



A Study Through Luke 1 & 2

**Dec 12-**  
**Dec 26**





# CELEBRATE THE COMING KING A STUDY

*Through Luke 1 & 2*

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**December 12 - December 26**

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Written by TJ Johnson

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# Celebrate the Coming King

Christmas has always been a mystical and magical moment for so many around the world. Snowfall, Santa Claus, songs and celebrations (lots of celebration) fill our month and allow the magic of Christmas to do its work. It is a time when hopes are renewed, joys are allowed to flourish, and the need for reconciliation is realized.

And yet for others Christmas is more of a journey through the valley of the shadow of death and sorrow. Another year without a loved one. Another year without our hopes being realized. Another year alone. Another year being forced to fake a smile to fit in with friends and family.

The GOOD NEWS of Christmas is that Christ comes to both sets of people. He comes to stately Zechariah and mild Mary. He comes to lowly shepherds and honored magi. He comes to rejoice with those who rejoice and weep with those who weep. And ultimately, He comes to turn ALL our mourning into laughter.

Over the next three weeks we will look at the birth of Jesus to see why He came and what it means for US today.

Celebrating with you,

Pastor TJ





# CHRISTMAS

— Hope Foretold —

*Luke 1:5-38*

December 12

Christmas brings with it an element of hope. It's a magical time when anything can happen. If Santa can fit down a chimney, then surely my deepest hopes can come true this year, right?

Often times, what we really mean by hope is, "wish."

I hope it snows on Christmas. I hope I did well on that test. I hope he comes home this Christmas. I hope I get a PS4 from Santa.

And if we are honest, our hopes are often set in the realm of the unrealistic. After all, who HOPES for something they can fulfill themselves? Hope, by definition, must be something that is not yet at hand and always beyond OUR reach.

But hope is a good thing, and as Andy once told Red, "maybe the best of things...and no good thing ever dies."

So, as we come to the story of the TRUE Christmas, God becoming man and making His dwelling among us, I pray you come full of hope. Or at least, I hope you come ready to receive hope. But not some weak wishful hope of the world that will never come to pass. No, I am praying for your hope to be renewed in something sure, Jesus Christ, the God of all hope who brings good gifts to His children.

Hoping with you,

Pastor TJ



*The child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God.*

### Ice Breaker

1. What is your fondest memory of Christmas?

### The Soil of Hope

2. What difficulties were the people facing in the times leading up to the birth of Jesus?
3. What difficulties have you faced in 2020?
4. What are your top prayers this Christmas season?
5. What are some examples, in the Bible, of people who waited hopefully for God?
6. What are some things we can do this Christmas season to hopefully wait for God?

