

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

LUKE 2:10-11 • TV133B

A television broadcast sermon delivered
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 21ST, 1980

By

HENRY T. MAHAN

Transcribed, edited and published
JANUARY 20TH, 2015

HENRY T. MAHAN TAPE LIBRARY

Zebulon Baptist Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501

Luke 2:10-11

“And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

I want you to turn in your Bible to the book of **Luke** and let's read the **verses 10 and 11**.

Now, the message today is on this subject: **“GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY.”**

“And the angels said unto them, fear not: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people: For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”

Now, I want you to listen very, very, carefully to me for just a few moments. This is the season of the year whether men like it or not they're compelled to think of the birth of Jesus Christ. Christmas is upon us and Christmas is celebrated all over the world, especially in America by believers and unbelievers.

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

LUKE 2:10-11 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Christmas is celebrated by skeptics, agnostics, infidels and even atheists. But, every man whether he likes it or not as this time of year is compelled to face this issue: a man called Jesus Christ came into this world.

A man called Jesus of Nazareth was born into this world and lived here for about 34 years and died on a cross and was buried, and most believe that He arose again.

Now, I hold that it to be one of the greatest absurdities under heaven, to think that there is any spiritual benefit in keeping Christmas or Easter or any other holiday. It's just absurd to think there can be any spiritual benefit to keeping a day and keeping a holiday such as Christmas or Easter or any other holiday.

My friends; a relationship with God is not observing a day. A relationship with God is not keeping a ceremony or a ritual. A relationship with God in Christ is based upon faith; it's based upon love and a personal knowledge of the living God.

God is a Spirit and they that worship Him, "*worship him in spirit and in truth.*" There's no spiritual benefit to keeping a day, a holiday, Christmas, Easter, or any other holiday.

Actually, if you want the truth about the matter, actually, we have no command in Scripture anywhere to observe the day that Jesus Christ was born. We have no command in Scripture anywhere that tells us to remember the day that He was born.

But, Christ did give His disciples the Lord's Table and He said: "*take eat; this is my body broken for you. This is my blood shed for you. As often as you do it, you show the Lord's death until he comes.*"

He said: "*This do in remembrance of me.*" We ought to remember His death, His suffering on Calvary, His crucifixion.

Baptism; every time a person is baptized we are showing the death, the burial and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ as we are commanded. Our Lord told us to "*go into all the world and preach the gospel. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.*"

He said: "*Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*" So, we do have and I am charging this religious world with a failure to obey the commandments of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He commanded us to be baptized. He did not command us to remember His birthday. He did command us to observe the Lord's Table. He left us the Lord's Table: Paul said to the early church; "*What I have received of the Lord I delivered unto you how that the Lord the same night in which he was betrayed took bread and in breaking gave it to his disciples and he said: this is my body broken for you: this do in remembrance of me.*"

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

LUKE 2:10-11 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now, some of you listening to me have observed Christmas for many, many, years. How many times have you observed the Lord's Table? So, I say: there is no command in Scripture for us to observe a day and call it: the Lord's Birthday.

Actually, the Lord has no Birthday. *"He is Alpha and Omega; he's the beginning and end and he hath no beginning of days."* He has no starting point; God is, *"in the beginning God."* Christ is God.

Now, there was a day when He came into the world: *"unto us a child is born a son is given."* The Son of God was not born. The Son of God is *"the only begotten, well-beloved Son of God."*

He is eternal. He is the eternal deity. He has no birthday for us to observe. He is God, He was God and He is *"the same yesterday, today, and forever."* Jesus Christ is the same.

So, to talk about bringing a birthday present for Jesus; God has no birthday. You have a birthday, I have a birthday but the God of glory doesn't have a birthday; whoever heard of such a thing?

If you claim your God has a birthday, you are dating your God back just a few years. Who was God before that? So, it's absurd to talk about the birthday of the Lord. There is no command in Scripture to observe it.

