

A Message From Heaven

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 22 December 2024

Preacher: Jon Hueni

[0 : 00] Luke chapter 2. We'll begin reading from verse 1, once more, the Word of God. In those days, Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world.

This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria. And everyone went to his own town to register. So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem, the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.

He was there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son.

She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

[1 : 14] Today, in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you. He is Christ the Lord. Lord, this will be a sign to you. You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger. Suddenly, a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests.

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about. So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph and the baby who was lying in the manger.

When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

Then the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. Dear friends, we're looking this morning at the greatest gift ever given, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The gift is Jesus himself, but the gift needs to be explained to see his true value, that he is indeed God's indescribable gift.

[2 : 43] You see, he looks just like any other baby boy, but he was not just any other baby boy. And that's why God not only sent his son, but sent angels with a message about his son.

Telling us who he is and why he's come, because without this information, we don't have a clue as to the real meaning of the incarnation. We have no idea of just how precious this gift is and how much we need him.

So let's peer into the manger this morning, and as we do, ask that question that that familiar Christmas carol asks. What child is this?

And an angel from heaven will give the answer, unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior who is Christ the Lord.

So two points this morning, the message from heaven, and then the responses to it. Now under the message from heaven, I have five points, and the first is the messengers sent.

[3 : 53] They're called angels, angels, and at first there's just one, but then a whole multitude of the heavenly army. Angels, created spirits, supernatural beings who inhabit the universe along with us, though rarely seen.

So there is extraterrestrial life. They're both good and bad angels. Well, the Bible tells us several things about these good, unfallen angels.

In Psalm 103, 20 and 21, the psalmist says, praise the Lord, you His angels. They're His because He made them.

It goes on to say, they are His servants to do His will. Mighty ones who do His bidding, who obey His words.

Kids, do you remember when Jacob was sleeping on a rock, and he had a dream? A dream of a staircase that reached all the way from earth up to heaven.

[5 : 02] And on that stairway, there were angels ascending and descending. God in heaven, angels going from heaven to earth and back and forth, receiving from the Lord their assignment, then coming down to the earth, fulfilling His word, doing His will, and then returning for the next assignment.

Sometimes coming to destroy God's enemies. Sometimes blinding them. They were mighty ones with great, they are mighty ones with great power.

Sometimes they're sent on missions to serve and to protect God's people from different dangers and temptations. Hebrews 1 of 14 says, are not all angels, ministering spirits, sent to serve those who will inherit salvation.

They serve Him by serving us. They long to look into the things concerning our salvation, the Bible says.

Now the Greek word for angel is angelos, and that simply means messenger. And so often these angels came to earth on an assignment to bring the message of God to people.

[6 : 29] And that was true of this angel that showed up this evening that we read about in Luke chapter 2. He doesn't come with his own ideas, his own thoughts, but he brings a message from God down to earth, to men.

And so we are to listen to it, not as the word of man, but as it is in truth, the word of God. This is something that the living God wants us to know about, the baby in the manger.

So he who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit has to say about this baby. That's the messengers sent, their angels.

The recipients then, secondly, who received this message? Who is it sent to? Well, it wasn't sent to the somebodies in Israel, the movers and shakers.

It wasn't sent to the king in Jerusalem or to the religious leaders, the priests and the Sadducees, the Pharisees, the scribes.

[7 : 36] It's rather sent to some lowly shepherds on the hills outside of Bethlehem. Verse 8 says, and there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night.

Shepherds were lower class citizens. Few people wanted their jobs. It was not easy to be a shepherd. It meant living day and night with the flock.

In the heat of the day, in the cool of the night, guarding them from predators and thieves, leading them to green pastures and still waters.

Indeed, a thousand years ago, or a thousand years earlier than this night that we're studying, in these very pastures outside of Bethlehem, David had watched over his father's flock and had defended them from a lion and a bear.

These were the fields surrounding Bethlehem, David's hometown. And so God says to his angel, go, go down to those shepherds and give them our message.

[8 : 46] So verse 9 says, an angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them and they were terrified. Well, it had been dark and suddenly it's light, but it's still night.

