

## Christian HOPE

This is the 1<sup>st</sup> of 3 studies about the birth of Christ discussing how His birth is the beginning of our:

- **Hope** (confidence) Victory over sin & death and the challenges of life w/out God
- **Comfort** (encouragement) Relief from pain & sorrow; inspiration for victory in the A/C
- **Joy** (rejoicing) Experience & enjoyment of victory over sin and death

We will discuss how Adam's sin has caused us all to experience:

- **Broken Relationships** With God, marriage, family, friends, society – Racism, war, slavery
- **Barren & unfulfilled lives** Lives w/out meaning & purpose – Eccl – meaningless life
- **Blindness & baggage** Corrupted beliefs & ideas that further complicate our relationships
- **Battle** Angelic Conflict with our enemy the devil seeking to destroy our life & testimony

- With each of these we will see how Christ is our hope, our comfort and our joy.

From Adam's fall until now, mankind has lived under 2 categories of death.

- Spiritual death caused man to be condemned to an eternal, indescribable horror in the Lake of Fire and to develop a corrupted way of thinking.
- Physical death made us slaves to fear our whole life. AOS caused us to be born with a sinful nature from which we have constructed a self-centered belief system that keeps us from properly relating to God and one another.

The evil of the devil's world guarantees that we will all be abused by life and in turn become abusers of others. W/out God our relationships are broken, our lives are barren, our hearts are blind to reality and we live in the middle of a battlefield. W/out God, life is meaningless and then you die and go to hell. These problems are insurmountable for us and are the source of deep sorrow in the soul of man, but these problems have been resolved by God who provides us hope, comfort and joy through His Son. The birth, life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension & session of Christ is our hope, comfort & joy in this life and forever.

**Hope** – Heb **tiqvah** – to wait and eagerly expect, looking for God's blessing; Greek **elpis** – confident expectation of God's blessing, looking to the future

- Hope is confidence that is certain that God desires to bless and do good to us
- Hope is the expectation of our future blessings, what we are waiting on to happen
- Hope is based on the work of Christ imputed by grace making us worthy of blessing
- Hope is based on the veracity of God's promises to bless us in time and eternity
- Christ is our hope, our confidence that He has and will rescue us from our sins

### **1. The birth of Christ brings hope to our broken relationship with God – sp/physical death**

Gen 3 – relationship/God is broken by sp/physical death – condemned to die and go to Lake/Fire

Gen 3:15 – the seed of the woman will bring the hope of eternal reconciliation

- The promise of the seed immediately answered the need – gave hope to A/E

Gen 4 – 2 children are born – one betrays and murders the other

- The promise of the seed predated the need for physical death – resurrection

Eph 2:12 existed with no hope w/out God in the world; 1Thes 4:13 grieve as those w/out hope

Mt 1:21 – His name will be Jesus – He will save His people from their sins; Mt 12:21 – In His name the

Gentiles will hope; Act 24:15 Paul, I have hope toward God there will be a resurrection of the +R & -R; Act

26:6 resurrection is the hope of promise to Israel; 1Pt 1:3 by His great mercy He has begotten us to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- The Christmas story begins the historical hope of victory over sp & physical death.

## 2. The birth of Christ provides fulfillment for the Barren, unfulfilled & meaningless life.

**Solomon** – searched out every category of life w/out God – totally meaningless & empty

Luke 1 – part of the birth story - Zacharia & Elizabeth – barren woman; Gen – Sarah; Rebekah; Rachel – wives of the Patriarchs who gave birth to lineage of Christ

Barrenness relates to the unfulfilled life – unfulfilled purpose – empty life

- God brings meaning & purpose to man through the miracle births of history
- Sarah, Rachel, Hannah, Elizabeth – miracle births that fulfilled the lives of these women
- The miracle birth of Jesus brings hope that our life can find meaning & purpose

## 3. The birth of Christ began the solution to spiritual blindness and personal baggage

Luke 2:25 – death of Christ will reveal the thoughts of many hearts – **dialogismos** – reasoning's

2Cor 4:4 the devil has blinded the minds of the unbeliever to the light of the gospel

- We are born blind to the spiritual realities of life – only see human truths
- Man w/out God has to find his own way to manage in the devil's world

**Belief System** – all beliefs, expectations and strategies we build to meet our needs and make our lives work w/out God in the devil's world – conformity to the world

- a. We begin life with false hope connected to earthly life – Lk 24:21 – Road/Emmaus – we were hoping He was the One to redeem Israel – from Roman rule
- b. Our beliefs about the fulfilled life are centered only on this life  
Col 1:5 – our hope is laid up in heaven – real hope is first related to eternity  
1Thes 4:13 – grieve as those with no hope – believe our dead loved ones are lost forever
- c. The Spirit enlightens all those who are saved by believing the gospel.  
Eph 1:18 – enlightened to see the hope of His calling & riches of His glorious inheritance  
Tit 2:13 – looking (able to see) blessed hope & appearing of our God, Savior Jesus
- d. Spiritual growth resolves all of our false belief issues & relationship problems  
2Cor 10:5 Casting down imaginations – bringing every thought into captivity to Christ  
Jn 1:9 – Christ is the light in the world that breaks through our blindness

## The birth of Christ is the beginning of winning the battle of the A/C.

Lk 10:18-19 return of the 70 – I saw Satan fall like lightning – defeated by Christ

Mt 4:1-11 Jesus defeats the devil's temptations in the wilderness

Eph 6:11 – we are in a struggle with evil angelic forces

Rom 12:2 – conformed to the world's beliefs and values – Christmas distorted

- a. The spiritual war comes out of eternity past and we find ourselves in the middle of it.
- b. The birth of Jesus was the beginning of the historical victory over the devil

Mt 2:16 Satan motivates Herod to kill all children under 2 yrs old to kill Jesus

- c. GF protected Jesus by avoiding Herod's attempt to kill Him

Mt 2:13-15 – sent a message to Joseph to go to Egypt until Herod died

- d. God has empowered us to also win our own battles in the A/C

Eph 6:10-17 – God has provided armor and a weapon for the fight – we can win

Gal 5:16-17 ministry of GHS enabling us to overcome the flesh

Christmas, the birth of Jesus our Savior was the beginning of our historical hope that our broken relationships could be reconciled, our barren lives fulfilled, our blindness and baggage dealt with and we could win our personal battles in the A/C. He has come, done His work and we are looking for Him to come again. Come Lord Jesus!