But, however, before I cause all of you to turn the program off, however, I am thankful for the Christmas season for several reasons:

First of all: I am thankful for the Christmas season and I choose not to ignore it. And I am thankful for it because there is enough work in the world. It is good for the working man and working woman to have a few days of rest and a few days of relaxation, and this is fine and I welcome it!

Second: I enjoy the generous and cheerful spirit of people during the Christmas season! I wish it could last all year. They laugh a lot during the Christmas season. They are generous during the Christmas season. We seem to be more aware of each other at this time. You will find that to be so. Well, I am thankful for the Christmas season for that reason.

Third: I am thankful for the Christmas season because it enables families to get together and children to come home.

You know, for a lot of young people, that's about the only time they visit daddy and mamma is at Christmas time. That's one good purpose that Christmas serves, it brings the families together and friends get together and they sit around the fireside and have some good fellowship and I suppose that is good and I'm thankful for that.

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

LUKE 2:10-11 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Fourth: The chief reason why I am thankful for the Christmas season is this: even with all of its undesirable qualities, even with all of its making merchandise of the Bible and spiritual things, even of its great compromise, at least once a year, men and women are brought face to face with the fact (at least once a year) that Jesus Christ came into this world.

Everybody in this world in this United States is brought face to face, brought to grips with this fact: Jesus Christ came into this world.

It says in **Isaiah Chapter 9:6:** Who is this man Jesus Christ? *“Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulders and his name shall be called: Wonderful, Counselor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and The Prince of Peace.”* **Isaiah** prophesied of His coming and he says: *“He’s the everlasting Father,”* that is who Jesus Christ is.

Then, in **Isaiah 7:14** the prophet said again: *“The Lord himself shall give you a sign: a virgin shall conceive and bring forth a child and thou shalt call the name of that child Immanuel, (which is being interpreted means God with us, God in human flesh).”*

“He was in the world and the world was made by him and the world knew him not. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father.”

I am thankful for the Christmas season; I choose not to ignore it because at least once a year every man and woman, boy and girl, is brought to grips with this truth, whoever he is, Jesus Christ came into this world. Whatever purpose He served, He was in this world.

Then it says in **Matthew 1:21**, when the angel appeared to Joseph to tell him that the woman to whom he was engaged, Mary, was with child. The angel said: *“Fear not to take unto thee Mary to be thy wife: that holy thing which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost and is called the Son of God and thou shalt call his name Jesus, (the Old Testament name for Jesus is Joshua, and it means God our Saviour, Joshua or Jesus): Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins.”*

Then, the text that I read a few moments ago, the first Christmas carol, and the first great announcement of this momentous event was sung by the angels of God. Listen to the angels, they are God’s messengers, they are God’s messengers.

They are sent of God to attend and to announce His ministry. Almost everything that Christ did in his ministry, the angels attended. Do you remember when He stood in the Garden of Gethsemane and Peter drew his sword to defend the Saviour?

Christ told him, he said: *“put away your sword; don’t you know that my Father; I could call my Father and he would send me 12 legions of angels?”* Do you know how many soldiers are in a Roman legion; 6,000; that would be 72,000 angels? Remember one angel destroyed a whole nation one time. What could 72,000 angels do?

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

LUKE 2:10-11 • HENRY T. MAHAN

The angels that attended His ministry, they announced His birth; they announced His resurrection. When the women came to His tomb that Sunday morning and the angel said: *“he’s not here; why do you seek the living among the dead? He’s not here; he is risen.”*

When the disciples stood on the Mount of Ascension and watched Christ go up into heaven when the cloud received him out of their sight, the angels said: *“ye men of Galilee; this same Jesus that is taken up from you into heaven shall so come in like manners as you have seen him go.”*

Then the Scripture says in **1 Thessalonians 4**: *“The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with a voice of the archangel.”* The angels announced the coming of Christ, the resurrection of Christ, the return of Christ, and all concerning the ministry of our Lord.

