

Hope in God's Power

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- [0 : 00] Luke chapter 1, verses 26 to 56. The birth of Jesus foretold. In the sixth month, the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph of the house of David.
- And the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, Greetings, O favored one, the Lord is with you. But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and tried to discern what sort of greeting this might be.
- And the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever.
- And of his kingdom there will be no end. And Mary said to the angel, How will this be, since I am a virgin? And the angel answered her, The Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you.
- [1 : 24] Therefore the child to be born will be called Holy, the Son of God. And behold, your relative Elizabeth in her old age has also conceived a son.
- And this is the sixth month with her who was called barren. For nothing will be impossible with God. And Mary said, Behold, I am a servant of the Lord.
- Let it be to me according to your word. And the angel departed from her. In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country to a town in Judah.
- And she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.
- And she exclaimed with a loud cry, Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. And why is this granted to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?
- [2 : 24] For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.
- And Mary said, My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. For he has looked on the humble estate of his servant.
- For behold, from now on, all generations will call me blessed. For he who is mighty has done great things for me.
- And holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm.
- He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts. He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent away empty.

[3 : 26] He has helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his offspring forever. And Mary remained with her about three months and returned to her home.

Here ends the reading of God's Word. Thank you very much, Demetria. It's good to be together this morning. And it is good to see college students begin to arrive home for Christmas.

Good to see Alex and Denzel and the others who might be here this morning. But this is quite a lengthy passage that was just read and that we'll be considering this morning.

And it includes three scenes. Gabriel's announcement to Mary. Mary's visit with Elizabeth. And then Mary's song of praise to God.

When you think about these three scenes, is what we can call them, they summarize one truth. They speak to one truth.

[4 : 38] And the one truth that they speak to can be summarized in one word. It's a theological word. And that word is incarnation.

And simply put, the incarnation refers to the act of God the Son taking on human nature.

And this morning as we continue our sermon series in the book of Luke, our the Hope of Christmas series, we come to part two of it.

And I want to encourage us this morning to ponder afresh this truth of the incarnation.

And I believe that if we think about the incarnation, it will enable us to hope in God's power. Because in the incarnation, we see that God's power is displayed.

[5 : 42] And so that's what I would, by God's grace, lead us in doing this one. But first, let's pray. Father, we bow our hearts as we prepare to contemplate the mystery of the incarnation.

As we contemplate what you did, and you sent your Son to this earth.

Lord, would you help us to posture our hearts to hear and believe the truth, to be more convinced of it. And help us, Lord, to be amazed by the great mercy that you have displayed to sinners like us.

Through the incarnation. I ask for grace, Lord, to be able to do this. In Jesus' name, amen. I want to consider, in our remaining time, three ways that these three scenes can help us to think about God's power displayed in the incarnation.

And I want to use a single word to work through each of the three scenes. And the first word is explanation. In this first scene, in this passage that we just read, we have an explanation of the incarnation.

[7 : 17] The incarnation is not simply that God caused a woman to bear a child without sexual relations and without any human involvement.

That's not the incarnation. God could have done that. God is able to cause a woman to conceive without sexual relations and bring into being a human being just like you and just like me.

But that's not what he did in the incarnation. What happened in the incarnation is this. And I thought about this trying to craft it because, brothers and sisters, this is the deep end of the theological pool.

We are trying to scale the heights of what is unscalable. We're trying to plumb the depths of what is not fully plumbable in understanding its height and its breadth.

But though we can't understand the incarnation fully, we can understand the incarnation truly because the Bible speaks to it. And here is how I have sought to craft what the incarnation actually is.

[8 : 41] And it should be projected on the screen for you. In the incarnation, the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, took on human flesh through a divine conception in the womb of Mary, thereby adding humanity to his divinity without mixing the two and thus he who was always the Son of God, also became the Son of Man.

That, brothers and sisters, is a faithful attempt to grasp what God did in sending his Son to this earth.

I want to read that again. In the incarnation, the eternal Son of God, the second person of the Trinity, took on human flesh through a divine conception in the womb of Mary, thereby adding humanity to his divinity without mixing the two.

And thus, he who was always the Son of God also became the Son of Man. And again, if we don't fully comprehend that or understand that, it's fine.

