

# “The Greatest Gift’s Ever Given”

*Lk. 2:1-21*

## **Open:** *The Christmas Story*

- The promised Messiah of **Is. 9:6** “*For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.*”
- Mary is told how she will be the vessel God uses to bring Jesus into the world. **Lk. 1:26-25**
- Joseph responds wisely to the news and trusts God. **Matt. 1:19-25**
- Mary and Joseph going to Bethlehem to pay their taxes. **Lk. 2:1-5**
- While in Bethlehem Mary gives birth to Jesus, in a manger. **Lk. 2:6-7**
- The angles proclaim the birth of the Saviour to shepherds nearby. **Lk. 2:8-14**
- The shepherds hasten to see the Christ child and leave from the manger telling everyone. **Lk. 2:15-20**

## **Tran:**

- We often say that Christmas is not about what we receive, but what we give. We know that the Bible says in **Acts 20:35** “... *it is more blessed to give than to receive.*”
  - We appreciate it when this truth brings blessings and gifts our way; but often shun this truth and shrug off our responsibility of being the one who is a blessing to others.
- Can you imagine how much different the story would have been, if the those in the story of Christ’s birth were like most Christians today? Glad to receive the gifts made available; but unwilling to share with others what they have been given.
  - Salvation      Hope      Strength
  - Joy              Peace      Forgiveness
- Sadly, we have all watched Christmas has become commercialized, to the point, that we have commercialized Christ right out of Christmas. Most Christians truly have forgotten, *Jesus is the Reason*, for Christmas.
  - I am thankful that God was not selfish, nor did He keep from us the glorious message of Christ’s birth and the Salvation that it made available.
    - *Let’s look at three gifts that were given by those who were apart of the first Christmas.*

- It is important to recognize that if one person disobeys, then this entire story is complicated, and God's plan is not carried out like he intended. **Matt. 1:22**

A. Let's take a closer look to the actions of those involved in this story.

1. Mary – Stayed useable. **Matt. 1:23**
2. Joseph – Did not put Mary away. **Matt. 1:20-25**
3. Wise Men – Didn't reveal to Herod the Christ child. **Matt. 2:12**
4. Mary & Joseph were obedient as a couple.
  - a. Remained pure until the birth of Jesus. **Matt. 1:25**
  - b. Went to Bethlehem for the time of taxing. **Lk. 2:1-5**
  - c. Went into Egypt until Herod's death. **Matt. 2:13-15**
  - d. Went into Nazareth because of the reign of Herod's son. **Matt. 2: 22-23**
5. Jesus – Finished what He started **John 19:30** "*When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.*"

B. We would not have the wonderful message of Christ's birth nor salvation if those in this story were not obedient. *Have you been obedient in your duties so others can receive the wonderful blessings of being a child of God?*

## **II. Yielded – Without being yielded, there is no completion of God's will in the Christian life.**

- There must be a submission of will. I must be selfless enough to submit my wants and my desires to what God has told me is best.

A. Lets look at those who chose to yield to God.

1. Mary and Joseph yielded their desires and wants to God.
  - a. Remained pure until after the birth of Christ.
  - b. They were obedient in their obligations as a citizen to pay their taxes.
  - c. They protected Jesus at all costs. **Matt. 2:13-14; Matt. 2:22-23**
2. The wise men did not do what was convenient, but what was right. **Matt. 1:12**
3. Jesus – In every way His life exemplifies this truth with one statement. **Matt. 26:39b** "*...not as I will, but as thou wilt.*"
  - a. Came to save the lost. **John 3:17**
  - b. Came to seek save that which lost **Lk. 19:10**
  - c. Came to establish His church. **Matt. 16:18**
  - d. Came to give us a more profitable life. **John 10:9-11**

B. How many times in your life has God shown you what His will was; but you chose to ignore His will in your life and do what you wanted to do?

1. Sharing the Gospel                      Being a forgiving Christian
2. Being generous                        Being kind

## **III. Proclamation – Without the telling of the truth, there is no knowledge in the Christian life.**

- A. Let's take a look at those who were involved in proclaiming the wonderful truth of God's Word.
1. God did not hide this wonderful message from man.
    - a. Shared with the world. **Is. 9:6**
    - b. Shared with Mary. **Lk.1:31-35**
  2. Mary did not hide this message from people in her life.
    - a. Shared with her cousin Elisabeth. **Lk. 1:38-42**
    - b. Shared with Joseph. **Matt. 1:18-19**
  3. The angels did not keep this message quiet. **Lk. 2: 8-14**
  4. The shepherds spread the news abroad. **Lk. 2:17**
  5. John the Baptist did not keep quiet that one greater than man had come.
- B. What would have happened if those involved in this story kept quiet the wonderful truth? How many people in our communities do not know the wonderful truth of Salvation; because those of us who have the truth have placed our light under a bushel? **Matt. 5:14-16**

***Close:***

- Beautiful pattern in the life of all those involved in this story.
  - A gift given
  - A gift received
  - A gift shared with others
- We in our lives as a Christian need to be hungry and searching for what God has for us to receive; not just so we can receive a blessing, but so we can take the blessings we receive and give them to others.
  - Salvation
  - Truths of God's Word
  - Blessings of obedience
- We all have received somewhere along the way some great gifts. We need to spend our lives letting the light of Christ shine through our lives.

**Matt. 5:16**

*“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.”*