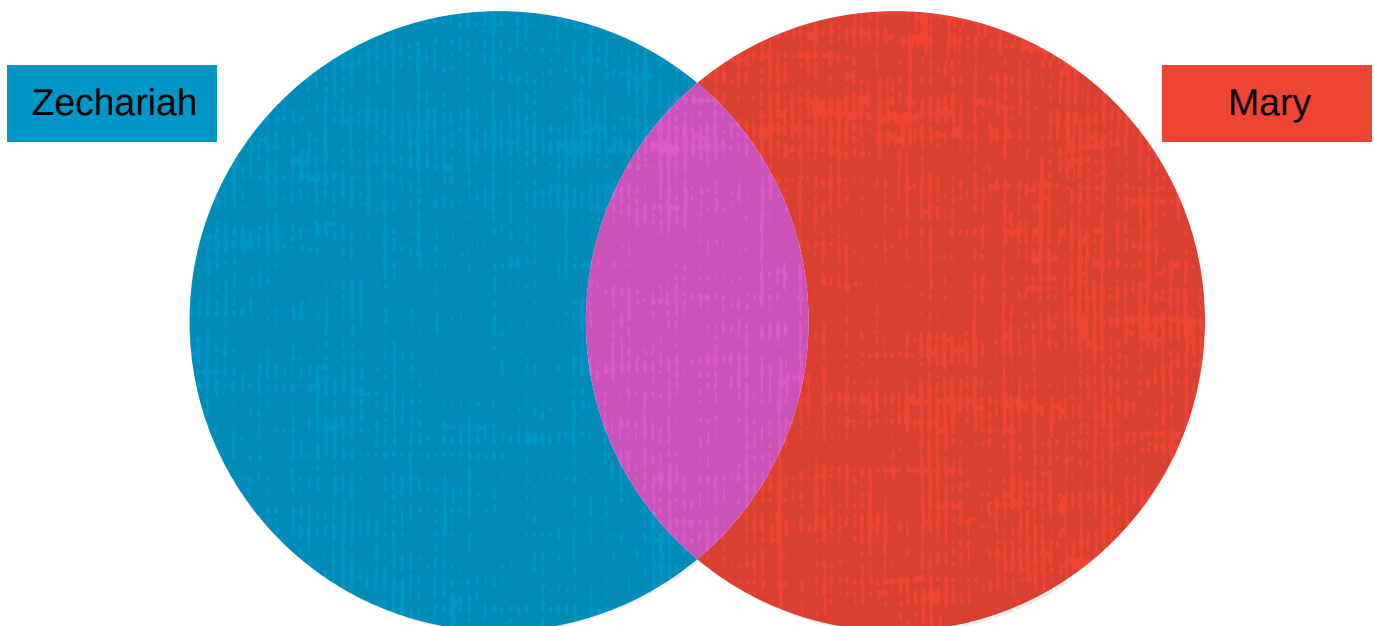


## The Savior of Hope

7. What specific promises are given to Mary about Jesus' coming?
8. What are some false hopes (promises NEVER given to us) people sometimes believe and how can we not be deceived to believe these false hopes?
9. In what ways does Jesus show that He cares for our spiritual, physical, and emotional needs?
10. Read Luke 1:37. What impossible things has God accomplished in your life this year?
11. What are you most thankful for about Jesus this Christmas season?

## The Servant of Hope

12. Create a Venn diagram to compare and contrast Mary and Zechariah and their response to the news of the coming Messiah.







## The Servant of Hope

13. In what ways are you like Zechariah and in what ways are you like Mary in your response to God's promises to you?
14. Read Luke 1:38. What are some things in our lives that we find it difficult to say, "Let it be to me according to your word."
15. What difficulties did Mary face because of her pregnancy?
16. What difficulties do you currently face because of your faith in Jesus?
17. If, even as Christians, we are to face difficulties in this life, why should we have hope in this life and in the next?

**Romans**  
**15**  
**:13**

**May the God of**  
**HOPE** fill you with all **joy** and **peace**  
in believing, so that by the  
power of the **Holy Spirit** you may

ABOUND IN

**HOPE**



## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports



## *Leader's Guide*

**December 19**

Many in this world believe that a “happy Christian” is a paradox of sorts.

Christianity isn't about delight but duty. It isn't about laughter but lament. It isn't about happiness but holiness.

But what if our holiness is magnified BECAUSE OF our happiness? What if our lament over sin is meant to be turned into laughter (Psalm 126)? What if our duty to obey is spurred on through our delight in the one whom we obey? What if the innate human quest for happiness was a desire implanted by our maker in order to draw us to Himself, the author, object, and essence of happiness?

It might surprise you that the Bible has A LOT of positive things to say about joy and happiness.

Is not our strength the JOY of the Lord? Was it not for the JOY set before Jesus that He endured the cross? Did not Jesus' parable end with, “enter into the JOY of your master.”? Is not JOY a fruit of the Spirit? Did not God give the feasts to be an occasion of JOY (Deut. 16:15)? Do not the Psalms command us to sing and shout with JOY? Does not David pray for God to restore the JOY of his salvation? Did not Jeremiah find God's Words to be a JOY and delight to his heart? Does not Isaiah envision a day when sorrow and sighing shall be replaced with gladness and JOY? Is not the Kingdom of God righteousness, peace, and JOY in the Holy Spirit?

Our God is a God of joy who invites the world to ENJOY Him forever (Westminster Catechism). This is why the birth of Jesus is a story of JOY. Not just joy but, the angels call it,

“Good news of GREAT joy.”

Jesus' coming into the world is a personal invitation for YOU to come and ENJOY Him forever. I don't know what struggles you are facing this Christmas. I don't know what depression you might be experiencing this Christmas. I don't know what deep-seated sorrow might be lingering in your heart this Christmas. But I do know this: As you bring your sorrows to the Savior who was known as a man of sorrows, He can and will give you joy.

His birth brought joy to the Magi (Matthew 2:10). His birth brought joy Zechariah (Luke 1:14). His birth brought joy to the baby in Elizabeth's womb (Luke 1:44). And His birth can bring you joy this Christmas season.