As I said, the mystery, the incarnation involves mystery. some degree of mystery. But, brothers and sisters, we're not called to fully understand the incarnation.

[10 : 21] That's not what the call is upon us. We're called to believe it. And you and I know that there are many things that we believe that we do not fully understand.

And we're called to believe this, but not on our own, as I believe we will see as we work through this text.

God doesn't just say, that's the incarnation, go ahead and believe it. No, he doesn't do that. But he enables us with the help of the Holy Spirit to believe the incarnation because it is the clear teaching of Scripture.

So let's look again at what Gabriel said to Mary, starting in verse 30. And the angel said to her, Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.

[11 : 27] And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.

So Gabriel says to Mary, you're going to have a son. His name is to be Jesus, which means Jehovah saves or simply Savior.

and he is to be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord will give him the throne of his father David.

So we see that Jesus was both the Son of God pointing to his deity and the Son of David pointing to his humanity.

And this is the fulfillment of a messianic prophecy in 2 Samuel chapter 7. And here's what it says. It's a prophecy from the Lord to David through the prophet Nathan.

[12 : 30] 2 Samuel chapter 7 verses 12 to 14. And when your days are fulfilled and you lie down with your fathers, I will raise up your offspring after you who shall come from your body and I will establish his kingdom.

He shall build a house for my name and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be to him a father and he shall be to me a son.

Now, in a sense, these words can be attributed to Solomon, David's son. But when you really consider them, you realize that they have to be someone other than Solomon because in order to truly and fully fulfill these words, that his throne will be established forever, one has to be divine.

And what the New Testament writers confirm is that this prophecy pointed ultimately to Jesus Christ of Nazareth as the Messiah.

Now, I want us to take a short detour out of Luke and I want us to look at John chapter 1.

- [13 : 53] The Gospel of John chapter 1. And I want to just read in our hearing the first 14 verses because John's Christmas presentation, as it were, is in these 14 verses.
- And it will be good to hear how John communicates the Incarnation in the opening verses of his Gospel. Beginning in verse 1.
- In the beginning was the Word, and the Word is with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.
- All things were made through Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men.
- The light shines into the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it. There was a man sent from God whose name was John. He came as a witness to be a witness about the light, that all might believe through Him.
- [14 : 56] He was not the light, but came to be a witness about the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.
- He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, yet the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own people did not receive Him. But to all who did receive Him, who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.
- And verse 14 sums it up. And the Word, that Word that He says was in the beginning in verse 1, that Word became flesh and dwelt among us.
- And we have seen His glory, glory as as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- And so, the Word of God was the Son of God. And the Word of God, the Son of God, became flesh and dwelt among us.
- [16 : 10] And His glory has been seen, the glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.
- Not with some grace and truth, full of it. Full of it. He's the fullness of grace, He's the fullness of truth. That is the one who has been incarnated in human flesh.
- Let's go back to Luke chapter 1. Look at verse 34. Mary asks Gabriel a very logical question. How will this be since I'm a virgin?
- And in a single verse, Gabriel explains the incarnation. Look at what he says in verse 35. The Holy Spirit, he says, this is how it's going to happen.
- The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the child to be born will be called Holy, the Son of God.
- [17 : 21] So how did the Son of God take on human flesh? Took on human flesh through the power of the Holy Spirit and the power of the Most High.
- And what we see as we consider verse 35 is we see the Trinity involved in the incarnation. we see the Holy Spirit coming upon Mary, the power of God the Father overshadowing her and therefore the child born of her was called Holy, the Son of God.
- And when I ask a question, do you think after Mary asked Gabriel, how will this be since I'm a virgin? and Gabriel gave her that explanation, do you think that Mary understood exactly based on what Gabriel said, how she was going to conceive a child even though she was a virgin and there would be no human sexual relations to bring that about?
- do you think that explanation was enough for Mary? Or put it another way, suppose you were Mary, do you think that would have been enough for you to understand, yeah, okay, I have no more questions, I understand what you're saying, no?

[18 : 49] I don't think Mary fully understood. As a matter of fact, later in the account, when we come to Elizabeth, when Elizabeth says, so blessed is she who believes the word of God.

That's a clear indication that Mary, she simply believed. Not that she fully understood, but she simply believed. Mary believed because she believed in God's word and she believed in God's power that he could do what had been spoken.

And so should we, brothers and sisters. So should we. We should believe not because we understand, but because the God who cannot lie spoke these words that this is what he would do.

That he would cause one to be born who is both the son of God in truth, in fullness, and also the son of man, one who is human as we are.

Having two natures, unmixed natures, that of divinity, and that of humanity. And we also see God's power displayed, not just in the incarnation, but we see God's power displayed in Elizabeth's conception.

[20 : 15] Her conception of John is a display of God's power. And the explanation of her conception we find in verse 37, actually, this is the explanation for both of the conceptions, for nothing will be impossible with God.

Nothing. Nothing means nothing. Nothing is impossible with God. Because God is God, he is able to cause the son of God, the one who is God of very God, to come to this earth and take on human flesh, and be the son of God, and also be the son of man.

Brothers and sisters, when we contemplate this, this should remind us that we can have hope in God's power. Nothing is impossible with God. Nothing.

And I wonder this morning, how many of us where we may stand at this juncture in our lives and in life who are just wrestling with situations, perplexed by them, anxious over them, that just seem impossible, that seem daunting to you.

And you wonder if and how you will be able to get through those situations. Encourage us to be encouraged by the incarnation that reminds us that nothing is impossible with God.

[22 : 08] God. In verse 39, we see that Mary arose and she went with haste to the hill country to a town in Judah.

And this brings me to the second scene and the second word which is confirmation. in the second scene of Mary's visit to Elizabeth, we see a confirmation of the incarnation, a confirmation that the incarnation had taken place, that what God had spoken to Mary through Gabriel had taken place.

And so in this second scene that begins in verse 39, it's an encounter between two pregnant women.

Mary, a virgin who was pregnant just a few days, and you would notice it says she left with haste, so she left and she went to Elizabeth, so she was pregnant just a few days, and Elizabeth, who was not just old but was unable to have children, and she was six months pregnant with John.

And while this might seem like Luke is just really recounting historical details, we must remember that Luke was more than a historian. Luke was also a theologian.

[23 : 50] And so Luke is recording these details, not just to give us details of history, but to also teach us theology, and he's trying to teach us about the person and the work of Jesus Christ.

He's trying to teach us about who Jesus is, because Luke's gospel, like the other gospels, all end in one place. They end with the person who the gospel is about on a cross.

They all end with Jesus on the cross, and so what the gospel writers labor to do is they labor to help us to know who is it who's going to die on that cross. And what Luke wants us to know is that the one who is going to die on that cross is no ordinary person.

If he's an ordinary person, he can't be our savior. If he's an ordinary person, he can't help us. If he's an ordinary person, he helps just like us. And so Luke is giving us these details to help us to know this unique person, Jesus Christ.

when Mary entered the house, her old cousin greeted her. Well, she greeted her old cousin, and we see in verse 41 that six months old John in Elizabeth's womb leaps.

[25 : 24] Now, some will say, oh, that's what happens when babies are around that age. they move around in the womb. There's nothing unusual about babies moving in that way.

But Luke is showing us that this was more than just a baby moving around in the womb. He tells us in verse 41 that it was the Holy Spirit who supernaturally revealed both to Elizabeth and John that Mary was pregnant with the Messiah, who was the Son of God and the Son of Man.

But baby John can't talk. But remember, we saw earlier that he was going to be filled with the Holy Spirit from his mother's womb. And what John does instead is at the hearing of Mary's voice.

He leaps for joy in Elizabeth's womb. And in verse 42, Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit, exclaims with a loud cry and she blesses Mary and the child in Mary's womb.

Not just Mary, but she blesses Mary and the child in Mary's womb. Let's look again at what she says starting in verse 43. And why is this granted to me, she says to Mary, that the mother of my Lord, that the mother of my Lord should come to me.

[27 : 05] For behold, when the sound of your greeting came into my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. Elizabeth is the one who explains to us what happened in the movement in her stomach and why it happened.

John leaped for joy. And again, she is filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is revealing to her, this is what happened, what you felt in your stomach was not just some baby moving around, but this is John filled with the Holy Spirit from birth.

This is John, the one who's going to go before the Messiah. this is John, who's leaping for joy because he has come into the presence of the Messiah in your womb.

And she says to Mary in verse 45, and blessed is the one who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord.

And so Elizabeth and John, they're not stirred just by being excited to hear Mary, a long time family member who hadn't visited in a long time.

[28 : 32] It wasn't something special about Mary. It wasn't something special in the sound of her voice. No, what would cause them, what caused Mary to be blessed by Elizabeth, what caused John to leap in Elizabeth's womb was the child in Mary's womb, the few days old child who was in Mary's womb.

And again, Luke is trying to show us, this is no ordinary child. He's trying to show us Christ's deity. And he wants to show us that this encounter between Elizabeth and Mary is confirmation that God had performed his word.

God had performed his word. And if you were to ask Mary, well, Mary, what happened? I don't think she would say, oh, the other night the Holy Spirit, no?

I don't think she had any consciousness, any awareness of the particular moment of the encounter of God in this whole process. But it happened. But it happened.

There she was, a virgin. And she was not just pregnant, but she was pregnant with one who was recognized by John from the womb of Elizabeth.

[30 : 03] and she was blessed by Elizabeth under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to say, you are the mother of my Lord.

And here's something that is important that we don't miss. In verse 28, when Gabriel first came to Mary, he said to her, greetings, oh, favored one, the Lord is with you.

And then in verse 32, he said to Mary, and the Lord God will give him the throne of his father David.

In both of these verses, in both verse 28 and verse 32, the title Lord refers to God the Father. She's talking about God the Father in both of those verses.

in verse 43, Elizabeth refers to Jesus using the same title, the very same title that is attributed to God the Father.

[31 : 11] She uses that same title when she says, she refers to Mary as the mother of my Lord.

Lord, the mother of my Lord. Same title, the mother of my Lord. And then finally in verse 45, when Elizabeth refers to that which was spoken to Mary by from the Lord, she's referring to God the Father again.

and the point behind all that is this, the very same title, Lord, that's attributed to God the Father, is the very same title that's attributed to the Lord Jesus Christ.

And see, this is how we develop our doctrine of the Trinity. This is how, we don't find the doctrine of the Trinity in a single verse where we go to and say, God is three and one.

What we see is that we see these distinct persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in Scripture. And then we see the same attributes being given to them. And so we understand that God is one in nature, yet he is three in person, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

[32 : 34] And that's the only reason that validly Jesus is able to carry the same title, Lord, as God the Father.

Jesus is Lord, God the Father is Lord, and Luke wants us to see that. Luke wants us to see that this one in Mary's womb is divine.

This one in Mary's womb is going to come into this world, he's going to look like you and look like me in his humanity, but he is divine. He is Lord. And how did she know it?

How did John know it? By the revelation of the Holy Spirit. Mary, Elizabeth, sorry, didn't know this because she had some intuition, or she was guessing.

John didn't know it because of intuition or guessing. No, they knew it because of the revelation of the Holy Spirit. John being filled with the Holy Spirit from birth and Mary and Elizabeth, sorry, in that moment, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

[33 : 45] She was filled with the Spirit and she spoke to Elizabeth. And brothers and sisters, in this regard, nothing has changed.

The only way that we will know and can say with conviction that Jesus is Lord Spirit, that Jesus is the divine person of the Godhead, the second person of the Godhead.

We can only know that and say that by the conviction of the Holy Spirit. We need the Spirit's help to see that and to know that. It comes to us no other way. No amount of brilliance, no amount of human ability will bring us to the place to be able to say that with conviction of heart and mind.

there's a scripture in 1 Corinthians chapter 12 that says that no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Spirit of God.

Now if you think about that, anyone who can speak, anyone who has the ability to talk can say Jesus is Lord.

[35 : 00] Anyone can do that if you can talk. That's not what Paul is saying. What Paul is saying is that the only way that anyone can with conviction of heart and soul say Jesus is Lord is by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit must reveal that truth to us. And if you believe that this morning, thank God the Spirit has revealed that to you.

It is no different than when Jesus was at Philippi and he said to the disciples, who do men say that I am? And they gave all kinds of different reasons, persons.

And finally Peter said, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus said to him, flesh and blood did not reveal that to you. but it was revealed to you by my Father who is in heaven.

That is the only way that we come to believe this truth, brothers and sisters. And see, this is why the Christian life is more than just not doing this and not doing that.

[36 : 14] It is a conviction of heart. It is a conviction of heart. It is a true belief. It is not just head information.

It is not just a bunch of things that we know about Jesus. No, it is knowing Jesus. And it is knowing Jesus as he truly is.

As he truly is revealed in scripture. And that knowledge of Jesus, that belief in Jesus is a life-transforming belief. It changes us.

Anyone who says, I believe in Jesus, and there is no transformation in his or her life, they contradict scripture. The witness of scripture is that those who encounter the Christ of scripture, they're transformed.

They're not the same. We cannot, brothers and sisters, truly believe in Jesus as Messiah, as God who has come in the flesh, and continue to live a life of sin and disobedience to him.

[37 : 31] When we truly believe in Jesus, we repent, we turn away from sin, and we surrender to him, and we live our lives for him. Because Jesus is not a mere man with whom we interact and who we respect.

he is the eternal son of God who has come to this earth clothed in humanity and worship is due to him. And I say this to all of us this morning, young or old, the evidence that we have come to believe in Jesus is a transformed life.

And we come to believe in Jesus only because the Holy Spirit opens our eyes to see him as Lord and as Savior.

And if you've come to that conviction, you've trusted him as Lord and Savior, rejoice that the Spirit has been kind to you. And if you do not yet know Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord, cry out to him that he might open your eyes and enable you to see him as the Lord that he truly is.

Well, the third and final scene in Mary's response is Mary's response to all that had happened. And it's a song.

[38 : 59] It starts in verse 46. And the third and final word that captures her response is exaltation. Mary's song is a song of exaltation of the Lord for what he had done through the incarnation.

She's overcome by what she's experienced and she breaks forth into singing a song of praise, exalting God. It's a song that we call the Magnificat.

And it's the first song in scripture that rejoices over God coming down and taking on human flesh to redeem sinners. in verses 46 to 49, Mary magnifies the Lord for his goodness to her.

God was good to Mary personally, choosing her to be the one through whom the incarnation would take place. The mighty God looked upon her humble estate. Someone born in the back side of the land of Palestine.

Someone born in Nazareth, the place of no reputation. The God of the universe cast his eyes on Mary and chose her to be the mother of the Son of God.

[40 : 27] God God is blessed. Mary said because of that all generations are going to call me blessed. But the accent of Mary's song is not on God's goodness to Mary.

That's not where Mary places a focus. The accent of Mary's song is on God's goodness to his people. That's the high point of a song.

That God had been good to his people. And we see it summarized in verses 54 and 55. This is the high point of Mary's song as she concludes it.

Look at those two verses. Verses 54 and 55. She says, He has helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy as he spoke to our fathers and to Abraham and to his offspring forever.

This is inescapable redemptive language. Mary says that God has helped his servant Israel in remembrance of his mercy as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.

[41 : 41] What God did in the incarnation was the expression of remembering his mercy. It was a merciful act that he performed. Mercy is a redemptive word.

mercy should clue us into something that God is doing beyond just something fuzzy of a baby being born into the world. It's something far more weighty than that.

This is an expression of God's mercy, his mercy that he had spoken to the fathers thousands of years before, to Abraham and to his offspring.

God sending his son into the world through the incarnation is an expression of his mercy that he had promised to Abraham and to his offspring.

Now, who is Abraham's offspring? We reflect on our series in Genesis and we encountered this term offspring in Genesis.

[42 : 48] Is the offspring Isaac? Or is the offspring Jacob? Or is the offspring Abraham's, Jacob's descendants?

Well, the offspring is none of those. In a sense, well, there's a transition between the two testaments, the Old Testament and the New Testament.

In a strict sense, the New Testament comes with Jesus Christ. So, in a sense, what we are encountering, though it occurs in the New Testament, though Luke is, this part of Luke is in the New Testament, this is still, we can say, technically part of the Old Testament.

Technically, it's still part of the Old Testament. And so, in the New Testament proper, we are given the identity of Abraham's offspring.

And we find it in Galatians chapter 3, verse 16. Here's how the Apostle Paul identifies Abraham's offspring.

[44 : 07] He writes, Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, and to offsprings, referring to many, but referring to one, and to your offspring, who is Christ.

Christ is the ultimate son of Abraham. Abraham. Christ is the true son of Abraham. He is the one to whom God performed his promise of mercy through his incarnation coming into this earth.

And this reminds us that the incarnation is redemptive. This is God's fulfillment of his promise of redemption of his people through Jesus Christ.

Brothers and sisters, the incarnation shows us the extent to which God went to redeem his people, and it is an expression of his power.

I believe all of us have had situations where we were estranged from someone, we had something that separated us, something that divided us, and I think we've all been to a place where, you know, if we did anything, we wanted to do the bare minimum.

[45 : 43] We're just not interested in really going to sacrificial lengths to bridge the gap that separated us from that other person.

God didn't do that. He didn't just do a surfacy kind of thing to bridge the gap between him and rebellious sinners like you and me.

We were separated from God. And what God did was God sent and gave us what we needed.

He didn't send us a coach or send us an advisor. He sent us a Savior because that's what we needed. We needed a Savior. And we needed a Savior to be saved from him because he is the one against whom we all sinned.

But we needed more than a Savior. We needed a mediator. We needed someone to come between us and bring us together. Now, God could have simply sent Jesus as the Word, as the Son of God, to the earth and say, okay, you will be the mediator.

[47 : 09] But if he did that, Jesus would have been able to represent him as mediator, but he wouldn't have been able to represent us because he would have been just God.

Or he could have just miraculously caused Mary to bring a child into the world, full human, just as we are, and let him be the mediator.

But had he done that, that Jesus, that Son, would only be able to represent us. Couldn't represent God because God is divine.

God is God. God is God. And this is why the incarnation was necessary. Because in the incarnation, we have a savior and a mediator who is able to both represent God because he is fully God, and able to represent man, represent us, because he is fully man.

And it is through Jesus Christ, our mediator, that we have been reconciled to God. But not just in his coming. It is in his dying.

[48 : 21] It is in the shedding of his blood. It is in his taking our place on the cross, paying the penalty for what our sins deserved, satisfying the wrath of God that he is able to bring us back to God.

And God is justly able to forgive us of our sins because the price for them has been paid by the mediator who he sent. And this is why the incarnation should cause us to worship.

That God has gone to this extent to reconcile sinners like you and me to himself, who don't deserve to be reconciled to God, who deserve to pay the full price of our sin and rebellion against God.

But God showed his mercy to us in Jesus Christ by sending him incarnated in human flesh, being both God and man, to die on the cross, that God and sinner may be reconciled.

God and God and God. Mary's song of exaltation to God sings about that redemption. It sings about that mediation.

[49 : 45] It sings about that Savior. And brothers and sisters, let's contemplate, let's meditate upon the incarnation.

And not only will it fill our hearts with fresh amazement at this Christmas season, but it will fill our hearts with hope.

It will fill our hearts to have hope in the power of God, which he displayed in the incarnation. incarnation. I pray we'd reflect on it today.

I pray we'd reflect on it through this Advent season and be amazed at the incarnation. That we don't fully understand it.

By the grace of God, those to whom the Holy Spirit has revealed that Jesus is indeed the Lord. He's indeed the one who has come down in human flesh, God a very God and died for sinners like you and me.

[50 : 51] We can be amazed and we can sing our own song of exaltation to God. Let's pray.

Oh, Father, thank you for the incarnation that God the Son took on human flesh to be a mediator between a holy God and sinful man.

God, will you help us to behold this wonderful mystery once again. I pray for those of us who have come to see Jesus as Savior and Lord, know him as Savior and Lord, that our hearts will rejoice.

God will and Father, I pray for any who has not yet come to trust in Jesus, to trust in his redeeming work as our mediator, as our Savior.

God, have mercy to them and open their eyes and Lord, would you grant them faith and repentance for their trust in Jesus.

[52 : 24] Would you do your work among us this morning? We pray in Christ's name. Amen. Amen. Amen.