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Isaiah's Christmas Message; Isaiah 9:1-7

GPBC

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Introduction – We celebrate Christmas as an event that took place over 2,000 years ago. There was a time when what would later be called Christmas was an event that was yet to come. Isaiah was written some 600 years before the coming of Christ. Isaiah was writing through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit with the eye of faith concerning who is to come and what is to occur as a result of His coming.

It is truly amazing how Isaiah's prophetic Christmas message is so precise in its telling of an event that is yet to take place. It's also truly amazing the degree to which the heart of the Christmas message in our day has been so cluttered with distractions and trappings.

That's why Isaiah's Christmas message is so pertinent for us today. It is good for us to take in once more the simple and yet eternally profound wonder of what Christmas is really all about.

- I. Christmas is About the Joy of a Great, Shining Light (vv2-5)
  - a. Why is there so much joy over this great, shining light? The answer is so wonderfully, deeply meaningful. Great joy comes from great light because it shines in great darkness.
  - b. Now we know the light that Isaiah speaks of is none other than the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
    - i. John 1:1-5
  - c. The joy of Christmas is that the Light of the World has shone and has broken through and pierced and chased away the darkness that enveloped and enslaved us all.
  - d. Notice how extensive was the darkness.
    - i. It was a deep darkness that surrounded us – “those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness”
      1. Darkness is the absence of light, and if Christ is the Light then sin is the darkness.
      2. Once sin entered creation it tainted and corrupted everything and everyone. There is a cloak of corruption that blankets everything that God created and called

good. Sin derails creation from its full purpose to glorify God in all aspects. Sin distracts from the good of God-centered beauty to the ugliness of self-centered inclination. Sin mars and distorts the fullness of God's good purpose and leaves a trail of empty promises. Sin sets us on a course of destruction away from God's design of meaning and joy and fullness.

3. The world in which we presently live is not the world as first created and not the world that will be in the new creation. Sin brought with it evil and destruction and corruption and death. And we feel it every day.
  4. The darkness that surrounds us is deep. It touches us all. It affects each and every one. The senselessness and the insanity of sin causes hurt and harm. We certainly hear of the darkness around us every day on the news, but more tragic is when the darkness around us knocks on our door. The darkness is so deep it can be devastating.
  5. But it's not only a darkness around us.
- ii. It was a deep darkness that lived within us – “the people who walked in darkness”
    1. Sin not only dwells outside of us, it finds a home within us. The deep darkness dwells deeply in our own hearts. Oh, we hate to admit it, but sin not only affects us from without but it has done its work of corruption within.
    2. We walked in darkness. We live and breathe the same air of sinful desire. The sin we detests when it appears in others also often appears in us. Rather than being drawn and inclined Godward, our darkened, hardened hearts are drawn inward, and oh the pain and regret we have brought on ourselves. We believed the lies of forbidden pleasures. We've trusted in the deception of ruined riches. We've fallen for the tricks of godless, worldly ways.
  - e. But Christmas – Christmas is about the joy of a great, shining Light! A light so great that it exposes the darkness around us and defeats the darkness within us. A great light that shines truth on lies and life on death.

- i. 2 Cor 4:6 – For God, who said “Let light shine out of darkness,” has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”
    - f. The joy of Christmas is that we who live in darkness and are enslaved in darkness, on us a great light has shone!
- II. Christmas is About the Gift of the Great, Incarnate Son (v6)
  - a. Christ is a gift – a gift to us – For to us a child is born, to us a son is given.
  - b. How remarkable and wonderful that God’s plan of redemption, God’s design to dispel the darkness, God’s purpose to save His people would begin not with an invading infantry but with an innocent infant.
    - i. Oh the heavenly host will appear, the armies of heaven will assemble, but they will come to sing of the birth of a baby. It’s the baby that will begin to push back the darkness and yes eventually defeat the darkness and one day soon eradicate the darkness!
    - ii. But this is no ordinary baby. He is a baby, but He is also much, much more than a mere baby. This child is none other than the Incarnate Son of God. Incarnate simply means God took on our flesh.
    - iii. It says it right here in this verse – this child born, this son given will be called Mighty God! The greatest gift ever given was when God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life!
  - c. Now we could spend an entire sermon on the four names of this Son in v6 but let’s at least take a moment to see how these names underscore the truth that Jesus, the Light, is the only sure hope for us who dwell in darkness.
    - i. Wonderful Counselor – if people surrounded by darkness and indwelt by darkness need anything, we need direction – and how wonderful is our Counselor. He directs us to the light of abundant life, to the light of salvation, to the light of eternal life. He is our guide through the storms and trials. He is our truth, our anchor, our lighthouse.

- ii. Mighty God – people in darkness need the power of God to be born anew and to live anew and to believe anew and to hope anew. The Mighty God of heaven dwells within us who believe, and His might sustains us in life and nurtures our faith and keeps us for heaven.
    - iii. Everlasting Father – is there a greater comfort than this? IN our darkness, Jesus comes to us as an everlasting Father. He never leaves us both now and forever, He’s everlasting with us. And He is as a tender father – always providing, always protecting – the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.
    - iv. Prince of Peace – what else could we want in a land of dark turmoil than peace? He ushers peace into our soul no matter what darkness around us we face, why even in the face of the darkness of death, His peace surpasses all understanding. And yet His peace runs deeper still. For He not only gives peace for the darkness without, He gives the greater peace by diffusing the darkness within. There is no greater peace than peace with God through Jesus Christ.
  - d. Christmas is about the gift of the great, incarnate Son.
- III. Christmas is About the Coming of a Great, Eternal Kingdom (v7)
- a. The work and peace that Christ brings inside of each and every believer will continue to extend to more and more believers until finally that work accomplished within us will be made complete throughout all His creation.
  - b. Upon His first coming, Christ's kingdom sets us right with God and grants us peace, dispelling the darkness within. Upon His second coming, Christ's kingdom will set all things right with God and usher in an everlasting peace, dispelling the darkness without.
  - c. A Great Light is shining.

Conclusion – The joy of a great light, the gift of the incarnate Son, and coming of an eternal kingdom is not just a promise for Bethlehem. V1b. It is a promise for the whole world. Christmas is for Christ, and Christ is for the world. JOY to the world, the Lord is come!