Rejoicing in Jesus with you,

Pastor TJ



*I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.*

## Ice Breaker

1. Make a list of things that bring you joy (45 seconds) and share with the group.

*Various answers*

## Supreme Joy

2. What are some common joys the world seeks?

*Money, sex, attention, entertainment, friendship, accomplishments, etc*

3. Why is the news of Jesus' birth GREAT joy (greater than worldly pleasures)?

*Jesus' birth means that God has come down and made His home among us. He has forgiven us of sin. Jesus has enabled all mankind to experience common grace (common good and joy). Without Jesus there is no joy. Jesus is the fulfillment of all of our longings.*

4. The Sermon mentions Jesus' birth and resurrection (and everything in between) marked with great joy. What are some other Biblical examples of joy found in Jesus?

*Jesus' healing, miracles, and casting out of demons (Acts 8:8). The opportunity to share the gospel is an occasion of joy, even when we suffer for sharing (Acts 13:52). Salvation (Luke 15:10), discipleship (2 Cor. 1:24), and spiritual growth in yourself or a friend. The opportunity to pray to Jesus for a friend (Phil 1:4). Etc.*

5. Share with the group a time when you experienced great joy in Jesus.

*Various answers*





## Attainable Joy

6. Discuss how the incarnation (God becoming man) helps prove God's great love for us and His desire for us to be in relationship with Him.

*Babel was an impossible attempt to reach heaven. But in the birth of Jesus, heaven comes down for us. Other religions are attempts for us to work our way to heaven, in Jesus we find that He loves us so much He becomes like us to be with us forever.*

7. Discuss the different types of people invited to rejoice in the birth of Jesus and how that helps prove Jesus is available to all peoples.

*Rich (Magi) and Poor (Mary and Joseph). Old (Anna) and Young (John the Baptist). Jew (Shepherds) and Gentile (Magi). Holy (Angels) and Unclean (Shepherds). Etc. The Angels say, for all the people. Jesus came for sinners which includes everyone.*

8. Read Luke 2:14b. What type of person is pleasing to God and how can we obtain the peace proclaimed by the Angels?

*Jesus (Luke 3:22). Those who come to Jesus and depend upon the works of Jesus. By repenting and believing in the gospel. By grace through faith and not of works.*

## Expressive Joy

9. What are some ways you have beheld Jesus this week and how have you expressed your joy of beholding Him?

*Singing, Reading Scripture, sharing my testimony, telling my family about what Jesus has done for me this week. Giving thanks through prayer. ETC.*

10. List the expressions of joy found at Jesus' birth (if time permits expand your list to include other expressions of joy found in the Bible). Which expression of joy is most natural and meaningful to you and why?

*John leapt. Mary sang and pondered. Wise men gave. Angels proclaimed. Shepherds shared the good news with others. Other expressions could include: prayer, dancing, bowing down, raising hands, shouting, etc.*

11. If joy is meant to be shared, with whom and how will you share your joy of Jesus this Christmas season?

*Various answers. Invite someone to your home to celebrate Christmas. Christmas in a box. Etc.*



## Prayer & Praise

End your time together by reflecting on the goodness of God and praying for one another.

### Prayer Requests

### Praise Reports



December 26

*Leader's Guide*

Christmas is over (or at least soon to be, depending on when you are reading this). While we may officially celebrate the birth of Jesus only once a year, the GOOD NEWS that Jesus has come into our world should be celebrated year round.

The birth of a baby born in Bethlehem is NOT the end of the story. Hebrews 9:22 tell us, "Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin." This child in the manger must become the man on the cross, crucified among criminals outside the city. For the way in which this baby was to bring HOPE and JOY was through REDEMPTION. Our redemption back to God is only possible through Jesus willing laying down His life (Galatians 3:13). This was the plan the baby came to accomplish, born to die that we might live.

Our life through His death. Our joy through His suffering. Our light through His darkness. Our blessing through His curse.

While we might consider Christmas to be all light and hope and joy, Simeon reminds us that it is mixed with myrrh: "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed 35 (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also)". So, we CAN NOT end our series on hope and joy this Christmas season, for hope and joy make no sense apart from the redemption Jesus came to secure.