And at His birth they said something that men can’t understand and ought to understand and if they do understand, will change their life. Listen to this Christmas carol, this first Christmas carol; the angels said to the shepherds: *“Unto you, (that’s the first thing that I noted in this carol) unto you is born.”*

The message of good tidings of great joy, the message of redemption and forgiveness of sin, the message of salvation is unto you, unto you and it doesn’t matter who you are, whether you are Jew or Gentile, whether you are old or young, whether you are rich or poor or whether you are educated or uneducated.

The Lord God has been pleased to redeem a people. What does he say in his Word, *“out of every tribe, kindred, nation and tongue under heaven?”*

It distresses me when certain denominations or certain preachers seem to insinuate that they are the only ones who are saved. My friend, that’s ridiculous; that’s utter ridiculousness!

I hear somebody talking about 144,000 that are going to be in heaven and nobody else. That’s the most ridiculous figure I have ever heard in my life. Why, God told Abraham: *“Your seed will be as the stars of heaven and the sands of the seashore.”* That’s a lot more than 144,000 sands on the seashore.

“And our God shall have a people out of every tribe, kindred, nation, and tongue under heaven.” There are going to be more people in heaven than there are in hell, why absolutely!

Do you know that according to the records of this world, more people have died in infancy than have ever lived? I know that in the last 100 or 200 years babies are living now more. But, back many years ago, back to the time of our forefathers, every family had two or three children who died in infancy.

There are tribes in some of the heathen countries that a mother is giving birth to eight or ten children and has only one living.

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

LUKE 2:10-11 • HENRY T. MAHAN

A missionary told me (who was in one part of the world where they didn't name a child until he was six years old) that they didn't want to waste a name. Every infant who dies in infancy goes to be with the Lord.

That's the reason He said: *"I will have a people out of every tribe, every kindred, and every tongue, (and I might add, every family)."* Our God has a people. *"It's unto you, it's unto you."*

I'm telling you this, my friend; it says in the Word of God: *"Ho; everyone that thirsteth; come to the water. Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden; I will give you rest: Whosoever will let him take the water of life."*

This Gospel is *"unto you"* and it's to all men. Not only is it addressed to all men, but this Gospel is addressed to men as they are. This is what I like. This is why I call it *"good tidings"*; this is why we call it *"good news"*; it is addressed to us just like we are.

The only thing that keeps you from God's mercy is your unwillingness to come. That's right! Our Lord Jesus said: *"You will not come to me that you might have life."* That's why you don't have life; you won't come to the source of life. You won't come to the giver of life. You won't come to Him who is life.

The only thing that keeps a man from Christ is a man's unwillingness to come. We have to be made willing to come to Christ. *"Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."*

The only thing that recommends me to Christ is not my merit but my need. That's what recommends me to Christ, not my merit, but my need.

The hymn writer put it this way:

***"Let not conscience make you linger
Nor a fitness fondly dream,
All the fitness that he requireth
Is to feel your need of him."***

It's good news, to whom, unto you, unto you? Are you interested? *"This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners."*

Are you qualified? That's the term that qualifies you. *"Christ died for the ungodly."* Are you qualified? *"Our Lord Jesus came not to call the righteous but sinners."* Are you qualified? That is what the Scripture says.

He says: *"Though your sins be as scarlet; I will make them white as snow."* Are your sins as scarlet? *"Though they be red like crimson; they shall be as wool."* Are you qualified?

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

LUKE 2:10-11 • HENRY T. MAHAN

The only thing that qualifies you to be a child of God is to need Him, to need Him. The lost will be found. The guilty will be cleansed and those who need mercy will have received it.

Watch this as we go on: “*Unto you is born this day in the city of David.*” Now, this is very significant: “*in the city of David,*” is most significant.

