



## JESUS IS OUR SURE HOPE: WORSHIP HIM

DECEMBER 24, 2023

### WORSHIP

Angels we Have Heard on High, Joy to The World / Shout for Joy, Emmanuel God With Us, Hope Has Come, I Speak Jesus, His Name Shall Be medley

### WELCOME

What is your favorite Christmas carol that brings up hope in your heart, no matter what situation you find yourself in this season?

### WORD

**LUKE 2:8-11**  
(ALSO READ MATTHEW 2:1-12)

<sup>8</sup> In the same region there were some shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. <sup>9</sup> And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. <sup>10</sup> 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; <sup>11</sup> for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.”

Our understanding of Christmas is crucial in the way we celebrate its true meaning. Let’s go back to the story of Christmas to discover that indeed, JESUS IS OUR SURE HOPE: WORSHIP HIM!

#### WHAT IS CHRISTMAS?

Most of us think that Christmas is about reunions, eating, shopping, and giving gifts. But CHRISTMAS has a very wonderful meaning: CHRIST is the title of Jesus. “MAS” comes from the word MAESSE (festival, connected to the word MISSA) which means to let go or to send. Christmas is about sending all of us out to proclaim His message!

The best narration of Christmas is in **Luke 2:10-13, 20**. It was God’s initiative – He sent an angel to do the announcement. The call was “**do not be afraid**”. Whatever it is we are facing, we can recalibrate our minds – the message of Christmas brings us “GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY”. That is the Greek word EUANGGELIO – and it brings not just joy, but GREAT joy! What kind of news can bring joy to “all the people”? The angel proclaimed the birth of Jesus in BETHLEHEM. He proclaimed three titles of Jesus: (1) God gave us a **SAVIOR**. We have one major problem – SIN, which is self-will against God’s will. The world is a mess, and God promised that He was going to send us a Savior. (2) **CHRIST** – this is the title of a King, the Chosen One, predicted in the Old Testament prophecies, and recorded in the Jewish genealogies. (3) He is **LORD** – if you think the gospel is simply a passport to heaven, you are completely wrong. We also must recognize that He demands complete obedience. We are saved by grace, but because of Jesus our lives will change!

Christmas is good news – Jesus came to be our Savior. Christmas is telling you God is for us, He gave us a Savior and did not spare Him for us (**Romans 8:31-32**). Today, whatever is our condition, God loves you, and God is for you!

#### WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CHRISTMAS?

There are about 300 prophecies for Christ’s first coming, but there are more than 1,500 prophecies about the Second Coming! Christmas also tells us that Jesus is COMING AGAIN! The gospel involves salvation, sanctification, and glorification.

In the Second Coming is when we will experience glorification. In the meantime, we worship Him – our response to who GOD is, what He has done, what He is doing, and what He will do. Here’s a comparison between Jesus’ first and second coming:

FIRST COMING	SECOND COMING
<b>Bethlehem</b> (Micah 5:2)	<b>Mount of Olives</b> (Zech 14:4, Acts 1:11-12)
<b>Low key/ Quiet</b> (Luke 2:12, 16-18)	<b>Glory and power</b> (Luke 21: 27, Matt 24:30)
<b>Savior</b> (Luke 2:11)	<b>Judge and King</b> (2 Tim 4:1-2, Matt 16:26-27)
<b>Good News</b> (Luke 2:10)	<b>Good and Bad News</b> (Acts 10:42, 2 Thes 1)

What are the prophecies about the Second Coming?

# JESUS IS OUR SURE HOPE: WORSHIP HIM

DECEMBER 24, 2023

## WORD

**Matthew 24:6-8** tells us there will be wars and rumors of wars, famines, and earthquakes. Many people don't realize the centrality of Israel as a nation in the narrative of the Second Coming. **Ezekiel 36-37** narrates how God is going to fully restore Israel (1948). **Ezekiel 38** gives a glimpse of the end times – mentioning nations and people groups that will be against Israel. **Ezekiel 38:15-16** declares that in the last days, God will permit these nations to attack Israel. **Ezekiel 39:1-6** gives their ending – they will all be defeated! **Zechariah 14:2-4** prophesies that in that great day of battle, God shall intervene, and Israel will look to Jesus and finally recognize Jesus because of the grace of God (**Zechariah 12:10**).