Celebrating redemption with you,

Pastor TJ



*I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.*

## Ice Breaker

1. Redemption is not a word we use often today. Take some time to discuss its Biblical meaning.

*Redemption in the Bible generally means that someone has lost something through injustice, debt, or death, and someone else has stepped in to buy the lost property back and restore it to its rightful owner. This can range from the avenger of blood (who enforces a payment of life for life), to the buying back of property, to the payment of a ransom to free a slave or captive. You see redemption in several places in the Bible: the firstborn following Passover, Ruth, Israel from Egypt, property (Lev. 25:25), Hosea and Gomer (Hosea 3), etc.*

*For deeper study see: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/essay/redemption/>*

## The Person of Redemption

2. How is Jesus different from every other human that ever lived on this earth?

*Jesus is not just a human, but also God. Jesus is the only sinless person to ever live. There have been a lot of people who did good things, but Jesus is the only one who ONLY did good. His love is deeper than any other human's love. His selflessness is greater than any other human. His sacrifice is greater. ETC.*



## The Person of Redemption

### 3. What has Jesus saved us from?

First and foremost, Jesus has saved us from sin, Satan, and ourselves. He has redeemed us from the consequences of sin, separation from God. But Jesus has done much more. He has given us joy and laughter and common grace. He is saving us from ALL effects of the fall: death, disease, suffering, etc. When we Read Revelation 21 & 22 we get a better picture of Jesus' full saving work.

### 4. In what ways do you personally fellowship with Jesus?

Various answers: *Prayer, Bible study, enjoying the good gifts He has given me, singing, playing the guitar, journaling, cooking, etc.*

## The Price of Redemption

### 5. Why did Jesus have to die?

*Sin is the most serious offense in the universe. The wages of sin is death. If Jesus did not die for us, then we would have to suffer the punishment of sin, both the first (physical) and second (spiritual) death.*

### 6. Why was Jesus an acceptable sacrifice?

*The Old Testament speaks of sacrifices being without blemish. Jesus was without blemish. Jesus lived the life I should have lived. He lived a life FULLY pleasing to God. When Jesus died on the cross our sins were put on Him and His righteousness was put on His followers.*





## The Price of Redemption

7. How should Jesus' death influence how we live today?

*The death of Jesus should not guilt us to serve Him, but motivate us to serve Him out of love and appreciation for what He has done for us. His death encourages us to come boldly before the throne of God and fellowship with Him. His death encourages us to not fear death or suffering, but entrust our lives to a good and holy God who cares for us so much He gave His Son for us. His death radically transforms how we treat ourselves and our neighbors. If God so loved us and our neighbors, it puts great value upon all humanity and challenges us to love them as God has loved them.*

## The Purpose of Redemption

8. How do you feel about death and does Jesus influence that feeling?

*Death is not the end of life, but the beginning of eternal life with Jesus. There is no fear in death, for I serve a God who defeated death. His resurrection will one day be my resurrection.*

9. What does it mean that Jesus is a light for revelation and glory?

*Moses longed to see the glory of God because he knew God's glory brought great joy and satisfaction. In Jesus we behold the glory of God. In Jesus we see God and fellowship with God. The text also says that Jesus is a SIGN. For everyone wondering, is there a God, the answer is yes, look to Jesus. In Him you see God in all His glory and have evidence that He is real and that He is for you.*



## The Purpose of Redemption

10. Read Titus 2:14. What good works have you displayed this Christmas season and how does Jesus' redemption motivate those works?

*Various answers: Opened my home for people to hear the gospel message. Baked cookies for my compound's baoan. ETC.*

## The People of Redemption

11. Why do you think God cares so much about redeeming people from EVERY tribe, tongue and nation?

*Isaiah 49:6. God is too big for just one people. It was sin that separated peoples from peoples (Babel), it is Jesus that reunites them, therefore showing the power of God over sin.*

12. Discuss the two reactions to Jesus and why people respond differently.

*Jesus said, "you are either for me or against me." There are two types of people in the world: those forgiven by Jesus because they have repented and those not forgiven by Jesus because they refuse to repent and believe. People respond in different ways because of the sins in their own heart. Everyone has something they value MORE than Jesus. To come to Jesus one must see Jesus as the greatest treasure this world has to offer.*

13. Is the message of redemption only for non-believers or is it important for seasoned Christians to continually think on redemption? Explain.

*The gospel is a message for all people. Monthly communion is a reminder of the gospel. We do it monthly because Christians NEED to constantly remember the work of Jesus. This reminder is meant to recalibrate our wandering heart.*