

December 11, 2011  
"Reasons for Rejoicing"  
Luke 2:8-14

I. We may rejoice in God's wonderful condescension toward us, His mindfulness toward us in our sad plight caused by sin –

<sup>3</sup> When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, <sup>4</sup> What is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? (Psalm 8:3-4 NKJ)

"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. (Luke 2:11 NKJ) of it, in the persons of our first parents, was crowned

1. It might be a wonder to us that God even notices us at all -

A. The vastness of the Universe makes us SEEM and feel insignificant, yet God still knows us, cares about us –

Betelgeuse 400 light years away is 600 times the diameter of the sun. Our Milky Way Galaxy is just one of billions of Galaxies in our universe. The Galaxy M87 contains over a trillion stars  
God made all of these and much more yet he notices us!

"Are not five sparrows sold for two copper coins? And not one of them is forgotten before God. <sup>7</sup> "But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Do not fear therefore; you are of more value than many sparrows. (Luke 12:6-7 NKJ)

2. Yet, His notice and mindfulness toward us, His condescension to us is not only wonderful because He is great and we are small but also because He is HOLY and we are sinful –

Mankind was created in God's image, given dominion over God's creatures, Psalm 8 tells us we were made just a little lower than the angels –

For You have made him a little lower than the angels, And You have crowned him with glory and honor. (Psalm 8:5 NKJ)

Yet, sin divested us of our original glory and beauty. Death and condemnation became the destiny toward which we march. Our internal faculties which were created to give God glory were infected with every kind of deformed lust, to the degree that in our natural state we do not seek or even like God but actually hate Him –

As it is written: "There is none righteous, no, not one; <sup>11</sup> There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. (Romans 3:10-11 NKJ)

Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be. (Romans 8:7 NKJ)

Yet, it was when we were steadfast against Him; Christ came into our world to die for us –

For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. <sup>7</sup> For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. <sup>8</sup> But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5:6-8 NKJ)

3. Yet, what is WONDERFUL again is not just that God helps mere creatures or even sinful creatures but that He WHO is ETERNAL condescends to be made FLESH and SIN for us –

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. <sup>2</sup> He was in the beginning with God. <sup>3</sup> All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made. (John 1:1-3 NKJ)

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14 NKJ)

<sup>21</sup> For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2Co 5:21 NKJ)

"In this condition—lost, poor, base, yea, cursed—the Lord; Christ, the Son of God, found our nature. And here on, in infinite condescension and compassion, sanctifying a portion of it unto Himself, He took it to be His own, in a holy, ineffable subsistence, in His own Person. Herein again the same nature, so depressed into the utmost misery, is exalted above the whole creation of God. For in that very nature God hath "set Him• at His own right

hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come," - Ephesians 1:20-23. This is that which is so celebrated by the Psalmist, with the highest admiration." - Psalm 8

John Owen

*II. We may rejoice in the fact that if God is with us and for us, evident in His coming to our world in such a sweet and humble way, no one can be against us –*

<sup>23</sup> "Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel," which is translated, "God with us." (Mat 1:23 NKJ)

What then shall we say to these things? If God *is* for us, who *can be* against us? (Romans 8:31 NKJ)

1. *Such a tremendous thing it is to have God on our side, no matter whom or what may be our enemy –*

*One of my best early sermons was based on this idea –*

*Exodus 17:8-16 "Four Keys to Victory over Sin and Satan"*

(I.) *Realize how constantly you are dependent upon God's empowering – Exodus 17:11*

(II.) *Realize you need a little help from your friends – Exodus 17:11*

(III.) *Realize how whole heartedly, and intimately God is involved with you in your struggle – Exodus 17:14-16*

(IV.) *Realize if God is truly FOR YOU, no one can be against you – Exodus 17:11 & :13 Navigators Christmas Party / Around-the World*

*What a reason for rejoicing, God will make us win, in the most important things, even when it may seem we might be losing –*

*"For Your sake we are killed all day long; We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter."<sup>37</sup> Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. (Romans 8:36-37 NKJ)*

2. *It is important to remember the ultimate end of God being with us, and for us, is God being WITH US, even in more and more intimate and wonderful ways –*

**Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea.<sup>2</sup> Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.<sup>3</sup> And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God *is* with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them *and be* their God.<sup>4</sup> "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." (Revelation 21:1-4 NKJ)**

*III. We should "rejoice" in God because such "joy" is glorious –*

that the genuineness of your faith, *being* much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ,<sup>8</sup> whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see *Him*, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, (1 Peter 1:7-8 NKJ)

*"Before the winds that blow do cease,  
Teach me to dwell within Thy calm;  
Before the pain has passed in peace,  
Give me, my God, to sing a psalm,  
Let me not lose the chance to prove  
The fulness of enabling love.  
O Love of God, do this for me;  
Maintain a constant victory.*

*Before I leave the desert land  
For meadows of immortal flowers,  
Lead me where streams at Thy command  
flow by the borders of the hours,  
That when the thirsty come, I may  
Show them the fountains in the way.  
O Love of God, do this for me;  
Maintain a constant victory.*

<sup>10</sup> Then he said to them, "Go your way, eat the fat, drink the sweet, and send portions to those for whom nothing is prepared; for *this day is holy* to our LORD. Do not sorrow, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." (Neh 8:10 NKJ)