You see, my friends; the Old Testament was written before the Messiah came. Christ is the Messiah; Christ is the Christ. He’s the Redeemer. The Old Testament in Genesis through Malachi, Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Psalms, Isaiah, and Jeremiah; all of this was written before Christ came. The Old Testament was written about His coming. He said: “*Moses wrote of me.*” He said: “*In the Psalms, in the prophets, and in the writings of Moses; these things are concerning me.*” He said to the Pharisees: “*You search the scriptures; they are they which testify of me.*”

So, the Old Testament was written about Christ. In the Old Testament the Messiah is prophesied, He’s promised and He’s pictured, all the way through the Old Testament.

He is the “*seed of woman,*” that is talked about in **Genesis 3**. He is to be from the tribe of Judah. That’s what the Old Testament said: “*The scepter shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh, (the king of peace, come).*” He has to be from the tribe of Judah according to the Old Testament.

He has to be from the family of Jesse. He has to be from the family of David and Mary and Joseph both were of the house and lineage of David. That’s why they went to Bethlehem to be taxed.

You see, the Old Testament is very clear on who the Messiah is and from whence He comes. He must be born in Bethlehem. That’s what it says in the Word, “*in Bethlehem.*” That is where He has to be born.

He has to be; David’s Lord has to be David’s Son. **Romans 1:3** says: “*He was made of the seed of David and declared to be the Son of God.*”

You see; “*Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures.*” What Scriptures are we talking about, the Old Testament? You see; the New Testament was written after He came, looking back to His death on the cross and His redemptive work.

The Old Testament was written before Christ came and all of these types and pictures and ceremonies and sacrifices are pictures of Christ.

You have in the Old Testament the prophecies and promises of His coming. He has to be of the tribe of Judah, the family of Jesse and of David. He has to be born in Bethlehem. He has to be that prophet of whom Moses wrote.

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

LUKE 2:10-11 • HENRY T. MAHAN

He has to be that priest of whom Aaron is the type. He has to be that sacrifice, that Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world. He has to be a picture of Jonah, three days and three nights, in the belly of the fish.

He has to be a picture of the Old Testament priests going under the veil, putting his blood on the mercy seat for the sins of His people. Do you see those things?

This is what the angel said when they came down to the shepherds, this Christmas announcement and this Christmas carol as we call it. They said: *“Unto you, unto you, is born in the city of David.”* Do you see that, *“in the city of David?”*

That’s so significant. He was born, He lived, He died, He arose again, and He ascended *“according to the Scriptures.”* Let me tell you this, if you’ve got a Messiah that you are worshipping, if you’ve got a way of salvation that you are trusting; it better be according to the Scriptures and Jesus Christ was born, lived and died, and rose again, according to the Scriptures.

You find in the Old Testament Scriptures every prophecy fulfilled in Christ; them casting lots for His garments, plucking out His beard, piercing His hands and feet, and His crucifixion upon the a cross where He cried, *“My God, why hast thou forsaken me?”*

All of these words are in the Old Testament, all these prophecies, even Judas selling Him for 30 pieces of silver and the money being used to purchase a potter’s field. All of that is in the Old Testament. It’s all there: *“Moses wrote of me,”* Christ said. He was born in the city of David.

Now, watch the next words, *“unto you.”* This announcement wasn’t made in the synagogue; it was made out there on the top of a hill. It wasn’t made to a bunch of religious ceremonialists and legalists; this announcement was made to some shepherds.

It wasn’t made to the intellectuals or the rulers in Rome, it was made to a group of shepherds on the hillside, four men, weary men, working men, and sinful men. *“Unto you is born this day in the city of David, (most significant), a Saviour.”*

That’s what I need; I need a Saviour. I don’t need an example, though He is an example; I need a Saviour. I don’t need a little help; I need a Saviour, a complete, sufficient Saviour.

I don’t need a little assistance; assistance won’t help me. I’ve got to have a Saviour. The angel said to Joseph: *“Thou shalt call his name Jesus for he shall save, his people from their sin.”*

Now, if words can mean anything, anything at all, the very purpose for Christ coming into this world was to what? Now; I know you hear a lot of preachers and they seem to indicate that Christ came down here into this world and died on the cross to heal our bodies and to make us healthy. I hear that so much.

