Series: The Drumbeat of Christmas

December 16, 2018

Message 2:

**Seeing CHRISTmas**

Matthew 1:18-23

*Guests - Handout designed with you in mind - Info and notes especially for you - won’t call or visit -*

*Next Steps - January*

*Generosity - Legacy Offering …*

**Intro:** Last week we had a great presentation from our NextGen Ministries - our Kids Ministries and Student Ministries together telling us the Drumbeat of Christmas. We were reminded that Christmas is not about food, family, or presents - but the Drumbeat of Christmas is God sending His Son, Jesus Christ, to this earth to die for our sins, so that we could have eternal life with Him. I’m tying my Christmas messages in with this theme - all the way through December 30 -

What does a drummer need to see?

Andy: 1. In marching band, the drummer needs to see the drum major in order to follow the tempo of the drum major, and the drummer needs to see the people around them to be sure they are staying in formation.

2. In concert band, the drummer needs to see the conductor for tempo, and needs to see the music in front of them.

3. On the worship team, I have notes on each song that I refer to while I am playing. Sometimes I will watch Pastor Seth's arms as he plays his guitar for help with the tempo. I would do the same with you when you lead worship on keys. When following Deneen, she gives very good visual cues, so I will watch for that. Pastor Seth also gives some visual cues to watch. I also will look at the drums some. If the snare doesn't sound right, I am not hitting it properly so I need to look at it to adjust. Sometimes when I am not looking close enough, I will have what I did yesterday, which was swing at and completely miss the crash cymbal coming out of the bridge in the second song. That's embarrassing.

Dale: Cues from the worship leader that indicate where we’re going.

* The obvious – we need to see where to strike (the drums and cymbals)
* Maybe the more important question is what does a drummer need to hear
  + Again, the leader and the Cues the leader gives
  + The Cues can be intentional cues so that the rest of the worship team can follow, but they are also following the Spirit of the leader so we can set the beat for where he/she is going – are we going into quiet worship or “shouting praise with joy”

How do we make sure we see Christ in Christmas?

Matthew 1:18-23 - This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly.

As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. “Joseph, son of David,” the angel said, “do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord’s message through his prophet:

“Look! The virgin will conceive a child!

She will give birth to a son,

and they will call him Immanuel,

which means ‘God is with us.’”

“He will save his people from their sins…”

Something about us as human beings, we want to pay for our own sins … we think we have to be good enough - but Jesus is the only one who has the solution to our sin problem.

All of this was done to fulfill what God had said through the prophet.

Emmanuel - God with us!

Notice vs. 22 - NIV - what the Lord HAD SAID!…

KJV - “what was spoken of the Lord…”

The details of Christmas - every detail - are related to God’s plan. Everything was to fulfill what the Lord had already said - already set in motion -

The innkeeper - the shepherds - the wise men - all was already planned - these were not coincidences … not unrelated. Every aspect of the story is important -

It all declares the Good News that God is with us! All of it is for our forgiveness.

Do we see it? Are we seeing it all as we go through Christmas?

Our greatest desire is for people to see Christ - His love - His forgiveness - accept Him as their Lord in this season -

We don’t want all the other aspects of Christmas to hide the focus of the story …

Some people are so busy during the Christmas season -

* work schedules … if you work in retail - you are working on Christmas Eve - and the day after Christmas … It’s hard for you to give it much thought -
* Some face sicknesses around Christmastime … you can’t focus on Christmas because you are focused on the needs of someone in your family …
* Some have lost family members right at Christmastime - you never look at Christmas the same - Uncle Bill … others …

Sometimes those encounters can actually cause us to look at Christ in Christmas in a new way.

Don’t just go through the motions this year -

* shopping
* Family activities
* Church activities
* School activities -
* Struggles -

Don’t let the message of Christmas get covered up. Don’t let the baby Jesus get hidden in that manger underneath all the other stuff.

Can we see Jesus in everything that goes on this Christmas? The Savior of humanity and the forgiver of all sins came to us at Christmas!

Like the Star that guided the Wise Men - let us be guided to worship Jesus this Christmas.

The trees and decorations - we are celebrating the biggest thing that is worth celebrating! We are celebrating the greatest birthday in the history of the world!

Decorate! Celebrate! Enjoy! And see the reason for the celebration!

The story of the Candy Cane … shepherd’s crook - turn it upside down it’s a J for Jesus!

Bells … have some to ring … Do they get irritating?

Song: Come on Right Those Bells!

