

# Continuing Christmas

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[ 0 : 00 ] Monday morning, not just the last chance to give your money, but your last chance to be here in church this end of 2021.

Who'd have thought, here we come again with another year that we haven't seen. Everybody's all talking 2020, the greatest, the worst year ever, and 2021 was pretty close.

Didn't get that much better as far as all that stuff goes, at least not out here. I guess in some states they claim it did, but here we go, 2022, maybe we'll just make three years out of it.

If you got your Bibles, please open them up to Luke chapter 2. Here we are the day after the Christmas holiday, and how quickly it all goes away.

How quickly the whole season, I mean for months and for months and like literally, I mean some stores even in the summer come to the close of summer and there's Christmas stuff starting to trickle in, and then it's full-fledged in October.

[ 1 : 12 ] And for months it's been promoted and anticipated, and then it's as if just in a moment it's gone. And for the youngest in here, they get so excited about Christmas, and doesn't it, it probably happened to most of us, there was that time in the day yesterday when it settled in like, oh, it's over.

You've got to wait 365 days for Christmas. It's like the worst feeling of all this buildup, and then it just dives and drops off.

And for the kids, it just doesn't feel right. And so I'm going to preach a sermon this morning called Continuing Christmas. I wait for a whole year for it to come back, but we don't have to.

It doesn't have to be over for us, and it doesn't have to end for the believer. And I believe we can continue Christmas long after December 25th. Now, here's my disclaimer to Brother Morton.

I'm not talking about singing Christmas carols. So, yeah, okay. So, just want to make sure he doesn't start building a wall against me already back there. No, I'm not talking about singing Christmas songs, but I want to show you some things from the Bible that took place at this time that we celebrate Christmas, and show you how they continued on, and how we can continue Christmas.

[ 2 : 33 ] So, we're in Luke chapter 2, and this is one of the premier passages to discuss the birth of Jesus Christ, all the way from verse 1 to about verse 20.

And I'm not going to read the entire passage. I feel like you've probably read it, whether in some service, or in your own reading, or at home yesterday with your family, or something. Luke chapter 2.

And I'm going to pick it up with the shepherds in verse number 8. So, the statement in verse 7 is that Mary brought forth her firstborn son, wrapped him in swaddling clothes, laid him in a manger, because there's no room for them in the inn.

And now we get into the shepherds. Verse number 8. They were in the same country, shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. 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.

And the angel said unto them, Fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

[ 3 : 35 ] And this shall be a sign unto you, you shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, 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, goodwill toward men.

And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.

And they came with haste, and found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a manger. When they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child. And all they that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds.

But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart. And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen as it was told unto them. Now the shepherds here are kind of major, if you want to call it players, in this whole Christmas story. And if there's any of you have ever been a manger seen, there's shepherds there.

[ 4 : 39 ] And the shepherds are somebody I want to look at here to start, because we see something in them, I believe, that can help us to learn from them and to continue Christmas.

To continue what took place here, and let them be our example. One thing that I want you to see in verse 20, after they had followed, I mean, this miraculous thing, not just in the birth of God becoming man, but in this sight that they beheld in the sky and then decided to follow up with it and to go and see what this is.

And they find the babe, and then they go home. In verse number 20, it says, and the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen as it was told unto them.

These guys went back to work. They went back to their families. They went back to their life. They weren't called to be disciples. They were still shepherds, weren't they?

But they weren't the same. How could they be the same? How could they possibly be the same?

These men, this night, it says that it was, they're keeping watch in verse 8 over their flocks by night.

[ 5 : 55 ] So get the picture, it's dark. These men sat on this earth in darkness, and out of nowhere a light shined unto them.

Something then was revealed to them from God. Who in the world are these shepherds? They're not kings. They're not in Jerusalem.

They're not the chief priests. They're not scholars. They're not scribes. They're shepherds. They're nobody down on the hillside of Bethlehem. Nobody knows them.

Yet a message was given to them that led them to Jesus Christ. And I say that they went home never in their lives will they forget this experience.

