

Insight for the Issues

Prov. 4:23

NE → XT STEPS

Prov. 4:23 **Keep thy heart** with all diligence; for **out of it are the issues of life.**

“Preparing for Christmas”

Luke 2:4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.

9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

Tonight, we continue considering a new “issue:”

“Preparing for Christmas”

The Christmas season is not the same for everyone. Some celebrate Christmas, and some do not. This evening we will consider the very first “Christmas” and observe a few principles of reality:

THE REALITY OF LIFE DURING CHRISTMAS

I. THE EXPEDIENCY OF ESSENTIALS

Luke 2:4 And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:)

5 To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child.

8a “And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field...”

A. Life Includes Special Necessities, v. 4 “...went up from Galilee...into Judea...”

- ❖ Obligations require attention and action whether enjoyed or not.
- ❖ Life is filled with expenses, employment challenges, health issues, family problems, political debates, etc.

1 Cor. 10:13 “There hath no temptation taken you **but such as is common to man...**”

Mt. 6:25 Therefore I say unto you, **Take no thought for your life**, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? ...

30 Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, **shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?**

31 **Therefore take no thought**, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

32 (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for **your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.**

33 But **seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.**

B. Life Involves Subtle Nuisances, v. 5 “To be taxed...wife, being great with child.”

- ❖ Joseph only went once to pay tax, and Mary was not perpetually pregnant.
- ❖ Life, even during the Christmas season, may have special challenges that only happen once or a few times during one’s life.

II. THE EXPECTATION OF EVERYDAY

A. The Natural Course of Life is Expected

Luke 2:6 And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered.

7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.

8 “...shepherds...keeping watch over their flock by night.

- ❖ Joseph and Mary expected the birth of a child.
- ❖ The innkeeper expected to care for his clients, and that Mary and Joseph would be fine on their own.
- ❖ The shepherds expected the sheep to rest without fear during the night.
- ❖ Believers expect to have a normal day of life without too many dire circumstances.

B. The Normalcy Continues in Life as Expected

- ❖ The world expects life to continue as normal – living for self, possessing things, indulging in carnality without fear of God's concern for their lives.

Luke 12:15 And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for **a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.**

III. THE EXCEPTIONAL EVENT

Luke 2:9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

A. Life Interrupts our Routine of Complacency

- ❖ The shepherds' routine was greatly interrupted!
- ❖ The innkeeper and his guests were interrupted from their routine.
- ❖ Consider all that are listed in Heb. 11 – their routine was greatly interrupted.

Heb. 11:5 **By faith Enoch was translated that he should not see death;** and was not found, because God had translated him: for before his translation he had this testimony, that he pleased God. ...

7 **By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark** to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith.

8 **By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out,** not knowing whither he went. ...

11 **Through faith also Sara herself received strength to conceive seed,** and was delivered of a child when she was past age, because she judged him faithful who had promised. ...

31 **By faith the harlot Rahab perished not** with them that believed not, when she had received the spies with peace.

B. Life Involves our Relationship with the Creator

- ❖ Everyone during the “first Christmas” experienced a life changing event when God moved on the scene.
- ❖ Christmas season is a wonderful time to sense God moving in our lives, for His glory.
- ❖ We cannot meet Him and remain the same as before we met Him!

Luke 24:13 And, behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem *about* threescore furlongs.

14 And they talked together of all these things which had happened.

15 And it came to pass, that, while they communed *together* and reasoned, **Jesus himself drew near, and went with them.**

16 But their eyes were holden that they should not know him. ...

27 And **beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.** ...

32 And they said one to another, **Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?**

Summary

Christmas season does not eliminate the necessary essentials of life. Financial obligations must be met, doctor appointments must be kept, automobiles must be maintained, employment responsibilities require obligations of commitments to be accomplished, etc.

While taking care of the essentials, personal expectations will greatly affect the quality of our attitudes and the influences of our spirits. Circumstances can be discouraging, but, by God's grace, we can overcome ourselves, honor the Lord Jesus Christ, and be a blessing to others.

The Lord can use us to make this Christmas an exceptional event for His glory!

Conclusion

Luke 2:10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you **good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.**

11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a **Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.**