

Savior King
Luke 2:8-14
Austin Davidson

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

*"Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"*

Hey everyone, my name is Austin Davidson and I am the director of liturgy and worship here at City Life. It's great to be with you here in the ballet and also it's encouraging to think of all the folks joining us from home.

This is the third week of our advent series, "Zera" in which we have been tracing the seed of Christ throughout scripture. This particular week, we are crossing the bridge from the Old Testament to the New Testament.

Today, our text brings us years and years later to this one moment, **where we find a savior who brings joy, a king who establishes peace, all beneath a canopy of God's glory.** Let's pray.

With this specific text we plop down into the middle of an extremely intricate and important scene in the middle of a rural town where (Spoiler alert) Jesus was born, Bethlehem.

Bethlehem was a small town near Jerusalem. This entire area was ruled by a king named Herod who was like a puppet ruler for Rome since Jerusalem was too far from Rome to have their own leaders there.

So Rome had invaded, taken control, and also kept control over these people- the Jewish people were in complete oppression and there was not much hope for them beneath King Herod who was taking orders from Caesar Augustus. A deep longing for peace weighed heavily in God's people during this time. They were longing for social freedom, religious freedom, financial freedom. Under complete oppression, they longed for **things to be better. This longing to be better wasn't anything new. In fact it was old, and there's a lot of history there...**

Just like any current series on Netflix that you are currently marathoning, this story deserves a little recap to help you imagine the scene and context. I want to take just a moment to look back on the type of kings and leadership God's people have been under

over the last...thousand or so years...so just imagine, *in narrator voice, “previously on the bible”

Let's start with the beginning. Though Adam was not titled as “king” he was called to rule over the earth. Adam and Eve were called to have dominion over and care for creation (Genesis 1:6-27). However, as we recall Adam and Eve attempt to place themselves in God's position and are sent out the garden. From that event a promise is given that there will be a victor who will come and crush the head of our enemy.

Later on in the Old Testament in the book of Judges Israel has made it to the promise land and judges (who were essentially kings) were appointed over them. There are some good things that come of it but, these judges end up being corrupt and as you read the book you see it go from good, to bad, to worse.

Gideon; a bit of a coward, murders some Israelites, and worships idols. **Jepthah**; effective but fell into false worship. **Samson**; Violent, arrogant, promiscuous, and murderer. Israel is not in a great place after these “kings”. In fact, in this book a common phrase is said something along the lines of, “Israel had no king, and did what they wanted”.

After that, the people of Israel then beg and beg for a king because everyone else has one. Asking for a king to lead them, Samuel picks a king for them, Saul.

Saul; Starts out great though he's dishonest, lacks integrity and extremely proud. Ends his reign by blatantly disobeying God.

David; An incredible man of God who loves him deeply. As David is training to be king, Saul is trying to murder him. David rises to kingship with lots of success but we know how this one goes. David has an affair with uriah's wife, then has uriah assassinated. His kingdom falls apart and his family is destroyed. His family-sons in particular- follow suit in disobedience to God. But a promise remains that God will send a savior to fix what was broken and establish his kingdom forever. After that we have Solomon.

Solomon; Incredibly wise man, but greedy, lusting, and ends up in idol worship following his multiple wives religious practices.

God's people then are sent into a long spell of exile, or enslaved to some degree.

As you round some of the final episodes in the OT you see 490 years of Israel's disobedience, seventy years of exile in Babylon, and then more exile to come... No king. No peace. They are still longing for things to get better. .

And now four hundred years later the people of God are in Jerusalem sitting under the rule of yet another pagan king, King Herod, oppressed and longing for a savior to deliver peace and relief.

If you grew up among God's people during this time, you would have heard of stories about a Messiah that will bring peace, prophecies of some king that will deliver Israel from all oppression.

A deep longing for a savior to bring peace permeated the lives of the people in this city and on this scene. God's people struggled to live lives full of enjoyment and peace and I think it's safe to say that you and I might be struggling to do this too.