It was light, for this was an angel of the Lord shining with the glory of the Lord from whose presence he had just come. You remember when Moses came from the presence of God, his face was shining.

God's glory is sometimes described as a burning fire, as in the burning bush or the pillar of fire. Sometimes it's described as a bright light, like the sun, like lightning.

And the shepherds being terrified shows that they were no more used to angel visitants than you and I are today. This was a rare thing.

Probably the first time they'd ever seen an angel. And the first words of the angels were therefore, most usually, don't be afraid.

[9 : 55] Because everyone was afraid when an angel suddenly appeared. But verse 10, the angel said to them, do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

So he kindly prepares these trembling shepherds to hear his message by removing their fears first, calming them.

They're wondering, has this angel from heaven come to punish us? Has he come to judge us? No, the angel assures them he's bringing them good news of great joy.

Now this word for good news is a verbal form of the word gospel. Euangelion. I've come bringing the gospel.

Good news that shall be for great joy. Not bad news. Good news. Not for dread and fear, but for joy.

[10:56] And then notice that though the message was first given to these shepherds, it was meant for all the people. Not just for them, but for all the people. So the shepherds didn't keep it to themselves as we'll see in verse 17.

They spread the word concerning what had been told them about the child. They repeated it to Mary and Joseph and many more. They too were the recipients of this message.

And eventually, the Holy Spirit inspired Luke to write this in his gospel. So that this message came from heaven to Bethlehem all the way over to America.

And we have it this morning before us. We are recipients of this message. God has something to say to us about the baby in the manger.

Well, we come then, thirdly, to the message itself. And it's short and it's ever so sweet. Today, verse 11, Today, in the town of David, a Savior has been born to you.

[12:06] He is Christ, the Lord. Something's happened today, shepherds, in that little town of Bethlehem that is newsworthy, that's cause for joy.

A baby has been born. And he's not just any ordinary baby. The baby born today is first of all said to be a Savior.

A Savior. That means a deliverer. A rescuer. And so Jesus' birth is phase one of a rescue operation.

And kids, if someone needs rescued, it's because they're in big trouble. We've seen pictures of the rivers carrying houses downstream and people being drowned in these rivers.

Maybe there's someone drowning in the river. They need to be rescued. Maybe it's a soldier out in the battlefield. He's surrounded by enemy. He needs to be rescued. Maybe it's someone trapped in a collapsed mine.

[13:15] There's no way out. But he needs to be rescued. A Savior is one who rescues from serious trouble.

Now the emperor of Rome required his citizens to call him the Savior because he thought, I'm the one who has saved you from the troublesome wars that we're having. We now have a Pax Romana, a peace from Rome that I've given you and I've enriched your life.

So you call me Savior. But God had demanded this title for himself alone in Isaiah 43, 10 and 11. He says, Before me, no God was formed, nor will there be one after me.

I, even I, am the Lord, and apart from me there is no Savior. Now words couldn't be clearer. God says, He is the only Savior.

Therefore, Jesus is either God or He's no Savior because apart from God there is no Savior. And did you know that the name given to the baby has Savior in it?

[14:27] His name will be, you'll give Him the name Jesus. Why Jesus? Well, because He will save His people from their sins. And Jesus is the name in the Hebrew Joshua or Yeshua that means the Lord saves.

And so, He's rightly named, wouldn't you say? The Savior. He's called the Lord saves. Why? Because He will save His people from their sins.

Ah, there's your great trouble out of which you need to be rescued. Your sins are taking you to hell. This is a God-sized problem. And no one but God can save you, can rescue you from it.

But good news, a Savior has been born for you, the angel says. He's come to deliver you from your greatest trouble, your sins.

Indeed, Acts 4 and verse 12 says, salvation is found in no one else. For there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.

[15:41] In other words, we must be saved by Jesus or be forever lost. There is no other Savior but Jesus. And then, this Savior, notice, has been born to you.

He's not just a Savior for the rich but for you poor shepherds as well. He's not just a Savior for the adults but for you children as well.