Never. It's left an impression on them, and now they have an exciting story to tell. A story that, in verse number 18, it says that all they that heard it wondered at those things which are told them by the shepherds.

[ 6 : 59 ] A story that they told. And it caused all to wonder and to be amazed at what is happening. What is God doing? What is this that we're hearing of? Now, first thing I want us to say is, or consider here this morning about continuing Christmas is, take one from the shepherds here, is continue Christmas by continuing to worship Jesus Christ.

Like it says in verse 20, when they returned, glorifying and praising God. They didn't just go back like, huh, that was different, and go back to their lives.

No, when they went back, they are glorifying and they are praising God for the things which they had heard and seen as it was told unto them. Now compare this, and I'll go ahead and turn if you don't mind.

Turn to, I'm going to read from Acts chapter 26, and I want to read a verse from 2 Corinthians 4. Acts 26 and 2 Corinthians 4.

Let's compare the shepherds to you. To you when you were lost and didn't know Jesus Christ.

[ 8 : 15 ] I'll start in 2 Corinthians chapter 4, and verse number 3 says, But if our gospel be hid, it is hid them that are lost, in whom the God of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Now come to Acts chapter 26, and verse number 18. Paul's commissioned here to preach the gospel, and he's commissioned in verse 18 to open their eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith as in me.

There's the words of Christ to Paul. Now just putting these thoughts together, just like the shepherd sat in darkness, and to you sitting in the darkness of your sin and blinded by the God of this world, a

light called the light of the glorious gospel of Christ shined unto you.

And there was a message made known unto you. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. And the gospel message came into your hearing, and the Lord God had something going on where his spirit was giving you light and giving you understanding, giving you an opportunity to hear and to receive the truth.

[ 9 : 55 ] And there was a message given to you, a message that was pointing you to knowing Jesus Christ. In the gospel, or in what we read in Luke, the things that they had heard was, unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

These shepherds learned of a Savior. They had revealed unto them that there's a Savior being sent to this world that can forgive them of their sins, that can redeem them. I believe that we can continue Christmas by remembering, like the shepherds, remembering the first time that you met Jesus Christ.

By continuing going home different. By continuing to glorify and to praise God. By allowing that moment to change your life too, forever.

And make it a real experience that you'll never forget. We can continue to worship Jesus Christ. After you met Jesus Christ for the first time, don't go back to life unaffected, and unchanged, and unmoved.

But no, continue by worshiping Him. By glorifying and praising Him for what you've experienced the day that you met His Son. I think it's sad how many believers, how many Christians, people that are saved by the grace of God through faith in the blood of Jesus Christ, I think it's sad of how many of them are ignorant of what God has done for us in salvation.

[ 11 : 29 ] And it's because they don't go to the Bible. They're ignorant of the Word of God. They've got the Gospel, and that's a blessing. That's eternal life. But not knowing what follows that, a Christian life, of how you can walk with God, and have fellowship with Jesus Christ, and know Him.

How many of them are just deceived because of either bad doctrine or bad teaching and preaching that men say, well, you've trusted Christ, but now you have to live it. And if you're living in sin, and if you've sinned, and you continue to do so, you're not truly saved.

And now they're confused. They did what they thought they were told to do, and now they don't know if they got it or don't have it. And then they burn out and give up or walk away from it all. And it's sad how many Christians aren't, how many people have the Spirit of God in them, have eternal life in them, but they haven't continued to worship Jesus Christ, to walk and go back to life different. They haven't changed. They haven't glorified and praised God. Some of them just through ignorance. Some of them through sin or selfishness. But we can learn from these shepherds how to continue Christmas by not going back the same, by changing, by letting that message change us forever.

There's something else I see from these men. It was in verse 17. Well, in verse 16, they came in with haste and found Mary and Joseph and the babe lying in a manger.

[ 12 : 59 ] And it says in verse 17, when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying, which was told them concerning this child. So verse 17 isn't taking place in some stable or some area where there's cattle in a manger with a baby.