2020 has brought a lot of things out of us. Let's take a moment to be real here. Some of us have experienced hard times, our church has run into tough times. For some families here, this year has been HARD and you experienced some painful loss. Loss of jobs, family members, friendships have exploded, and loved ones have fallen out of your life. I have been grieved by racial tensions, the lack of being able to gather safely with our entire church, and even small things such as my daughter doesn't get to see her teachers smile because they are wearing masks due to the pandemic. I think I speak for most of us when I tell my wife, "I just want things to be better". But to say these things are hard is just scraping the surface of what is really wrong. Right? If we got a vaccine, that's not going to stop another pandemic from happening. Getting a better job isn't going to fix that constant desire to have more security and money. Gaining more wisdom didn't make Solomon's life complete; he blew it anyway. And get this-- the Israelites learned that getting a new "king" doesn't fix everything! The problem is, things are more broken than we even comprehend, we long for them to be made **complete** again. What are you wanting to be "fixed" most right now?

So here we are, in a city, Bethlehem, with the group of God's people plagued by longing for things to be "fixed".

And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. (8-9).

On a truly silent and normal night, as lowly shepherds are doing their jobs...BOOM! Light shines in the darkness. This is not just like a flood light. This word "shone around" is used by Paul to describe a light brighter than the sun ([Acts 26:13](#)). Radiant glory bursts forth in the middle of this field. God's majestic presence invades a dark and lowly place.

With that, an angel arrives on the scene and these shepherds are...shooketh. Yet, the angel responds to their fear by saying what? Fear not. They encountered a truly terrifying thing, and God says, Fear not.

Some of us are well acquainted with fear currently. Fear of contracting COVID, fear of raising children in a time that seems terribly unsafe for them. Fear of losing income due

to economic changes. As we too face terrifying & seemingly life threatening things, how is it that God could say, Fear not?

“Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

This phrase, “brings good news”, contains the Greek word for “gospel”. The gospel is “good news.”

So what news is so good it brings great joy into real hardship? What news is so good that it breaks through unthinkable anxiety, so good that it silences fear?
A savior.

In the same city of David (the city of the King who God promised to establish his kingdom through 2 Samuel 7 & Micah 2:11) a long awaited savior, who is Christ, The Lord is born. Years and years of longing for someone to come and make things better. Finally, this person is here!

This deliverer is coming to rescue his people, deliver, and preserve them. It is an announcement of being rescued from oppression.

But just like the truth that things are way more broken than we can comprehend. This savior is so much greater than we can comprehend...

This oppression runs deeper than they think. They aren't just externally oppressed by the Romans but internally oppressed. You see over all the years of experiencing brokenness- God's people failed to realize that the deepest oppression came from the enslavement to sin.

In chains to sin, Gideon followed his anger into murder.
Bound up by pride, Saul disobeys God.
Held captive by lust, David destroys his life.
Disillusioned by lies, Solomon worships false gods.

Are you in chains to sin?
Following the pull of anger in your life turning on your brothers and sisters?
Has pride taken over your life- leading you away from trusting God ?
Has lust and lying enveloped your world cultivating a selfish life?

Make no mistake- these things do not produce joy.
More recently God has been really showing a lot of prideful areas in my life. I tend to fight to control every aspect of my life because I believe that I make the best decisions, that I know what is best for me...

When I am operating under the oppression of pride, I stop loving people, I start seeing my city group as a place to serve me and only me, I start bossing my family around because I want things to go my way, and anyone who stands in my way should be torn down. Sounds real joyful right? When I operate under the oppression of pride, I miss out on the joy that Christ is the better leader in my life, that he truly knows what is best for me, and my family. The burden is lifted and I am freed up to love those around me.

Matthew describes why Jesus is such a great savior...he says, *“you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”* (Matt 1:21). Jesus came to save us from the greatest oppression...sin. That is great news, that calls for great joy!

