

***It's A Boy!***  
**Christmas Eve Message**  
**North East United Methodist Church**  
**Rev. Dr. Drew M. Christian**

*“All Because A Child Was Born...”*

I want you to think for a moment this Christmas Eve how the world was forever changed by the child whose birth we celebrate this night.

Think about Jesus for a moment. D. James Kennedy, in his book, What if Jesus Had Never Been Born, writes, *“He was born in an obscure village, the child of a peasant woman. He grew up in another village, where He worked in a carpenter shop until He was thirty. Then for three years He was an itinerant preacher. He never wrote a book. He never held an office. He never had a family or owned a home. He didn’t go to college. He never visited a big city. He never traveled more than two hundred miles from the place He was born. He did none of the things that usually accompany greatness. He had no credentials but Himself. He was only thirty-three when the tide of public opinion turned against Him. His friends ran away. One of them denied Him. He was turned over to His enemies and went through the mockery of a trial. He was nailed to a cross between two thieves. While He was dying, His executioners gambled for His garments, the only property He had on earth. When He was dead, He was laid in a borrowed grave through the pity of a friend. [Twenty] centuries have come and gone, and today He is the central figure of the human race. All the armies that ever marched, all the navies that ever sailed, all the parliaments that ever sat, all the kings that ever reigned, put together, have not affected the life of man on this earth as much as that one solitary life.”*

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Out of Jesus' life and teachings grew a movement, Christianity. Through this movement birthed from Jesus' life and teachings, hospitals and universities were started in the Middle Ages, literacy and education were supported for the masses; and representative government was birthed. The abolition of slavery, elevation of women and children, values of benevolence and charity, the development of art and music, and higher standard of justice grew out of the teachings of Jesus. We cannot date a check without acknowledging His birth. Not to mention the countless changed lives over the centuries because one entered into a relationship with Jesus.

Historian, Jaroslav Pelikan wrote, *“Regardless of what anyone may personally think or believe about him, Jesus of Nazareth has been the dominant figure in the history of Western Culture for...twenty centuries. If it were possible, with some sort of super magnet, to pull up out of the history every scrap of metal bearing at least a trace of his name, how much would be left?”*

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Jesus changed everything, but to understand the change, to understand what Jesus brought, what He taught, what He offers, we must go back to the beginning.

*“In the beginning...”* there was a couple...Adam and Eve. Adam and Eve were living in beauty, in absolute peace, as the world was meant to be. In the garden, they were offered a choice. As Kurt Burner & Jim Ware write, *“[They] could sing the good song of the great composer or follow the opposing melody of the enemy. [They] chose the latter. And when [they] rejected the good that God is, [they] embraced the bad that he isn't.”*

Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. In biblical terms...Adam and Eve sinned. The basic sin, beneath all other, is disobeying God. The Bible tells us we too are guilty of disobeying God. We don't like to talk about this, but as **Romans 3:23** states, *"For all have sinned; all fall short of God's glorious standard."* J. Ellsworth Kalas goes as far to say, *"If we don't comprehend this...we're not likely to get the full, magnificent impact of Christmas."*

Kalas writes, *"When we live below our best potential, when we're mediocre when we ought to be fine, cheap when we ought to be noble, shoddy when we should be upright – this is sin. When we are anything less than godly, it's because we're involved in this scandal called sin."*

Even our secular Christmas stories show us this truth. Look at the Grinch or Ebenezer Scrooge.



Both in need of something, both involved in the scandal of sin, and in the end discover conversion and transformation.

That is why we need Christmas. Christmas came because, like Adam and Eve, we are offered a choice and often we choose *"the opposing melody of the enemy"* and find ourselves disobeying God.

I remember sharing with my boys this truth...sharing with them how I knew once again that I had fallen short “*of God’s glorious standard,*” that I was “*involved in the scandal called sin.*”

My boys and I had gone to see *The Dark Knight*. In that film, the superhero Batman faces off against his arch-nemesis, The Joker. The Joker is a homicidal maniac who has killed many innocent people. In one scene the two fight and the Joker ends up hanging off a fire escape, barely holding on, about to fall to his death. Batman, a man with a strict moral code, reaches down and saves him, pulls him up, placing him in jail instead of allowing him to fall to his death.