Indeed, for all the people because all the people have sinned and are in this great problem of needing a Savior. That's the good news.

The Savior has been born to you. To you. Now what will you do with him? That is the question. And then, he's said to be the Christ. He's Christ meaning the anointed one.

The Hebrew Messiah. Oh, he's that long promised Messiah who was to come and to save his people and now he's here. He's just been born here in the city of David just like Micah had prophesied 700 years earlier but you Bethlehem Ephrathah though you're small among the clans of Judah out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel.

[17:00] He is Christ the Messiah. That's the one in the manger. And then lastly he is Christ the Lord. That's God's covenant name in the Old Testament.

The baby is the Lord God himself. Many of the Old Testament prophecies about Messiah identified him as God. That the only Savior is God.

There is no other Savior but God. So the virgin's son was to be called Emmanuel. Isaiah 7 14 Why Emmanuel? Because it means God with us.

And Isaiah 9 6 says that he will be called Mighty God. Everlasting Father. Those are titles of deity. Yes, this child in the manger is God. Even as John says in his gospel the word that was made flesh in the beginning was not only with God but was God.

[18:06] He is God himself. That's the one born for you today in the city of David. Hallelujah. What a Savior. Savior.

What a Savior is this babe come from heaven. Well then fourthly the accompanying sign that was given along with the message. Now a sign was God stooping down to help our poor wavering faith to help us to believe whatever was being promised or said.

And usually it was something strange something amazing that if that's true then we can know for sure that what God is saying will come true. It was God condescending to our weakness.

And this sign also helped the shepherds to recognize the baby that they were speaking of. Verse 12 this will be a sign to you.

You will find a baby wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. A manger. A rough sawn cattle trough for feeding animals. That's no small sign because it's not where you'd usually find a newborn.

[19:18] And especially God, the Savior of the world. So shepherds, when you see him lying in a manger you'll know that these things that I've said about the baby are true.

Such a great one in such a humble place. What's he doing in a place like this? What's he, God, doing in a wicked world?

And the sign, you see, points to the gospel itself. For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that you through his poverty might be made rich.

Thou who was rich beyond all measure, all for love's sake became poor. Thou who art God beyond all praising, all for love's sake became us man, stooping so low, but sinners raising.

And he would stoop lower, even lower on a rough sawn cross in order to save us and to lift us to heaven one day.

[20:34] Well, no sooner was the sign given than verse 13 says, suddenly, a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, glory to God in the highest and on earth, peace to men on whom his favor rests.

This good news is too good just for one angel. Now, a whole company of the heavenly army are sent to announce the results or the fruits of this savior's birth.

birth. This is my fifth and last point about the message. What his coming would bring, the results of his birth.

There would be something Godward and something manward. First of all, this birth will bring glory to God in the highest. Do you know that nothing so glorifies God as the salvation of sinners? sinners. And that's because nothing is more impossible than the salvation of sinners. But what is impossible with man is possible with God.

[21:47] He specializes in the impossible and it just demonstrates his greatness, his supremacy, his glory. And it does so like nothing else does.

You know, that's the theme song in heaven. Unto him who has loved us and freed us from our sins by his own blood.

This salvation is the theme song in heaven and so these angels come and share that theme song with earth to these shepherds. Glory to God in the highest.

You see, this birth is the brightest revelation of God's glory that had been seen to that point. You see, God has put in the heavens the demonstration of his glory.

He's given us his prophets who proclaimed his word that manifest his glory, but now we have the word himself with us. We have God himself with us and we see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

[22 : 53] Glory to God in the highest for the birth of this child who is himself God. Now to be sure, this savior born today will bring great blessing to men on earth, but first and foremost, it brings glory to God in the highest.

We heard it in the Sunday school hour. Man is not the center of our being or God's purposes. God himself is.

And his salvation says, who is like the Lord our God? Who is like this? So the salvation of sinners points to his glory and that's why they sing, first of all, glory to God in the highest.