The news the shepherds hear keeps getting better. God’s people were expecting something similar to an earthly leader. One to bring freedom from political oppression, social strife. But, better than any king to come before him, stronger than any military uprising, more freeing than a revolution, this savior king is better than anything **because he is the Christ that establishes peace.**

As we look at the text, “Christ” is the second word used to describe this savior.

Christ- means “Messiah, or “anointed one,” this baby born was the long-awaited savior. Years and years of longing as we talked about earlier.

God promised to come and build his kingdom to David and this is the inauguration of him bringing his kingdom.

It’s such good news that the savior has arrived, but WHAT exactly does he do? The angels declare the objective of this savior more in depth...

*“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”*

Peace delivered. The savior is on a rescue mission and he is going to establish peace as he does it!

What does this word peace mean though? Why is it so significant to us and the hearers in this text?

The Hebrew word for peace is “shalom” and you have probably heard it before. Shalom is a way of describing wholeness or completeness. Peace is an objective term of a reconciliation between two parties...sound familiar yet?

This is the beautiful way the birth of Christ extends all the way back to the garden.

Christ is born to usher in that peace. Not only does he bring that peace, but he PURCHASES IT. He was born to reconcile God and man by **his life, death, and resurrection**.. He came to bring ‘completeness’. To fix what was broken! No more longing and no more temporary relief. Joy and peace purchased in Christ! Deliverance

from the true oppression of sin, a building of an indestructible kingdom in the church, all beneath a canopy of God's glory.
Because he is... the Lord

Lord is the third word used to describe this Savior.

Lord

This long awaited-savior is the Lord.

The lord who is revealing his glory and sending his message is the Lord lying in the manger .

This savior, messiah is GOD HIMSELF. What great love.

The response to the gospel is joy. The benefit is peace.

And as we look at this text closely we see the beautiful reality that joy and peace are interwoven with God's glory.

*“Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!”*

God gets glory (or in other words, God gets praise), we get peace.

Peace to who?

Those with whom he is pleased.

This translation is a technical term used in first century Judaism describing those who have faith in God.

Peace comes to those who glory in the savior king. Faith.

Shalom envelops those who join the chorus of the angels, who recognize the burning sun of God's glory and worship him for it.

What do you glory/worship/rest in? What envelops you when you're overwhelmed with 2020? When the storms of anxiety rise, where do you bunker?

I confess in times of anxiety i've realized my bourbon stash becomes a little bit more full than normal....

Maybe you turned to podcasts, books, and videos to master and learn all you can about the church, politics, or social issues rather than turning to the master over all those things...

That is joyless, great joy only comes when you glory in the Savior King above your views, your bourbon stash, or your knowledge of a certain topic.

We don't get one without the other. We cannot separate them. Joy and peace are given only beneath the canopy of God's glory.

God's purpose is to give you peace and joy,
by being the most glorious person in your life....

The angels cherish something we often don't...God's glory

Do you cherish God's glory?

Reveling in the glory of God is trusting him at all times.

When I am longing deep down I am so tempted to save myself, rather than trust Christ. In times of stress the bourbon stash gets a little bit more full because I fall prey to the lie that the Lord is not the best savior to bring me out of anxiety.-

1 Peter 5:7 casting all your anxieties on him, because he cares for you.

You may find yourself listening to podcasts constantly, reading every article on the internet finding a way to raise your kids in this season, falling prey to the lie that the Lord's commands are not one of a good savior that loves us.

2 Timothy 3:16-17

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Christ, the Lord, is a savior King who delivers good news of great joy. God comes down to restore and save all of humanity. Good news, the gospel, full of great joy delivering peace to those who trust in him.

Church, let's be a people that in our longing we remember and rejoice in the good news of the gospel. Let's be people who cherish the glory of God and secure true peace.

This is the good news of the gospel.

In love, God sent his son. Born in a manger, walked the earth in humility, crucified on a roman cross, raised to life again...to renew all things, bringing shalom, fixing all that is broken. Forever.