No, this is going somewhere else. This is going out. They moved from that moment and took it to the streets. And they made known abroad the saying.

What's the saying? Verse number 10 and 11, the angel said unto them, fear not, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, which is Christ the Lord.

These men had a message now to spread. They had a message and I believe we can follow the shepherd's example by continuing Christmas, by witnessing, by making note abroad the saying. These shepherds never spread a message like that before one day in their life. You know what they talked about? They talked about the weather. They talked about, oh, maybe how they need to groom their sheep, feed their sheep.

[ 14 : 10 ] They talked about things of work, their families. They talked about politics. They talked about this taxation. Can you believe what he's making this do? Look at all these people coming into town.

They were talking about that. Never before had they told a soul that God sent a Savior into the world until they met him. Until they met Jesus Christ.

And then, in verse 17, they made known abroad the saying. Do you see? They continued Christmas by going out and telling others about the Savior.

They witnessed. Now they're telling everybody. How about you? Did you hand somebody a Christmas track this season? Maybe did you put one in a Christmas card if your family sends them out to your family members?

Or did you choose to insert a line about the Lord Jesus Christ in your letters that you send to your family over this time? And I know it's tradition for some to update everybody on what's going on.

[15:14] Did you put something about Christ in there because you think some of these people are lost and I want them to know that I'm not, but I want them to be saved. Did you do something like that this season, this Christmas, in hopes of them having their eyes open, being turned from darkness to light?

Did you reach out to somebody over the season? Well, continue Christmas. Continue witnessing. Don't wait till next year to hand out a track.

Don't wait till next year to insert a line about the Lord Jesus Christ. Continue Christmas. We had a Christmas Eve service and we had visitors with us because somebody invited them to come.

Don't wait till next year to invite somebody to your church. Continue this work of Christmas.

Continue it. Invite them.

Witness to them. Attempt to reach others with the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ. Now come to Matthew chapter 2. Here's the other passage.

[16:20] We're going to come back to Luke in a little bit, but I want you to go to Matthew. We can continue Christmas by continuing to worship Jesus Christ and glorifying and praising Him and not being the same that we were.

We can continue it by continuing to witness and telling them of the gospel message of a Savior. Now in Matthew 2, here's this passage of the wise men.

In verse number 1, Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem.

Now, I understand that the wise men are not part of the traditional manger scene, but they're definitely part of what we call the Christmas story here and associated with the birth of Christ in verse 1.

Christ is already born in verse 1 before they travel. And in verse 2, they come saying, Where is he that is born king of the Jews? For we have seen a star in the east and are come to worship him.

[17:31] So this isn't the night that he was born that they showed up in Jerusalem the same night and then made it to Bethlehem the same night. That's obviously not the case. We understand that.

But these wise men continue to forge on. Christmas Day is past. The birth of Christ is over. It's the day after and the day after.

And these men continue to travel. Why? Because they were shown a light from God that they decided they need to follow up on.

In verse number 3, When Herod the king had heard these things, he was troubled in all Jerusalem with him. And when he had gathered all the chief priests and scribes of the people together, he demanded of them where Christ should be born. And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet, and there he quotes Micah, Thou Bethlehem in the land of Judah, art thou, art not the least among the princes of Judah, for out of thee shall come a governor that shall rule my people Israel.

Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, inquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem and said, Go and search diligently for the young child.

[18:42] When you found him, bring me word again that I may come and worship him also. Now, I don't, I don't know. And I'm just going to give you what I think on this.

And I may have already covered this back a year or better ago in Matthew chapter 2. I'm not sure how much of this I said. I don't know. There's, nobody knows about this star specifically.

Nobody knows the duration, the timing. Nobody knows the exact time of year or how long. And nobody knows even where they ended up going in the end. It's not given to us in scripture.

It's commonly just assumed that it went to Bethlehem. We don't know that for sure either from the passage. What it says is that the star appeared.

In verse number, verse number 8, or no, no, verse 7, Herod diligently asking chiefs of the wise men what time the star appeared.

