

## Looking for the Promise

### I. It is Time to Look

#### A. Seeking

The Wonder of Christmas Eve 1971 — Drawing names in summer or fall. One by one distributed, opened, acknowledged, and discussed.

No midnight Mass that year — The next year we had found Him

For many years, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day

Christmas Eve Candlelight service — the town showed up. Snowing when it ended.

A few Christmas Eves we ate at La Torre's Italian Restaurant by the fireplace. Some magical memories...

Pennsylvania ... No family, No friends. '87

'88 Second Christmas Eve in PA.

Reservations at Rillo's. CLOSED. Found a sports bar... TV's ... Bright lights. No atmosphere

#### B. Looking for Light

[Matthew 4:16](#) ESV

the people dwelling in darkness have seen a great light, and for those dwelling in the region and shadow of death, on them a light has dawned.”

### II. Timing

[Galatians 4:4–5](#) (ESV) But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law,

to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

#### A. Fullness of Time

*Full of trouble, dangers, frustrations, deaths, diseases, wars, human inability to save ourselves.*

*For centuries, it seemed too late*

#### B. The Son was Sent

*Eternal plan*

#### C. Born of a woman

*BORN! He was born not LIKE a human, but AS a human.*

*Maybe Mary held Him and whispered, “So this is what God looks like...” ...*

St. Augustine wrote -

*Man's maker was made man that He, Ruler of the stars might nurse at His mother's breast; that the Bread might hunger, the Fountain thirst, the Light sleep, the Way be weary on its journey; ..... that Strength might grow weak; that the Healer might be wounded, and that Life might die.*

*God KNOWS what it is like to be human. Deadlines, long lines, people who do not "get it."*

*He has been there, He has been HERE*

## D. Born under the Law

## E. To Redeem Us from the Law

*Christmas begins what Easter celebrates*

*The lamb wrapped in swaddling cloths, the **King on the Cross**,*

## F. SO THAT We Might Receive

Adoption

Intimacy Access Freedom Inheritance

**Gal 4:6-7 ESV**

And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"  
So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

## III. Looking for the Ultimate Gift

### A. His Presence Transforms

**Matt 1:23 ESV**

"Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us).

### B. Immanuel... **God with Us**

*Not just "God made us."*

*Not just "God thinks of us"*

*Not just God "above us."*

*But God WITH us, where we are.*

*In the office, kitchen, on the plane. He breathed our air and walked the same earth.*

**When You walk into the room... Everything changes**

**Darkness starts to tremble ...      At the light that You bring**

*Always near us. For us.*

*Never forgets us.*

*Always ON his mind and IN his plans.*

*Now he is In us. Now he shines through us.*

## IV. He Seeks Us!

### A. Darkness Trembles

The troubled, dark EMPEROR brings about God's Plan

**Luke 2:1–7 NLT**

At that time the Roman emperor, Augustus, decreed that a census should be taken throughout the Roman Empire.

(This was the first census taken when Quirinius was governor of Syria.)

All returned to their own ancestral towns to register for this census.

And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David's ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee.

He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child.

And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born.

She gave birth to her firstborn son. She wrapped him snugly in strips of cloth and laid him in a manger, because there was no lodging available for them.

### B. Glory Invades

**Luke 2:8–9 ESV** And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear.

#### 1. Great (*mega*) Fear!

*And when You walk into the room*

*Every heart starts burning*

*And nothing matters more*

*Than just to sit here at Your feet*

*And worship You*

**Lk 2:10 ESV** And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

## 2. Good News - Announcing the Kingdom

### 3. Great (*mega*) Joy for ALL

**Luke 2:10 TPT** But the angel reassured them, saying, “Don’t be afraid. For I have come to bring you good news, the **most joyous news the world has ever heard!** And it is for **everyone everywhere!**

**For Everyone Everywhere!**

*When You walk into the room*

*Sickness starts to vanish*

**Every hopeless situation ceases to exist**

*The dead begin to rise*

**RESURRECTION LIFE in all You do**

## C. THE Promise - Savior and King

**Luke 2:11 ESV** For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

**Unto YOU!**

*Everyday People*

**Born – God’s face...just getting started**

**This Day**

*Specific time*

**In the city of David**

*Specific location*

**Savior**

*Specific mission* — Rescue, Restore, Renew

**Christ, Messiah**

*Specific Person* — Messiah - the Seed of Abraham

**Lord**

*Specific purpose* —A new ruler —Kyrios, Lord! (Caesar)

**Specific Sign that He Came to Save**

**Luke 2:12 ESV** And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.”

*Shepherds who cared for the temple lambs understood this. When a male lamb without defect, suitable for sacrifice, was born the shepherds would wrap the lamb in clean cloth. It set them apart.*

## D. Suddenly Worship!

### 1. Massive Army of Worshippers

[Luke 2:13–14 ESV](#) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”

#### Angels and Worship

[Rev 5:11–12 NKJV](#) Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands,

saying with a loud voice: “Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!”

### 3. Impact of Worship

#### Mission

[Luke 2:16–17 ESV](#) And they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby lying in a manger.

And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.

#### Wonder

[Luke 2:17–18 ESV](#) And when they saw it, they made known the saying that had been told them concerning this child.

And all who heard it wondered at what the shepherds told them.

#### Mary Treasured

[Luke 2:19 ESV](#) But Mary treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart.

#### Shouting and Praise!

[Luke 2:20 ESV](#) And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

## VI. Naming the Promised One

[Luke 2:21 ESV](#) And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb.

*The One Who named every star at creation,*

*Named by His mother and adoptive father.*

[Psalm 147:4 NLT](#) He counts the stars and calls them all by name.

## VII. Seek and Find

**Luke 2:22 NKJV** Now when the days of her purification according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present *Him* to the Lord

The Incarnate Word is 6 weeks old. The one who determined the number of the stars, now has the days counted before he can enter the Temple built by Herod.

The days were completed (fulfilled). 8 plus 33 days...

### A. Simeon - the godly Seeker

**Luke 2:25–26 ESV** Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him.

And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.

*Eagerly EXPECTING the Consolation of Israel, God's Promise (Messiah), the **HELP** Holy Spirit had REVEALED that he would see MESSIAH before he died.*

### B. That Day - Timing

**Luke 2:27–28 NLT** That day the Spirit led him to the Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the Lord as the law required,

Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying,

THAT DAY...Holy Spirit led him

SO WHEN... Mary and Joseph came

SIMEON WAS THERE!

HE TOOK ...Child in his arms and

PRAISED GOD WITH A SONG

**Luke 2:29–32 NLT**

“Sovereign Lord, now let your servant die in peace, as you have promised.

I have seen your salvation,

which you have prepared for all people.

He is a light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people Israel!”

*Now ... SHALOM*

*Seen SALVATION*

*Prepared ... all people ... Barbarians...Romans...Jews...*

*Light for the Gentiles ... declared in the Temple*

*Glory for your people Israel.*

*Great anticipation that every promise of God finding its YES in Christ.*

## IX. What We Look For

### Beyond words

#### **2 Corinthians 9:15 ESV**

Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!

*If I seek what others give to me or take from me, leaves me incomplete, disappointed, and unsatisfied.*

*A space in every soul that only God can fill.*

*Seek FIRST the Kingdom & Character*

*The Consummation...Parousia...Until He Comes*

*Seek... The True Gift is already Present...*

*Every word of God is true*

*Every promise will be fulfilled*

*The Birth of Jesus in the darkest hour gives us confidence*

*In Him all the Promises of God find their YES*

*So we say AMEN*

*He will Come Again... When He Walks Into...*

*Let's Worship*

**JOY TO THE WORLD**