

My Soul Magnifies the Lord

Christmas 2020

Sermon Four: My Soul Magnifies the Lord because He Seeks Worshipers.

Luke 2:1-20

December 27, 2020

Opening Illustration: There is a wonderful display of 2 seemingly very different things in the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ. On one hand, we see simplicity and humility and understatement. On the other, we see glory and magnificence and splendor. At the same time the Lord decided to be born under lowly circumstances in a stable in Bethlehem, the angels of God were shouting His brilliance and celebrating His glory. At the same time the baby's hushed cries could barely be heard outside the stable, the great and grand voices of innumerable Heavenly beings were shouting the resplendent melody of God's beauty. Although born into relative poverty, there would soon be wise men from a foreign land making a mysterious pilgrimage to give the Lord gold, frankincense and myrrh. Seriously, is there anything more amazing?

Transition: This may lead us to ask this question: Did God want the birth of Christ to be celebrated or to be a secret?

I. Introduction

A. Is Does God really care if people worship Him or not?

1. The Lord seeks people to worship Him.
 - a. **John 4:23** But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.
2. The Lord commands that people worship Him.
 - a. **Psalms 2:11** Worship the LORD with reverence And rejoice with trembling.
 - b. **1 Chronicles 16:29-34** Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; Bring an offering, and come before Him; Worship the LORD in holy array. ³⁰Tremble before Him, all the earth; Indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved. ³¹Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; And let them say among the nations, "The LORD reigns." ³²Let the sea roar, and all it contains; Let the field exult, and all that is in it. ³³Then the trees of the forest will sing for joy before the LORD; For He is coming to judge the earth. ³⁴O give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting.
3. The Lord is offended when people do not worship Him.
 - a. **Malachi 1:6** 'A son honors his father, and a servant his master. Then if I am a father, where is My honor? And if I am a master, where is My respect?' says the LORD of hosts to you, O priests who despise My name. But you say, 'How have we despised Your name?'

B. God doesn't have to include us in the celebration of His glory.

1. God was perfectly happy in His inter-trinitarian fellowship. He didn't create us because He was lonely.
 - a. **Acts 17:24-25** The God who made the world and all things in it, since He is Lord of heaven and earth, does not dwell in temples made with hands; ²⁵nor is He served by human hands, as though He needed anything, since He Himself gives to all people life and breath and all things;

C. God chooses to show us His majesty and to involve us in His story.

1. What we study and experience is something angels long to look into.
 - a. **1 Peter 1:12** It was revealed to them that they were not serving themselves, but you, in these things which now have been announced to you through those who preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven-- things into which angels long to look.
2. The simple and yet glorious fact of Christmas is that you will never receive a gift under the tree that is remotely as amazing as the sheer mercy God has given you by allowing you to know Him.

II. The Situation of Christ's Birth (Luke 2:1-7)

A. We must remember that these things happened.

1. We cannot magnify a God in Whom we do not believe.

- a. That is why belief is so crucial.
 - b. That is why apologetics is so necessary.
2. We cannot allow ourselves to drift into thinking that these things are just fluffy fables or moralistic mumbo-jumbo. We must wrestle with the fact that these things are...well, facts.

Quote: "There is no message in this book except that God, the very God whom people insulted and against whom they rebelled, is so concerned about them that he himself did the only thing that could be done to rescue them and to redeem them." Martyn Lloyd-Jones

B. We must remember what it is that happened (vv. 1-7).

- 1. What happened that was so significant?
 - a. The historical context (vv. 1-5)
 - b. The historical facts (vv. 6-7)

III. The Celebration of Christ's birth (Luke 2:8-20)—These things were meant to be celebrated:

A. By the Shepherds (vv. 8-12).

- 1. Remember, God came to them! He approached them with the greatest news that they would ever hear.
- 2. Notice their reaction! It is a terribly frightening vision that these shepherds were given!
 - a. Our first reaction would be the same, I'm sure.
 - b. Why did they react this way?
 - i. Because things like this don't happen very often.
 - ii. Because they were very aware of their faults and flaws.
- 3. Notice the reassurance that they were granted by the angel:
 - a. Do not be afraid.
 - b. I am bringing you the best news of your life.
 - c. I am bringing you the greatest joy you will ever experience.
- 4. Notice what made the difference to the shepherds:
 - a. Jesus was born today (time).
 - b. Jesus was born in Bethlehem (place).
 - c. Jesus was born as your Savior (significance).
 - d. Jesus is the Messiah and the Lord (transcendence).

B. By the Angels (vv. 13-14).

- 1. This was a choir of the angelic army!
 - a. They were praising God!
 - b. They were saying:
- 2. The glory that God deserves echoes in the highest places.
 - a. That is to say that in the heavenly, angelic realm, God is constantly worshipped.
 - b. That is to say that in the heavenly, angelic realm, God is constantly magnified.
- 3. The glory that God deserves resounds in the lowest places.

C. By Everyone in the stable (vv. 15-20).

- 1. Notice how the shepherds respond to the heavenly vision!
 - a. They want to go to Bethlehem right away!

D. By us.

- 1. We must magnify the Lord, because He is the Lord!
- 2. We must magnify the Lord, because He is our Savior!
- 3. We must magnify the Lord, because He is our God!
- 4. We must magnify the Lord for hundreds of other reasons!

Point: God seeks worshippers. God desires that the created order would recognize and delight in the absolute splendor of His being, nature and character. Beloved, Magnify the Lord.

IV. Conclusions

A. Magnify the Lord

1. Because He does the Impossible.
2. Because He honors the humble.
3. Because He redeems His people.
4. Because He seeks worshippers.

Quote: "A very real danger confronts us at this present time. We are living in an we when men and women are tired - that is the effect of the warfare that we have been considering. You always get that weariness at the end of a war...We are exhausted. We have been trying different remedies, we have been given promises and we have put our faith in them, but the promised good times do not seem to have materialized. So men and women are at the end of their tether and in that condition they are ready to believe anything and to clutch at almost anything that is offered." D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, "The All-Sufficient God," page 20

Beloved, we must remember that the things of Christmas are true, that the Christ of Christmas is wonderful, and that all creation exists to live, to sing, to serve and to anything that they do

To the Praise of His Glory,
Amen.