

Welcome to our Christmas Celebration!

We are glad you chose to join us today to worship our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. We hope that your stay will be both meaningful and memorable.

Our Mission

We are a church that seeks to bring glory to God, to build the local church through discipleship and to fulfill the Great Commission.



Announcements

We will be continuing our Christmas sermon series entitled, “**Away in a Manger,**” where we are looking at the Christmas story from the perspectives of five Biblical characters – Isaiah, Mary, Joseph, Shepherds and the Wise Men.

Mark your calendars for our 2020 week-long **Prayer & Fasting** to be held on **January 20-24, 2020**. Let’s start the new year by coming together as a congregation in prayer as we seek God’s favor for our church and for our lives.



How Can We Pray For You?

It is our privilege to pray for you. You may send your prayer requests by text, by writing them on the prayer cards provided or by sending us a private message on our FB page!



Discover Life in the Small Groups

We are passionate about community.

We encourage you to join our small groups where we cultivate meaningful relationships and grow in our relationship with God together.

To join a group, you may inquire from our volunteers at the Information Booth.



Stay for Fellowship Et Refreshments

We invite you to stay for coffee and fellowship after the service. Take the opportunity to meet new friends or inquire about our small groups or about the church.

Our weekend Services are held at the Café Corazon (2nd Floor), Bai Hotel, North Reclamation Area, Mandaue City, every Sunday 10AM-12NN and 1PM-3PM.

*The Living Word NRA Center is located at the 2/F Northgate Centre, Banilad (across Country Mall and beside University of Cebu-Banilad).

Get in touch with us:

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GOD’S AMAZING GRACE DESERVES AMAZING GLORY

Luke 2:8-20

Jeraldine Leones (Worship Leader) | December 22, 2019 | 10AM Service

sermon notes



SERMON THEME/BIG IDEA



MY NOTES/HIGHLIGHTS

Lined area for sermon notes and highlights.

DAY 4. UNWANTED OUTSIDERS

Read: Luke 2:8-20.

Shepherds were social outcasts. They were poor, uneducated, uncultured, and uncouth. They were rough characters in a small town on the fringe of society, so much so that their testimony was not even admissible in court. If you were with your family, walking through town, you would likely go to the other side of the street to avoid them.

Shepherds were religious outsiders. Because of the work of caring for the sheep made them ceremonially unclean, they were not allowed into the temple courts or to be an active part of synagogue worship. Religious leaders often considered them on the same level as prostitutes. When it came to religion, they were always on the outside looking in.

God invited a group of guys who had been labeled as outcasts and outsiders by everyone, and placed them at the top of the invite list for the most important birthday in history.

The shepherds had nothing to offer Jesus. They were not religiously trained or socially polished. Unlike the wise men who would arrive later, they did not have exquisite gifts. These guys lived under the stars with only the clothes on their backs, a staff to guide the sheep, and a rod for protection. They had nothing of value to bring to Jesus except for themselves. That’s exactly what he wanted, and what he still wants today.

Reflect & Apply.

1. Who are “shepherds” in your circles — social outcasts and religious outsiders? Do you believe that God can use them to impact your community and point people to Him?
2. How can God use you to invite them to join Jesus’ mission?

DAY 5. NO ROOM

Read: John 1:10-14.

He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. John 1:11 —

If you have ever been in a busy tourist town during peak season, you may have noticed “no vacancy” signs in front of many motels. These signs simply mean that the motels are full.

Sometimes motels and inns don't have room for people, but sometimes people don't have room for others in their hearts. Maybe a group at school won't make room for someone who isn't as smart or athletic or physically attractive as they are. Maybe at church a group of friends stands around talking after the service but won't make room for newcomers—people who are hurting and longing for a friend.

Luke tells us there was no room for Mary and Joseph in the inn at Bethlehem (Luke 2:7). Jesus was born into a world of people that had no room for him. Later in life he was hated and rejected. “He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.”

In this season, is there room in your heart for the Lord Jesus? So many things can fill our lives and make us busy: family, friends, careers, sports, and the general business of life. But do we have room for the Lord Jesus, and for others who need to know his love?

Reflect & Apply.

1. Have you ever missed something that was important (event, responsibility, etc.)? What caused you to miss it? What are some reasons that a person can miss something that’s important?
2. Jesus started out His earthly life immediately faced with rejection—no room in the inn. He was rejected by his hometown, his own people, even the disciples initially abandoned him. How did Mary and Joseph deal with rejection? How did Jesus respond to rejection? (Think of His statements from the cross)
3. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you through this passage?



**Living Word NRA
Worship God. Advance His Kingdom.**



“CHRISTMAS IN THEIR EYES”

December 22, 2019

Questions for Personal Study & Reflection

This 5-day devotional includes readings with brief commentaries that builds upon the weekend sermon. You are encouraged to take the time to read the Bible passages and meditate on them. On average, you will need 20-30 minutes to complete them.