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

LUKE 2:10-11 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Some preachers seem to indicate that Christ came down here and lived on this earth and died on the cross to make me wealthy, to wear a big diamond ring, drive long automobiles, live in huge mansions, give a tenth of our income and get rich. They say, “that’s what God wants you to be, rich. That’s why He came.”

Let me tell you something: I don’t care how many times God heals me, I am going to die. This body is going to the dust. I’ve got to stand in the judgment and that’s where it is; that’s what I need. I need a Saviour.

I don’t need good health but I do need a heart of grace. I do need my sins forgiven. I don’t need money. I can’t wear but one suit. I can’t drive but one car. I can’t live in but one room at a time and can’t eat but one meal.

But, I do need salvation. I need a Saviour. Christ came down here not to reform the world, not to heal the world, not to just set an example; He came to save, He came that our sins might be forgiven.

He came that we might have eternal life that *“we might have life and have it more abundantly.”* That’s why Christ came:

**“Man of sorrows, what a name
For the Son of God who came,
Ruined sinners, to reclaim
Hallelujah, what a Saviour.**

**Guilty, vile, and helpless we
Spotless Lamb of God was He
Full atonement, can it be?
Hallelujah, what a Saviour.”**

That’s what I need; I need a Saviour. That’s the good tidings of great joy that these angels brought to the shepherds, *“unto you, is born this day, (God incarnate) God was made flesh and dwelt among us.”*

“This day, in the city of David,” He’s the fulfillment of every promise, a Saviour from sin, a Saviour from sin, which *“is Christ the Lord.”* Oh my friend; *“what think ye of Christ? Whose Son is he?”*

Well, He said, *“I and my Father are one.”* Thomas said, *“My Lord and my God.”* The Centurion says: *“Surely this man was the Son of God.”* Peter said: *“God hath made this same Jesus both Lord and Christ.”* Paul said: *“God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself.”*

GOOD TIDINGS OF GREAT JOY

LUKE 2:10-11 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Who is He; “*what think ye of Jesus Christ?*” Well, I will tell you; He’s no ordinary man. He said: “*He that hath seen me hath seen my Father; I and my Father are one. If ye had known me you should have known my Father.*”

He’s no ordinary man. He’s the God-man. As the God-man He can redeem. You see, man can’t satisfy God’s holy law. Man can’t satisfy God’s divine justice, no way, because God’s law is a perfect law and you and I can never attain unto any measure of perfection.

God’s justice is an infinite justice because He is an infinite God. So, there is no way that we can satisfy. We can face the law forever. We can face His justice. We can be under the wrath of God forever and still would never satisfy.

We would never come up to that measure of glory. We would never come up to that fullness of justice. We would always be lacking; so, we can never satisfy but we can suffer.

Well, you see; God can’t suffer, God can satisfy. Jesus Christ can satisfy the Lord. He is perfect in His every thought. He knew no sin. He could honor the perfect law. He could satisfy justice.

Justice could lay one hand on Christ and He could fully satisfy it because He is an infinite person, the infinite character of Christ. So, in order to redeem us, God can satisfy but can’t suffer. He became a man who could suffer.

So, the God-man; both suffered under the judgment of God; He both suffered under the wrath of God, and He satisfied the law of the holiness, the righteousness, and justice of God, a Saviour which is Christ the Lord, Christ the Lord. Jesus is His name of humanity; Christ is His office and Lord is His God-hood.

All right; notice the last thing the angels said, they cried: a multitude of heavenly hosts joined that angel and said: *glory to God in the highest.*” It’s a lesson that we need to learn from this angel’s song is this! Salvation is God’s greatest glory; that’s right, God’s greatest glory.

Somebody said, “That God is glorified in every drop of dew that sparkles in the morning sun. God is glorified in every bird that sings and God is glorified in every flower that blooms. God is glorified in every drop of snow or rain but God is glorified in His greatest glory, in the salvation of sinners through the blood of His Son.” Glory to God!