[ 19 : 40 ] So he wants to know the timing of this. Now, I think the star shined because in verse number 2 it says, where is he that is born king of the Jews? We have seen his star in the east.

So these men are in the east and they have seen his star past and then they have come to worship him. I don't know that these men are Bible scholars so much that men take them out to be.

Some say, well, they knew, they studied their Bible, they were wise men and they knew in numbers that a star was going to rise out of Jacob. I'm like, well, if they knew that, why didn't they know to go to Bethlehem? Why did they have to get these priests and princes involved in this thing and figure out where they were supposed to go?

I think they're in the east and this star goes off and it's God revealing to them the king is born. And I don't know how much revelation they received. That's what they took it as.

That's what they knew that a king of the Jews was born on a day because we saw his star. And so they come with that revelation, with that understanding understanding that the king of the Jews is born and he's born in Israel.

[ 20 : 50 ] And so they begin traveling. They prepare. They get all the stuff. There must have been a caravan. It wasn't three men. I doubt it was three men on three camels. It must have been a, it's quite a travel and a trek and I don't know how far it was.

Nobody truly does. Know how many miles they covered and how long it took them to get there. But as they show up, they're following the signs that, the road that leads to Israel and just like if you're driving Interstate 10 coming across the south here, you're going to see signs that say Jerusalem, I mean sorry, Los Angeles.

You're not going to see anything that says Burbank, 230 miles, Glendale. Nobody's going to be advertising the smaller towns but the big one. That's the one. And so that's the one they're traveling to.

And as they come into Israel and they come to Jerusalem expecting there to be a king here in Jerusalem because months possibly, I don't know how long ago we saw his star, we know he was born, where is he?

And they're like, what are you talking about? There's no king that was born here. Oh, well, so they get the ear of Herod, they go research this a little bit, he gathers the priests and the scribes and say, where is this Christ to be born?

[ 22 : 01 ] And they say, well, the scripture says in Bethlehem of Judah. And so he goes and goes back to the men privately, you guys can go home now and he goes and talks to these wise men, why don't you go?

And in verse number eight, he sent them to Bethlehem and said, go and search diligently for the baby. He says, for the young child. When you have found him, bring me word again that I may come and worship him.

Now watch verse nine. And when they had heard the king, they departed and look what happens. Lo, the star which they saw, past tense, in the east went before them till it came and stood over where the young child was and when they saw the star, praise the Lord, the star's back.

They rejoiced with exceeding great joy. This time it shows the star traveling. It leads them. It went before them. And so in verse 11, when they came, not into a stable, but verse 11 says they were coming to the house.

They saw the young child. Now, we understand this from the scripture that the traditional scene is a little bit off. But it's definitely all, there's not a lot of scripture about the early infant days and beginnings of Christ.

[ 23 : 16 ] This is what we have is the birth and it's just what followed just after with the wise men coming to worship him. They got light when he was born.

They got light when he was, the day I believe he was born. It makes me wonder did they, from the east, did the world see this angelic thing? Maybe only the shepherds privy to the actual words and all of it, but did the brightness of it all, was it something that was, I don't know.

I have no idea what took place there. Maybe it's completely different things there. But at any rate, this star leads them eventually to where Jesus Christ was.

Continuing Christmas though, they didn't show up the day he was born. They didn't show up the night of his birth. They didn't hear the cattle and smell the smells. All of that was past, but they continued on after it was past.

And what were they doing? They were following the light that God revealed to them. And you know what you and I need to do in this day and age, in this life of ours?

[ 24 : 22 ] God reveals certain things to certain people as he chooses. And that's why it's such a man, it's such a huge thing that you have a personal relationship with God.

You, not your church and not your family, but you seek him and he gives you light. He gives you direction like he gave to the wise men.

He gives you instructions. He gives you understanding about the king of the Jews. He gave it to those men. There wasn't wise men coming from every country around.

It was those men. They were given light and they followed the light. Continuing Christmas this morning by following the light that God reveals to you.

