

WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY NOTES

Grace and Peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord;... 2 Peter 1:2

A Christmas Revelation

How to Enter His Rest Part 3

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Luke 2:4 Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the city of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, **5** in order to register along with Mary, who was engaged to him, and was with child.

Luke 2:6 While they were there, the days were completed for her to give birth. **7** And she gave birth to her firstborn son; and she wrapped Him in cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Luke 2:8 In the same region there were [some] shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. **9** And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. **10** But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; **11** for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

Luke 2:12 "This [will be] a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." **13** And suddenly there appeared with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, **14** "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased."

- So great was the birth of our savior that the angels in heaven came down to earth glorifying God, rejoicing in this once in an eternity event they had waited so long to behold.

What was this event, so powerful, that the angels gathered together to manifest such awesome praise unto God?

God Became man so that man would become like God!

Jesus came to restore man back to the image and likeness of God which mankind enjoyed before the fall

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;... "

Genesis 1:27 God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; ...

Image: Tselem: More than a physical resemblance, it goes beyond that to include the essence of character.

Likeness: Tzelem: a reflection of God's nature; possessing morality and rationality, and like God, Domincance.

- These two words when placed together as they were in Genesis, describes man in this way: as God looking at Adam and seeing His own reflection.
- This meaning is absolutely brought out in the New Testament teachings of Paul, and James, regarding redeemed man.

However, man being made in the image and likeness of God was lost at the fall.

- Fallen man no longer exists in the image and likeness of God
- Being made in the image and likeness of God only applies to True Born Again Christians, who through the work of the Holy Spirit are right now being restored back into the image and likeness of God

Make no mistake about it, this is what the angels were celebrating on the night of Jesus' birth

This is the good news of a great joy!

1 Peter 1:23 for you have been born again not of seed which is perishable but imperishable, [that is,] through the living and enduring word of God.

James 1:21 Therefore, putting aside all filthiness and [all] that remains of wickedness, in humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls.

James 1:22 But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. **23** For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; **24** for [once] he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was.

- Do you get this?
- When we look at our reflection, we are supposed to see Jesus
- Just like God saw His reflection in Adam
- This is what James was talking about here...

We are supposed to be reflections of God

- When the spiritual forces of wickedness look down upon us what reflection are they seeing?
- What does God see?

Psalms 14:2 The LORD has looked down from heaven upon the sons of men To see if there are any who understand, ..

- Friends, My Brothers and Sisters, the modern Church does not understand
- The church has lost its way, has lost its identity, and has its priorities all upside down and inside out

John 1:12 KJV - But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, [even] to them that believe on his name:

- Jesus did not come to be celebrated, Jesus came to be duplicated
- But the Church has become all about the best music, singers and sound
- It's all about the music imitating worship,
- Worse than that, the word which actually has the power to save our souls has taken second place to the music that tickles our ears.

Jesus is supposed to be our spiritual identity, that is why He came

- This is what the angels celebrated on that special night:
- When we look in the mirror we should see Jesus
- When the world looks at us they should see Jesus
- When the devil looks at the church he should see Jesus

Instead, when the devil looks at the church he sees a church that has become so attractive to the world that they do not even resemble Jesus anymore!

- Tell me, who was the genius who said that church has to be attractive to the world so that we can win the world?
 - Why do we insist on making our church services comfortable for the world when they come in?
 - Wake up!!!
 - Church is not for the world church is for the church!!!
 - Since when have we made church about the world
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- We now have churches full of carnal Christians who have lost their spiritual identity because of watered down messages carefully crafted by men of deception, so as to not offend the world when they come in
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- If the world comes into your church service and leave because it offended them good, your simply removing the tares from the wheat
 - If they are wheat, they will stay, and receive whatever correction comes their way and love it.
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- The world is supposed to be very uncomfortable when they come into church
 - They should be convicted of their sinful lifestyle, and brought to a place of soul-searching conviction,
 - This will lead the world to repentance
 - Jesus call the world to repentance, not to fill churches and increase our numbers

Friends, God is not looking for churches filled with Church folk, He is looking for churches filled with sons and daughters of God!

- Do you even know who you are?

On the night Jesus was born all the angles rejoiced, because God became man

- Do you not even know that when one sinner repents, that all the angels in heaven rejoice because another lost soul has become like God

Luke 15:10 Jesus said, "... I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

- Mightier than an atomic explosion
- More spectacular than the birth of a new star in the heavens
- Is the birth of new son's and daughters of God
- So great is this event, that just like on the night that Jesus was born, all the angels in heaven stop what they are doing and break out into praise and celebratory rejoicing

James 1:18 In the exercise of His will He brought us forth by the word of truth, so that we would be a kind of first fruits among His creatures.

What are we thinking, what are we doing?

James 1:16 Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren. **17** Every good thing given and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shifting shadow.

- We should only be allowing good things to come into our churches

- Instead, we are bringing the things of the world into our churches
- And, we do this under worldly wisdom which has deceived the church into thinking we need to bring the things of the world into church so that we can win the world

Are you out of your mind?????

James 3:15 This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic.

Have we become so dull spiritually, so carnal in our thinking?

That we bring the very Character Satan has used so successfully to divert the world's attention off of Jesus at Christmas time

And invite him into our churches?

And excuse it as some kind of elevated wisdom from above?

While we mock the pure in heart for being childish and spiritually immature for being offended by this very mixing of light and darkness.

Romans 1:22 KJV- Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, **23** And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, ..., and fourfooted beasts,...

We have invited the very one who stole the true meaning of Christmas from the world, and brought him into our churches

And we encourage our little ones to believe in a fairytale when we should be instructing them in truth

The world no longer views Christmas as it once did just 100 years ago

During World War 1 the Germans and the English were killing one another just mere yards way from each other hunkered down in trenches on Christmas Eve 1914

When out of nowhere a German soldier began to sing Silent Night

The English joined in

One by one the sheepishly rose out of the trenches and approached one another

Sworn enemies, that just moment s ago were killing each other

Now reaching out in gestures of peace

Exchanging gifts and even playing a game of football together

This is the power of Christmas

Christmas was not about the gifts, but the celebration of Jesus, our Savior

People would gather from all over to come assemble at churches to sing the gospel set to Christmas carols, and this brought so much joy and comfort

And now we sing songs like, Baby its Cold Outside, and, Last Christmas I gave You My Heart, and let's not forget the all time favorite, Santa Claus is Coming to Town

What a royal mess, may God have mercy on us all.

I will gladly wear the badge of honor and suffer the reproaches of the mature Christian leaders who consider my thinking to be immature and childish and too extreme.

I will wear this gladly...