, Health, Prosperity, Security, Soundness)
 - a. A Promise to those who receive Christ – Colossians 1:19-21
 - b. A Promise to the world in the Millennium – Isaiah 11:1-10; Micah 4:3
 - 2. Good Will Toward Men
 - Through Christ’s redemptive work, mankind is the recipient of God’s good will and blessing in salvation and an intimate relationship with God.

LESSONS AND APPLICATION

The TRUE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS is really ALL ABOUT WHAT GOD DID FOR MANKIND THROUGH JESUS CHRIST and WHO JESUS CHRIST REALLY IS...**HE IS THE ETERNAL AND DIVINE REDEEMER OF MANKIND.** THE MESSAGE WE MUST DERIVE FROM CHRIST’S DURING THE CHRISTMAS SEASON IS THREE-FOLD:

- 1) TRUST CHRIST AS SAVIOR
- 2) EXALT CHRIST AS LORD
- 3 SHARE CHRIST DELIVERER