I said God gives you direction. He gives you light. And when you're obedient to that light and when you follow that direction God gives you, then he gives you more specific direction just like these men.

[ 25 : 22 ] They knew to go to Israel. He's king of the Jews so they show up at Jerusalem and when they got there, they rejoiced because God gave them more light and led them directly to where the young child was.

When God gives you light, follow that light. He'll lead you to a place in your life where you can glorify Jesus Christ. The light gives direction.

The light also gives understanding that these men knew that he was born king of the Jews. The Bible says that the entrance of thy words giveth light. It giveth understanding.

To the simple. Light gives understanding. And there's other things to say here. There's the light of your conscience, knowing what's right and wrong and God gives you truth inside of you and you know some things are wrong.

But if you reject the light, whether it's in direction for what God wants for your life, whether it's in understanding and knowing truth and error, or whether it's knowing right and wrong, when you reject God's light, he's not giving you more.

[ 26 : 27 ] You're going to have to follow the light to get more light. You're going to have to follow your conscience when you know something's wrong. Stay away from it. If you ignore your conscience and ignore what's right and wrong, it just all blends together eventually and you're dead.

And there's the light of your conscience, there's the light of the scriptures where God can teach you personally from this book about whatever he deems necessary. God will speak to you from a passage and I'll say, huh, I never saw that before.

God will reveal something to you that he wants you to consider or just help you out and it means nothing to anybody else. When I was back in Pennsylvania, I got to speak with my former pastor and a man that I worked under for 15 years and got to sit down with him for a little bit and we talked about some things and one thing that came up was just about the Bible and I made a comment to him and I won't get into the details of it but I just said I feel like God's speaking to me more from the Bible than he ever has.

From the Bible. And there's been times, you know, not just in getting a sermon together but I mean in just personal reading and things start to just come out and I think, huh, and then it comes out again and it's, then I've been around long enough to know God is showing me something, look at it again, read it, pray on it, think about it because God gives light and he speaks to his children when they have a personal relationship with him.

Now consider this, when light shines, you have a decision to make. When the light shines, it's time to make a decision.

[ 28 : 06 ] If it's the light of your conscience saying that's wrong, you have a decision to make. If it's the light of the scriptures revealing something to you, you have a decision to make. Do I want to go after what God's telling me?

If it's the light of understanding or of direction for your life, you have a decision to make. Are you going to follow the light? It might mean change is needed.

It might mean there's a journey ahead. These wise men got prepared for it. These wise men took the journey. They followed the light. And you know what else they did when they saw the light the second time in verse 10?

When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. They wanted more light. They didn't want to go here and just be stuck, confused.

They wanted more light. And I think with that kind of reaction, with rejoicing at the light that God gives you, you can bet that God's going to lead you or give you more light. He loves when we rejoice over those things He reveals unto us.

[ 29 : 08 ] But there's a problem with men, isn't it? Look at John chapter 3. John chapter 3, you can lose your place in Matthew. There's a problem that we have, that men have, that we in our flesh have.

And it's this love for darkness. In verse number 19, the Bible says, this is the condemnation that light has come into the world.

And men love darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God.

If you're a born again Christian and you have a new nature inside of you, there's a side of you that wants to do truth and wants to come to the light and wants your deeds to be made manifest that they're wrought in God.

You want God to have the victory in your life. You want God to work through you. You want Him to be pleased with you. You want to stand before Him one day and know that you did what was right. And there's a side in you that's your flesh, that old nature that says, I want darkness rather than light.

[ 30 : 27 ] I don't want to mess with that light. I don't want to go to the light. I don't want to go to the scriptures. I'm fine with the way I am. And there's a battle inside of you, a battle inside of you of what's right and what's wrong and which one are you going to follow.

Well, we can continue Christmas the day after by continuing to follow the light that God reveals to us. And He's pleased when we rejoice to follow that light.

Now come with me to Luke chapter 2 and we want to see one more aspect of the Christmas story and the day after.