But then there is something for man. This birth, secondly, will also bring peace on earth to men on whom his favor rests. What a wonder that God's glory and man's peace should meet together, should be joined together, and that forever, only in Jesus is God's glory and man's peace brought together.

Only he can do this. And notice this peace does not come to all men, but to men on whom God's favor rests. You see, it's unmerited favor.

[24 : 28] It's unmerited grace that is shown to his enemies. And men come to possess this peace with God through faith in God's Son.

Romans 5.1, therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The peace with God only comes by faith in this Son of God who's been born in the manger. Because how is our peace brought about? All of our sins were transferred to him, and all of his righteousness is transferred to us.

He himself is our peace who has reconciled us to God through the cross. On the cross, this baby will win peace with God for all those on whom his favor rests.

There he suffered the punishment that his people deserved. And so that's why the child born to us, the son given, is called in Isaiah chapter 9, the prince of peace.

[25 : 37] He is the one who brings peace. That's what he's come to do, to bring peace between a holy God and sinful man, to rescue sinful men from the deserts of their sin, and to bring them to be at one with God.

He's come to bring glory to God and peace to men on whom his favor rests. You get into Christ by faith, by faith, by trusting in what he's done.

We're only accepted in the beloved because of what he's done to save sinners. So we've seen the message that the angels brought from God to the shepherds and to us.

Now let's consider the responses to this message. First, the response of the shepherds, verse 15.

When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened which the Lord has told us about.

Now notice their response. they received the message of the angels as from the Lord himself. They say, which the Lord has told us about, not which the angel has told us about, no, which the Lord.

[26 : 54] You see, they received the message of the angel as from the Lord indeed who sent it. But then notice they believe the message. And that's why they want to go and see these things that have happened.

Not, let's go see if they've happened. No, no, let's go see this thing that has happened. Because what the Lord has said has happened has happened.

And they believed that message. They received it, they believed it. And so believing they went, and notice they went right away, and they went in a hurry. Verse 16, so they hurried off, found Mary and Joseph and the baby who was lying in the manger.

there was the sign right before them. A baby, a newborn baby lying in a manger. That's what the angel said.

Now, what about your response to what the angel said? That this is a Savior that is coming.

[28 : 06] They ran to see this Savior. Savior. Have you believed the message that the angels brought? That you need a Savior. That's why he's come.

Have you believed that Jesus is the only Savior from sin? Oh, that boys and girls and men and women would be as in a hurry to get to Jesus as the shepherds were.

They hurried off to him. And verse 17 says, when they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child. You know, that's the obligation of everyone who has heard and seen the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We should not keep it to ourselves, but spread the word about Jesus. What they had seen and heard and believed was so remarkable and filled them with such joy that they couldn't not talk about it.

They told Mary and Joseph. They told others about it. It reminds me of Peter and John when they were arrested in Acts chapter 4 and threatened to no longer talk about this Jesus.

[29 : 15] Do you remember their response? Well, we can't keep it to ourselves, they said. We cannot help speaking about what we've seen and heard. Maybe the reason we don't speak as much about Jesus as we ought is that we're not amazed enough about the good news that Jesus has come as our Savior and he's done all the saving work himself.

And we have so much more knowledge about this Savior than what the shepherds have. Think of just that verse, unto you is born this day a Savior.

He's Christ the Lord. Oh, but we have now seen that Savior grow up and obey God's law perfectly to have a righteousness to give to anyone who trusts in him. We've seen that Savior then go to the cross and take the punishment for sin.

We've seen him rise victorious over death and sin and hell. We've heard that he's now ascended into heaven and he's coming again to judge the living and the dead. Oh, we have so much more about him that should excite us and open our mouths to tell all that we know about this Savior.

For me, kind Jesus, was thine incarnation, thy mortal sorrow and thy life's oblation, thy death of anguish and thy bitter passion for my salvation.

[30 : 43] Oh, let us tell the world about our Savior. Should we not be more full of wonder, love, and praise such that we can't but help speak about him?

But then there was the response of those who heard the shepherds witness. In verse 18, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.

Now, these were amazing things. These were titles for God. God has come to save us in this child.