*Come on, ring those bells,*

*Light the Christmas tree,*

*Jesus is the king*

*Born for you and me.*

*Come on, ring those bells,*

*Every-body say,*

*Jesus, we remember*

*This your birthday.*

*Celebrations come because of something good.*

*Celebrations we love to recall*

*Mary had a baby boy in Bethleham*

*The greatest celebration of all.*

*Come on, ring those bells…*

Celebrate!

The bells remind us of the announcement … shepherds …

**Big Idea: Make a decision that you are going to see Christ in everything this Christmas.**

Maybe you’re going through such a struggle - you can’t see Jesus - you can’t see joy -

God is with us … He is with you - no matter what you are going through - He is with you!

**T.S.:** 4 drumbeats to see:

**> God has not forgotten you.**

The idea that God has forgotten you is a lie - it is a lie from the enemy of your soul.

The enemy of your soul wants to convince you that God has forgotten you - prayers haven’t been answered - you’re going through a hard time - there is separation and division in your family - there is hurt and there is pain -

You have concluded that God has forgotten you -

It’s not hard to think this way - you have forgotten people - you have left people out - we forget all kinds of things -

God has not forgotten you!

The Christmas story tells the world that God has not forgotten -

400 years between OT & NT - lots of people thought God has forgotten -

Romans 5:6 - When we were utterly helpless, Christ came at just the right time and died for us sinners.

**> God has a promise for you.**

God keeps His promises!

We live in a world where people break their promises - It becomes expected - there are times we’ve broken our promises -

We begin to believe that God won’t keep His promise -

He kept the promises …

* His name Emmanuel - prophecy of Isaiah
* Born of a virgin - prophecy of Isaiah
* Born in Bethlehem - prophecy of Micah
* The children being killed - Prophecy of Jeremiah
* Flying to Egypt - prophecy of Hosea
* Returning to Nazareth - prophecy
* 8 Days - Simeon - I have seen what you promised me!

prophecies … all fulfilled …

God has a promise for you - forgiveness of your sins - living with Him forever - just accept the promise - God will keep His promise!

**> God has a purpose for you.**

When we are going through a hard time, it’s hard to see the purpose.

Romans 8:28 - And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to his purpose for them.

It’s hard to see that sometimes. God had a purpose in every detail of the Christmas story - He has a purpose for what is going on in your story.

He has a purpose in the pain.

Sometimes our pain gets us back on the right path.

We get off the path we get in the ditch - get back on the path.

Sometimes you’ve done something that’s caused you to drive into the ditch … the crash wakes you up - don’t do that thing that caused you to drive in the ditch anymore!

Story of Dino Rizzo going on a missions trip … everyone told him to go see the rug maker - best anywhere - artist - masterpieces …

He went to look - maybe to buy … didn’t see anything? What’s the deal? This is ugly! This is no big deal! Why is everyone excited about this?

He was looking at the back! He was looking at the wrong side!

Sometimes in our lives, we can’t see anything! We can’t see the purpose! We don’t understand why we’re going through something! When this happens at Christmastime we see no joy - we don’t see Jesus - we only see the struggle, the pain, the ugliness -

We’re looking at the wrong side of life! We’re looking at life from the wrong side!

Christmas says, “Look over here! There’s something else to look at!”

A teenage girl was pregnant - her fiancé almost deserted her - she was scandalized - not believed - her husband was a crazy man for going ahead and marrying her.

What happened in Elkhart this past week … teenage girl pregnant - killed by her boyfriend - stabbed to death because the baby had progressed beyond the point of having an abortion …

God help us to get God’s message to people like this!

Wise men travelled for two years …

A king went mad and went on a massacre of infanticide - It’s hard to see God’s plan in this -

But look over here - God came in the flesh! The Savior of the world was born! The answer to every problem has come!

And the one who can give purpose to your life is laying in a manger where cows have slobbered and regurgitated their cud!

Jesus came into the mess! Jesus came into the hurt! Jesus came into the confusion!

Your confusion and pain is a reminder of Christmas - and the reason Christmas exists!

Come to the other side - don’t look at the back side of the rug - look at the masterpiece!

**> God has a plan for you.**

Once you know God has a purpose - you can know He has a plan!

Next Steps - Discover Purpose - God has called you to make a difference!

“One of the best ways to see Christ in Christmas is to be a part of His plan.” - to make a difference.

You are part of His plan when you give -

You are part of His plan when you participate in a small group -

We are constantly reminded of the brokenness in our world … so many examples … current examples … the world is broken.

Jesus came to fix it!

Testimonies … ways in which the church has seen brokenness healed …

What has our generosity done this Christmas?

Legacy Offering to Nathanael & Nicole’s ministry -

27 people this year who have made a decision for Christ.

This is seeing Christ in Christmas!

**Invitation …**

**Blessing -**