Luke chapter 2. In that typical manger scene, there's the shepherds and there's the wise men. And there's a few other people in there too, isn't there?

There's Joseph, Mary, and the babe that's lying in a manger. What can we learn from them? Luke chapter 2 and notice in verse 21.

[ 31 : 38 ] When eight days were accomplished for the circumcising of the child, His name was called Jesus, which was so named out of the angel before He was conceived in the womb. And when the days of a purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord as it is written in the law of the Lord.

Every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the law of the Lord. A pair of turtle doves or two young pigeons.

Now, circumcision, purification, sacrifice, all of these things mentioned in these few verses are all aspects of Mary, Joseph, and the babe, all of them being in submission and obedience to the Word of God, to the law of Moses.

It's careful to say it more than once though. The law of Moses being accomplished in verse 22. The law of the Lord mentioned in verse number 23. And look at another spot.

Here comes, they get into that temple and then Simeon shows up and he's a whole other story. But look what he says, look what's said in verse 27.

[ 32 : 52 ] He came by the Spirit into the temple when the parents brought in the child Jesus to do for him after the custom of the law. What are they doing? What do we see here?

This is Mary. Remember Mary, highly favored, blessed among women. But she's not above the Word of God. No matter what some denominations do in exalting and elevating her, it doesn't matter what they do.

We see from the Word of God she knows her place. She submits and humbles herself that she's not above the Word of God. The Christ child, God in the flesh, not above the Word of God.

Submits to the Scriptures the eighth day just like he's supposed to according to the law, the circumcision, being brought to the temple of the Lord because he's the firstborn of Mary, just like it says back in the Old Testament law.

All of these things, humbling themselves, God in the flesh, Mary, Joseph along the way, complete submission with the Scripture. Look even at verse, a little later, look at verse number 39.

[ 33 : 59 ] And when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee to their city Nazareth.

The miracle of Christmas was past. Now the days, today after day of grind begins. And what do they do?

Well, they continue Christmas by continuing in the daily obedience and submission to the Word of God. There's no New Testament penned here. There's only law of Moses.

There's no John the Baptist yet. The law of the prophets are until John. That's future stuff. This is just strictly Moses' law to the Jew and keep it. To the very, to jot and tittle every little bit, keep it. Continuing Christmas, Mary and Joseph and Jesus did, submitted to the Word of God. And Christian, the Christian life, our Christian life today is following a book.

[ 35 : 04 ] It's following a book. It's what it is. It's not following your gut. It'll lead you astray. It's not following your feelings. It's not following your emotions. It's not following your upbringing.

It's not following your culture. There's something better than that. God's given us something far better than that. He's given us His words. We're a people of a book.

We've been given even some small commands as well as some big ones. God gives us instructions in all manner of life like what to do with your time, how to live in your home, about the choices you make, about your marriage.

He addresses things about your character, about being honest and full of integrity and upright, even addresses your selfishness and your covetousness and your laziness.

The Lord in this book, He hits it all. He informs us about our relationships between husbands and wives, between children and parents, between bosses and employees, even in the church with pastors and members and lays out some offices.

[ 36 : 11 ] God puts it all there. This book demands that we love one another, that we as newborn Christians or the new birth Christians in Christ, that we have charity and kindness and He condemns our pride and our arrogance.

He condemns all sin. This book demands that we are different, teaches us how to worship, teaches us how to give and how to serve and how to praise and teaches us how to devote ourselves and to love the Lord thy God with all our hearts, souls, minds, and strength.

To continue Christmas, we must continue in our relationship with God in the Word of God, in obeying the commands in His book.

Maybe you've been saved for 10 years, maybe you grew up in church, maybe you've been saved for 50 years. Let me remind you, you're not above the least command in this book.

That's still for you. That's still for you. I'm going to read a quick verse here I just thought of in Hebrews because some people, and I fear this could be you and it can happen to any one of us.