And through him, not only will God be glorified, but we will have peace with this God.

The angels had announced it. And the people who heard it were amazed. And that's good insofar as it goes, but amazement is not repentance and faith.

You know, in the days of Jesus preaching, there were many people that were amazed at his miracles that never repented and trusted in him to save them. So, yes, we ought to be amazed at the gospel, but if it doesn't lead us to come and repent of our sins, confessing our sins and putting all our trust for heaven on that Savior, well, then our amazement will not save us.

[32 : 13] The gospel is not that whoever is amazed will not perish, but whoever believes on him, whoever puts their whole weight on him will not perish but have everlasting life.

And that leads us to Mary's response. Her response was something more than just amazing. Verse 19 says, but Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.

It wasn't just a passing amazement with her, just another amazing fact. No, she treasured them up in her heart. The words about this child that she had just given birth to were added to all those other words that Gabriel had given to her that she'd heard from John the Baptist mother and father.

And now she's adding these to her treasury chest in her heart. And there she's pondering them.

Kids, that just means she's thinking about them over and over.

All that has been said about this baby. Mary, have you heard her saying at Christmas? You heard all these things? Yes, and she treasured them.

[33 : 28] Are you treasuring the good news of the gospel this morning? Is it still good news to you? Is it still worth pondering? Is it still worth thinking about and rejoicing in?

It's good news of great joy and Mary would not let it go. She had believed that nothing is impossible with God.

Elizabeth had said of her, blessed is she who has believed what the Lord has said to her will be accomplished. Have you believed the good news? That it will be accomplished?

Well, the shepherds, verse 20, returned glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen which were just as they had been told. So the shepherds' response, it's worthy of our

imitation.

They received the message as from God himself. They believed it. They hurried in response to that faith to see the Christ child and then they went and told others about Jesus.

[34 : 37] Now here they are glorifying and praising God. They came believing, they came eager to see, and now they returned praising God for all the things that they had heard and now seen which were just as they had been told.

It matched exactly what the angel said is what they found. What they heard was exactly what they saw.

One day we're going to see everything happen just as we have been told in God's word. It says in here it's appointed unto man once to die and then the judgment.

One day we're going to see that that's exactly going to happen according to what's been said. And then it tells us what happens at death that the spirit returns to God to be judged and the body is then put in the grave.

But it tells us that Jesus Christ is coming back again and then we will be raised from the dead to then stand before God in judgment. And there will be only two places, heaven and hell.

[35 : 54] And he'll say to some, come you who are blessed by my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. And then he'll say to those without the Savior, depart from me.

I never knew you, you workers of iniquity. And then they will go away into everlasting punishment, the righteous unto everlasting life. It's all been said, just like it was said to the shepherds.

And it will always happen exactly according to what it said. That should give you an interest in what God has said. That should give you a desire to ponder the things that have been said about you. being a sinner, about Christ being the Savior, and about those alone who are given peace with God.

Well, the response, the response to this good news, does it not hit us a bit strange that the response to the good news of the gospel is so poor even then as it is today.

[37 : 14] It's good news of great joy, and yet it's not being received as that, is it? And neither was it then. I think that the gospel writers are giving us clues of that.

Early on in their gospels, Luke and Matthew, what did they tell us? There was no room for him in the end. I think it's an ominous sign, just a hint of what this Savior is going to face.

Indeed, in Matthew 2, what do we find? We find the king, Herod, trying to kill him as a baby. Again, an ominous sign. Indeed, Simeon will say to Mary, a sword will pierce your heart and you see what this world will do to your son.

And so, as John says, he came to his own and his own received him not. This wonderful Savior comes with heaven to give, hell to save from, and they received him not.

And it's still the response to the good news today by the majority opinion. O. Palmer Robertson is a professor who started the seminary in one of the African nations and comes back and teaches in Reformed Seminary here in the States.

[38 : 37] And he was in Florida, and he was teaching about personal evangelism. And he was telling them what they do in Africa, how they do it.