Coming out of the theatre that night, I remember turning to my boys and telling them this is why I needed a Savior, why I needed Jesus, because I have no doubt...no doubt...I would have let him fall to his death. In fact, I would have probably pushed him. The ability to murder, to hate, to cast aside another life, is in me. I need a Savior.

**John 3:16** tells us, “*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.*”

Think about how awesome it is that you and I, who often walk away from God, who know deep down that the world and ourselves are less than what we were meant to be...you and I were given a gift. God sent His Son, wrapped Him in flesh, and laid Him in a manger.

“*All Because A Child Was Born...*”

## **Luke 2: 8-12 (NIV)**

*And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”*

This child, born in a manger, was the fulfillment of centuries of prophecy, would be God’s way of bringing us back to Him.

**Isaiah 9:2, 6** tells us, *“The people who walk in darkness will see a great light—a light that will shine on all who live in the land where death casts its shadow...For a child is born to us, a son is given to us. And the government will rest on his shoulders. These will be his royal titles: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.”*

This child, this baby, in the manger, grew into a man, taught us about the love of God, taught us how to live and love, and eventually was crucified, sacrificed, on a cross. Paul writes, in **Romans 5:8**, *“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”* Paul later explains further in **2 Corinthians 5:21**, *“For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ.”*

How long I walked in darkness, did not let Christ in? How long I suffered from guilt for the things I had done or had not done? How long I missed the true miracle of Christmas, the Prince of Peace, the *“Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world,”* even mine?

**Romans 10:9** states, “*For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.*”

Every Christmas we sing this good news, but I wonder if we sometimes miss the meaning, God’s message to us, sent that first Christmas night.

God rest ye merry, gentlemen  
 Let nothing you dismay  
 Remember, Christ, our Saviour  
 Was born on Christmas day  
**To save us all from Satan's power**  
**When we were gone astray**  
 O tidings of comfort and joy...

Silent night, holy night,  
 Son of God, love’s pure light;  
**Radiant beams from Thy holy face**  
**With the dawn of redeeming grace,**  
 Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth...

Joy to the World! The Savior reigns!  
 No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
 Nor thorns infest the ground;  
**He comes to make His blessings flow**  
**Far as the curse is found...**

That is way Christmas came...that is why Jesus came...”*to save us all from Satan’s power*”...to bring “*the dawn of redeeming grace*” ...to make “*His blessings flow far as the curse is found*” ...to offer us the opportunity to grab hold of the light in the midst of the darkness and to be transformed.

Because of that baby in the manger giving up the glory of heaven and putting on the flesh of humanity in order to show us the depth of God's love, like so many before us, we have a choice. We have the opportunity to begin again, to throw away the past, to have a future, to be made right with God. We have the choice, like the shepherds who traveled to the manger, like the wise men who followed the star, like Mary & Joseph who were obedient to the angel's voice, we have the choice to travel to the manger, to see the Christ child, and to bow down before Him.

*"All Because A Child Was Born..."*

Each of us have been invited, but each of us must make the choice to go. Coming to church a few times a year is not making a choice. Choosing Christ is a daily walk. It requires a life change. The church, the Bible, serving others...these things become part of our daily lives because they are important to Christ and Christ is important to us. We bow before the manger, invite Christ into our hearts, and allow Him to begin to lead us, showing us where to go, how to love, what words to speak and actions to take.

*"All Because A Child Was Born..."*

I see all that has happened, how the world has changed, the countless lives transformed, because of this child born in Bethlehem. I choose to believe that the child whose birth we celebrate tonight is the Son of God, and if Jesus is the Son of God, He rightfully deserves our allegiance, obedience, and worship.

Jesus says, *"I knock on the door – whoever answers and lets me in I will enter and dine with them."* Accept the good news. Accept the gift. Accept the miracle.

Allow the news, "It's A Boy!" to change your life. Allow this Jesus, who continues to affect the life of men and women on this

earth more than two thousand years after His birth...allow Him to have each and every part, each and every hurt, each and every day of your life. Accept the miracle, be cleansed from your sin, be transformed, be made new, by the babe in the manger. Open your heart, begin a relationship with the Christ, recommit your life to Him, this Christmas Eve, and have your life transformed and your eternity opened, "*All Because A Child Was Born...*"

## **INVITATION**