[ 37 : 21 ] There's some people that get dull of hearing over time and they start to justify some things that they know are wrong or they know in their life they've always stayed away from but over time they become a little bit more lax and there's absolutely a tendency to just settle on some things that they once held as I will not because I'm God's child I want to please Him and then they start to slip.

And here's a passage about this in Hebrews chapter 5 it says for the time ye ought to be teachers because you've been around long enough and you've had the Word of God given to you long enough you ought to be teachers ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God and are become such as have need of milk and not a strong meat that's a problem when people that have been around long enough who ought to be strong and grown and mature have to be slapped around like a little baby again because they're childish because they're laying down on their principles and they're backing off like backslidden on what they know is right on even the finest the smallest commands in Scripture.

This morning I want to challenge you to follow the example Mary Joseph and the baby Jesus to continue Christmas the day after eight days after thirty-three days after and forward in obeying and submitting to the commands of God's book.

what he commands us is always for our good. Those instructions on life and on our ethic and on our relationships and on our worship it's always for us and him and being right.

It's not to hold a whip over your back. It's not to take from you. It's to give you something better. It's to keep you safe.

[ 39 : 18 ] It's to keep you clean. It's so you can live your life out of sin and above regret without heartache and trouble. So what are you going to do?

These submitted to the law on every point. They didn't find a way around it and say well do I seriously Joseph? I mean how am I impure?

I've never known a man and this is the holy child. She could have made excuses like Christians would today. For why they shouldn't make the trip. Why they shouldn't go to the house of God. I don't need that. I've been saved. It's just Wednesday night. I can skip it. How quick we are to make excuses and not fulfill our obligations and our obedience to the word of God.

It's still the book. It's not going anywhere. And by the way you're going to get judged by the book. So don't let it slide. Continue Christmas. Continue by remembering that first experience you had when you met Jesus Christ and continue worshiping Him and praising Him and glorifying Him like the shepherds.

[ 40 : 30 ] Continue witnessing and making note abroad the saying about the Savior. Continue by following the light that God gives you until He gives you more light and keep following more light.

and then continue by obeying in every way everything you can and know from the word of God. You're not above it. So submit yourself to it.

Let's bow our heads together. I wonder this morning is this any thoughts this morning ringing true in your heart? Did you do something this season?

Did you hand a track out? Maybe that's not your normal. Did you do it? If so will you continue to do it? Will you continue that movement inside of your spirit that I want to do something for Christ?

Did you tell your family that they need to be saved that Christ came into this world for them? Will you continue to do that? Have you been given light like the wise men a direction to go understanding in your spirit?

[ 41 : 38 ] Will you follow that light? Will you seek more light? And are you submitting yourself this morning to the word of God?

Is there something in your life? Is God pricking your spirit saying you were stronger one day? You're slipping. You were more devoted. You're letting some things in. You used to say no to that now you're tired of saying no.

You're getting lazy. You used to read your Bible every morning. You used to pray for people. You used to pray for your family.

But you stopped doing it. Will you pick it back up this morning? Will you commit to God that I don't want to let it go. I want to continue it.

God, the altar is open this morning. Anytime you need, you come up here and talk to the Lord. You commit to the Lord if He's dealing with you. Don't let this service be over where you don't make a decision for Christ to walk closer to Him to get more devoted where you need to be more devoted.

[ 42 : 47 ] Father, I pray that You'll move among the hearts of Your people. God, we owe You our lives. We owe You our faithfulness. We owe You our diligence. Lord, in all these areas, whether it be our witness, whether it be our praise, whether it be our obedience, and our following of You.

Oh God, I pray You'd put in our hearts that each one of us would catch fire, that we'd continue this spirit of Christmas as we call it, that we continue these things that we've seen today in the Scriptures. Lord, put this on our hearts.

May we respond with obedience and grace to You. We thank You for these things. In Jesus' name. We're going to sing number 102. Get a hymnal out.

Join me in standing. 102. 2 o'clock in the 20 devan 20y 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 20 21 21 20 21 20 21 22 24 20 21 22 22 22 26