And the guy said, well, can we do it with you? And he says, okay, let's go. So they went to the beach. Beautiful day, and there was the perfect family, a lovely husband and wife and their children. And if you knew Dr. Robertson, you know he's got a kind eye and a kind voice. And he just said to them, I've got good news for you.

Can I share it with you? And the father said, don't preach. preach. It's good news.

Could I just share it with you? Don't preach. And the little girl said, daddy, I'd like to hear the good news that the man said. Don't preach.

[39 : 40] And that was the end of it. And that's the response of the world today. They receive him not. It's good news. And yet they do not receive it.

And no doubt, in part, it's because they don't see that they need the Savior. They don't see themselves as needing to be rescued.

They don't see themselves as helpless. You know, there's people that think, if I'm just good enough, and I just go to church and pray enough, read my Bible, give enough, and I'm kind to my neighbor enough that I'll somehow make it in the end.

Would God the Father have sent his Son into this wicked world and to the hellish cross if you could make it without him? Would he have wasted his Son, his Son's suffering, if you didn't need him? Would he have emptied heaven of his treasure, his delight, if you didn't need him? You know, Paul argues that very point in Galatians 2 verse 21.

[40 : 44] He says, if men could be right with God by their own obedience to the law, then Jesus died on the cross in vain.

He didn't need to do that. You could have made it without him. You see, the folly of such thought, no, you need a Savior. Your sin is bringing you down to hell, and there's one who's come to save his people from their sin.

Seek him. Run after him. And you know, John doesn't just tell us in John 1 that they received him not. But it goes on to say, but as many as did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to be called the children of God.

There were exceptions to the rule. Most all of you are exceptions to the rule. You have received him. You have heard the message, received it as the very word of God, the promise of the gospel. It must happen, because God has said it, that if I trusted his son, I will be saved. And you have believed on the son of God, and it's changed your life. Yes, there are exceptions.

[41 : 57] And so now, what are we to do? We're to go, and we're to proclaim to this world the good news of great joy about our Savior. God has not chosen angels to be the announcers anymore.

He's chosen you and I, who've been saved by grace. He's chosen you and I, who have known the burden of our sin, who have known what it is to try to enjoy this life when we know that at the end of it, I've got a face of God I've sinned against, and he's threatened hell for my sin.

It's hard to enjoy life that way. And our conscience nags this, you're going to die one day, you're going to face the judge, you know what's coming. We felt that, and we've run to Jesus, and we found this glorious Savior who is more than willing to forgive us of our sins.

And it's those kinds of messengers that make the best advertisements for the gospel today, that can come alongside of any sinner and say, I'm right here with you.

I, too, was a child of wrath, going my own way, headed to hell. And Jesus said that he would save me if I came to him and cast all my weight upon him, all my trust, turning from my way and embracing him in the gospel.

[43 : 23] That's the kind of messengers this world needs, and that's why God has chosen you and me to be his witnesses in Jerusalem, in Judea and Samaria, to the ends of the earth.

What good news we have. Let's go tell it. Tell it on the mountain. Shout of Christ, the Savior. Well, the birth of this baby in the manger says because you could never lift yourself up to God, he came down to you.

He came down in the person of his son, Jesus Christ, to do for you what you could never do for yourself, and so find peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

I urge you to trust in him today if you don't know him, to call on him to save you from your sins, confessing them before him, and so finding for the first time the real joy and peace of the Christmas story of God become man to save us.

Let's pray. Father, we thank you for the gift of your son, that when we needed a Savior, you did not spare him, but gave him up for us all, gave him up to the hellish cross that we might not face that judgment ourselves, but instead he took our curse and he gives us his blessing.

[44 : 56] God, we thank you for the peace that's brought to our hearts, the joy of being right with God through this wonderful Savior. Help us then to be pondering, meditating on this gospel to the point where we will not be able to help but speak to others about it, to tell them of our Savior and his so great salvation.

salvation. So make us good representatives of him filled with the good news, filled with the joy that it gives, and bring many others, even this day, all around the world, to trust and to find in Jesus a Savior and King.

We pray in his name. Amen. Amen.