Reflection questions and applications are intended to invite you to slow down and mediate on the truth that God is teaching you. Daily application steps are also given to help drive the message in practical ways.

DAY 1. PERFECT TIMING

Read: Galatians 4:4-7.

The label said, “Don’t Open Until Christmas,” but the grandchildren cried, “Hurry up; open it!”

Patience is a virtue, and we recognize the importance of perfect timing. But we often have a hard time waiting. This is especially true when we are hurting and want relief, or we are anticipating something special.

The same holds true in relation to God’s work in our lives. We suffer a loss, wrestle with what seems to be unanswered prayer, or face a spiritual struggle, and soon we cry, “Hurry up, God!” We wonder why God hasn’t acted, and the “delay” often causes us to question God.

Or how about when we reflect on Christ’s second coming? We eagerly long for a world free from sin, Satan defeated, injustices set right, and all things made new. So we cry, “Come, Lord Jesus; come quickly.”

For ages believers waited for the birth of the Savior and wondered, “How long?” But God was not slow. He had a plan, and in the fullness of time—when the time was ripe—God sent Jesus.

In our lives, as we wait for God’s help or for the second coming, we remember God’s promise that “those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength” (Isaiah 40:31). God might not come when we want, but we can trust him—his timing is perfect.

Reflect & Apply.

1. In what ways does our culture tempt us to behave like slaves even though we are children of God?
2. When the Bible says “in the fullness of time” (Galatians 4:4), what does it say about the timetable of God? How excited are you when it comes to the second coming of Jesus?
3. In what area(s) are you impatient these days? What is the Lord saying to you through these passages?

DAY 2. GIFTS FIT FOR A KING

Read: Matthew 2:1-12.

I always have a hard time buying Christmas gifts. I want my gifts to be appreciated by the recipients-and affordable to me! Gift-giving takes a lot of thought. Gift-giving is no easy task!

The gifts the Magi brought to Jesus were equally thoughtful. They brought gifts that "fit" the child's identity. First, gold. Storehouses filled with gold were found in royal palaces. Gold was a gift fit for a king.

Second, incense, probably the resin of the terebinth tree. This incense was often burned with other spices during temple offerings. It was a gift fit for a priest.

Third, the gift of myrrh. Like incense, myrrh was from an aromatic resin. But it was hardly a gift you gave a child. Myrrh was symbolic of death. At his crucifixion, Jesus would be offered a drink of wine mixed with myrrh (Mark 15:23). At his death, Jesus' body would be wrapped in 75 pounds of myrrh and aloes (John 19:39).

The myrrh that the Magi laid before the Christ child, then, was symbolic of an unexpected role. This child would become the Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53. This child would become the sacrificial lamb led to the slaughter for our redemption.

Have you chosen the gift you'll bring to Jesus this Christmas season? Based on his gift to us, the best gift to bring him is our hearts, offered in humility and love.

Reflect & Apply.

1. Think of one of the best Christmas gifts you’ve ever given to someone. What made it the best, and how long do you think they appreciated it?
2. What part of the story of the kings was most intriguing to you?
3. Which of the following examples of the three Magi do you most need to put into practice: Submitting to Jesus’ authority over your life, opening up your treasures for God’s purposes or committing to a needed life course change with God’s help? What will you do to begin making this happen?

DAY 3. THE ASSURANCE OF IMMANUEL

Read: Matthew 1:18-25.

One of our daughters woke me in the middle of the night and said, "Dad, I had a bad dream, and now I can't sleep." After I assured her that her mother and I were in the next room and that Jesus was watching over her, she crawled back into bed and fell asleep. All it took was that simple assurance.

As adults, we might not have the same bad dreams that children have, but there are times when we also can have trouble sleeping. Sometimes in the night I have anxious thoughts that keep me awake. I toss and turn and worry. Maybe you have nights like that too.

So many things can keep us awake--fears and anxieties that seem to grab hold of our minds and won't let go. We may have anxieties about our health, our safety, our security, our relationships, our children, our jobs, our finances, our future. Sometimes our fears are even realized, and our grief and heartaches keep us awake. We may long for a loved one who is no longer with us, and there may be tears of loneliness that keep us from sleeping.

In times like those, remember the name Immanuel--which means "God with us." In the dark of night when your spirit is in turmoil and sleep won't come, remember that Jesus is there with you. As a child of God, you can rest and sleep in that simple assurance.

Reflect & Apply.

1. What fears or anxieties await you for the year 2020?
2. Can you think of a time when God was closest to you? What was the situation?
3. What are some ways that you can remind yourself of Jesus as “God with us”?