Since there is great significance in Jesus' first coming and second coming, we must choose how to respond!

### HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND TO CHRISTMAS?

**Matthew 2:1-12** tells us about HEROD, the PRIESTS, and the WISE MEN. Herod was troubled when he found out about the Messiah's birth from the wise men (magi) who came seeking for the Child. He sought the help of the religious people (priests and scribes), and they named BETHLEHEM as the Messiah's birthplace (**Micah 5:2**). Herod pretends to desire to worship the Child also, but he saw Jesus as a threat. Herod wanted to be in control of his life – and if we think the best way to live is to do so our way, like Herod, we will never succeed. The priests and scribes pinpointed the prophecy of the Messiah's birth but did not go to Bethlehem. They were preoccupied with duties and responsibilities, especially their self-righteousness. Some of us are very busy – but worship is surrendering and changing our priorities. May we not be like the priests rebuked by Jesus (**Matthew 15:7-9**) – may we worship God truthfully with a sincere, broken, and contrite heart. We need to realize who Jesus is and respond to Him correctly!

The wise men followed the "star", found the Child and worshiped Him with precious gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. They worshiped Jesus from the heart and understood that worshipping God is also GIVING to Him. Knowing about Christmas is one thing but acting in response to Christmas is another thing! The final form of worship is seen in the response of the shepherds (**Luke 2:15-16**) – they came in a hurry, leaving behind all that concerned them, eager to worship the Messiah. Like them, let us make JESUS our top priority! The shepherds' response to Jesus was to TELL OTHERS about what they heard and seen, and they GLORIFIED GOD!

Christ is sending all of us on a mission, let's make this season about Him. How we respond to Christmas determines what we will experience when He comes again. Jesus must come again to correct the wrong, to bring about righteousness and justice. This world has a lot of injustice and unfairness. **2 Thessalonians 1:6-9** tells us that God will REPAY those who afflict His people, give those who are His people RELIEF. He will give RETRIBUTION to those who do not know God, and it includes the loss of the whole being, away from God's presence. There is an eternal penalty for those who do not align with Jesus. We will be glorified with Jesus (**2 Thessalonians 1:10-12**). We are destined for glory IN CHRIST ALONE – let's cling to Jesus, our SURE HOPE, and respond in truthful worship to Him.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

### 1. Self-Check.

What is Christmas to you and what is its significance?

### 2. Setting It Right.

How should we correctly respond to Christmas?

### 3. Living It Out.

What do you commit to do this Christmas in order to WORSHIP and please our sure hope – Jesus Christ our Savior – in this season?

## WORKS

### PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people around you to discover Jesus, our sure hope this Christmas. Do your part to tell others about what you have seen and heard about Christ in your own life!

## WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

### I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives.

### II. Country and the World

- Upright and moral governance of public servants; repentance and salvation for government leaders and citizens for a Christ-centered Philippines.
- God's help and comfort, salvation for Israel, wisdom for their leaders in government, military and their soldiers as they defend themselves against terrorists' attacks. PRAISE GOD for the release of hostages so far! Continue to pray for the release of the remaining ones.
- War in Ukraine to end, loss of lives prevented; conflict in African, East Asian and Middle East countries to stop.
- Middle East countries to stop.

### III. Church

- CCFers would honor and love God and make disciples.
- Elders, pastors, dleaders, and families (holy, humble, harmonious, happy, heart-working).
- Ministries and churches expansion worldwide.

### IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

### V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God.
- Righteous living.
- Salvation of family and friends.

## MEMORY VERSE

### LUKE 2:10-11

<sup>10</sup> 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; <sup>11</sup> for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord."