

## “All Heaven Broke Loose” – Pr Jim Sprengle – Christmas Eve, 2021

- I. **Luke 2:11-12** - <sup>11</sup> For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. <sup>12</sup> And this will be a sign for you: you will find a Baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger.
- II. **2000 years ago, God decided to stage a rescue mission.**
  - a. It wasn't the kind that you find on Mount Hood, as climbers get in trouble in a snowstorm and can't find their way down.
  - b. It wasn't a rescue from sea because a ship and its crew were sinking.
  - c. It wasn't people in a burning building with no escape route.
  - d. Have you ever needed to be rescued before?
    - i. I told a story of being out in the woods as a kid and losing my way – and that was a very scary experience to think I might not get out
    - ii. If you've had a close call, you know the feeling of needing help or hoping someone will come to save you.
  - e. The problem with many in our world today is they are completely unaware of their need to be rescued!
    - i. They just consider their lives and the world around them as mostly a matter of chance.
      1. Maybe they believe if you do good things you will get good things back – if you do bad things you will get bad things back
      2. Most also believe that people are generally good – and deserve to be happy and successful.
    - ii. So, if a person is being pretty good, who needs to be rescued?
      1. I go home to my house, I have a career and family, I am mostly healthy – so what do I need rescued from?
  - f. Yet, when any person on this planet is pressed, they have to admit that the world is a cruel and evil place.
    - i. Nature has no mercy – just look at the tornados in the Midwest
    - ii. Diseases are indiscriminate – Covid, cancer, and so many other health problems come without warning
    - iii. Crime and murders are up – and society is not becoming more peaceful with all our human progress – just smarter about hurting others
    - iv. No matter how nice or good we are as a person, on any given day, all heck can break loose...
  - g. Whether we know it or not, we need to be rescued.... Not the kind that people plan for hikers or victims of natural disasters.
    - i. The rescue mission God planned and carried out was far more elaborate, requiring thousands of years... and perfect timing...

- III. **The Gospel lesson** for this evening is the beginning of the rescue mission.
- a. Again, at the perfect time, God sent His Son Jesus into the world (Galatians 4:4) as a Savior (Luke 2:11).
  - b. To save us from what? Why do we need rescued?
  - c. Again, many people have no idea that they are in trouble...
  - d. At the beginning of human history, one event changed everything – Adam and Eve made the decision to violate a trust... a perfect relationship between God and humanity was broken because of pride and sin.
    - i. God gave them everything, and even shielded them from evil...but they weren't content with all that –
      1. Every possible need was met – but they wanted knowledge that was only God's to know...meaning they wanted to be God.
      2. And so they ate from the only thing that could cause all hell to break loose into the world... the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.
      3. Out of that one choice to not trust God, nothing could be the same – the world and all it's relationships would be broken.
  - e. The story of sin and brokenness entering the world is the very reason we ALL need a rescue mission from God.
    - i. No one is immune... none of us can claim to be perfect and without sin... the Bible says that “all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” – (Romans 3:23)
    - ii. At the very least we recognize that the world is broken with death and evil all around us – just watch the news for 5 minutes!
      1. Even if we are so bold as to claim that we are good enough to measure up to God's standards, we can't escape the evil that surrounds us – the disease, the crime, the injustice, the death and loss...
      2. I realize that's tough to swallow on a night that is supposed to be filled with peace and good feelings and family
    - iii. Yet, this is the condition we find ourselves in – a profound brokenness inside us... and all kinds of trials and tribulations constantly bombarding us from outside.
  - f. It is from this lost and hopeless situation that God decided to launch the single greatest rescue mission of all time.
  - g. As the angel says in Luke 2 (10-11), “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.”
- IV. **Jesus, God in the flesh, came to rescue us from all that is lost.**
- a. First, we understand that the good news is for “all the people” (vs 10) – which simply means that every human being needs Jesus...

- b. Second, the good news is that a Savior – a Redeemer – a Rescuer was born who is God.
  - i. The phrase, “Christ the Lord” is like saying, “Messiah Yahweh” – the Anointed One who is God Himself.
  - ii. Jesus Christ, the baby born in squalor, is Yahweh, the God of the universe.
    - 1. How’s that for a rescue mission? God Himself came to be one of us – to experience the trials, the loss, the fears, the injustice, the hatred, and all we could ever live through...
    - 2. Not only that, but this little baby...*[point to baby in the creche]* was destined for the cross... to answer for our sin... and to pay for all sin.
- c. The final piece to the puzzle is, who gets rescued?
  - i. If Jesus came for all people, then everyone is jumping on the life raft, right?
    - 1. Unfortunately, there are people who are treading water, completely unaware of the danger they are in...
    - 2. They can’t see the need for a Savior – and they are content to slip away without His saving grace.
  - ii. John 3:16 says that God loved the world so much that He gave His only Son to die for us, so that whoever believes in Jesus would not be eternally separated from God – but instead have an eternity with Him!
  - iii. Jesus, God Himself, came to shower us with grace and love – so that by believing in Him, we might have eternal life... with Him

V. **To me, this story never gets old.**

- a. The story of our salvation and rescue is the best story – because it’s my story through faith – and every person’s story as they believe in Jesus too
- b. Through faith in this miracle of God becoming a real human being, a part of history, a part of us, we are now in God’s favor.
- c. It is a beautiful picture... as all heaven broke loose on that quiet night – and angels and the archangels and all the host of heaven could not contain themselves and the joy of God’s redemption – the Savior and Rescuer had finally arrived.
- d. For all of you here tonight, may the glory of the Christ child shine on you as well – as we celebrate our rescue from sin and death – the true meaning of Christmas. Amen.