

The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord

St. Luke 2:1-14

December 25th, 2025

Sts. Peter and Paul Ev. Lutheran Church, UAC

Simpsonville, SC

Pastor Jerald Dulas

The Days Were Fulfilled

In Nomine Iesu!

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Sermon Text:

“And it came to pass, while they were there, the days were fulfilled that she should be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son; and she wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.”

Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Dearly beloved friends, the angel proclaims to the shepherds in the Gospel for today, “There is born to you this day.” This statement proclaims two types of faith. The first type of faith many people have for it is the type of faith which believes the historical record of the events of this night. This type of faith believes that the man Christ + Jesus was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary and that He was wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. It believes what angels sang about Him and proclaimed about Him to shepherds. It is the type of faith that has been broadcast over the speaker systems at shopping malls and gas stations in the Christmas songs played over the past month and longer. It is an easy type of faith, because it only requires one to believe the events are true; that the history is accurate; that what St. Luke, the Evangelist, writes in chapter two of his gospel actually happened.

But, as we learned in catechesis, and is spoken of in great detail in the fourth article of the Apology to the Augsburg Confession, this type of faith, is not saving faith, because even the devil and his angels believe the events of this story are true. However, saving faith, the second type of faith, clings to the words, “to you.” It believes that these events happened “to you”, or, *for* you, and *for* your salvation. Saving faith believes that our Lord and Savior + Jesus, the Christ, came down from Heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost, and was born of the Virgin Mary for us. Saving faith believes that God became man, in order to redeem us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. A person with saving faith clings to this promise; believes it his heart, and rejoices over this great gift of the Lord God. That person rejoices this day that his sins are forgiven because of what our Lord and Savior does today: He is born in our flesh, that He might fulfill perfectly the whole will and Law of God which we are unable to fulfill, and that He has come to suffer and die in our place on the tree of the holy cross. This is the reason for our joy today.

If however, my dearly beloved friends, our joy this Christmas is getting together with family; if it is getting together with friends at Christmas parties, then our joy is misplaced. If our joy on this

Christmas Day is opening the gifts under the tree that have patiently been waiting for us, our joy is misplaced. If our joy this day is from eating tasty treats, or listening to Christmas music, then our joy is misplaced. If our joy this Christmas is for any other reason than the birth of our Savior, that the day of His coming to take upon Himself our flesh has been fulfilled, then our joy is misplaced. That is not to say that these things should not make us happy, or that they are wrong, or that we should not receive any joy from them. These are good things, they should make us happy, these are the things that happy people do, but these things are not the main event, they are not the cause for our celebration, they are the result of it. These things are the icing on the cake, the frosting on the Christmas cookie. They add to the joy, and are the expression of that joy that we receive from rejoicing in the gift of a Savior, of the incarnation of the One Who rescues us from sin, death and the power of the devil; the One Who forgives us all our sins, grants us salvation, and promises us an eternal life in Heaven with Him.

This is why the most important place to be today is right here—in the Church—with our fellow believers in Christ. We are gathered here today with our family of Christ, our fellow brothers and sisters in Christ, to rejoice that our Lord God chose to make His dwelling place with us; that He chose to be born into our family—the family of all those born of Adam. In this Church our Savior richly gives of Himself. He is the greatest Christmas gift we could ever receive. He gives us Himself in the bread and wine of Holy Communion. There we receive Him—His true and substantial Body and Blood—in bread and wine for the remission of our sins. He gives us in that sacred meal His Holy Ghost, Who creates and strengthens in us, true and saving faith, that produces in us, love for each other and love for God. This meal is the tastiest treat we will ever receive for it provides the medicine for our sin-sick souls, so that we may learn Who our true and only Savior is, and where He is to be found.

He is found among His people. Today, we find Him wrapped up in swaddling clothes, and lying in a manger. We find Him sucking on His mother's breast. We find Him surrounded by the shepherds who were keeping watch over their flocks by night. We find Him surrounded by the whole company of the angels of heaven singing that the days of His coming to dwell in our flesh and among have been fulfilled. He Who created the heavens and the earth, now humbly rests in the mercy of His creation. He rests in His mother's arms. He rests in a manger, for you.

Those who choose not to be here, or in any other Church on this day, because “they have more important things to do” miss the point of Christmas entirely. The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ, is all about gathering in the Church to rejoice in our Redeemer and Savior, Who is born to us today. The reason for Christmas is even in the name of Christmas. The title of Christmas comes from the phrase, “the mass of the Christ.” Christmass is all about Christians gathering together around the sacrament of our Lord’s Body and Blood given in bread and wine to receive Him as their greatest gift, and so that by His death on the tree of the holy cross, He might gift us with forgiveness, life, and salvation. Today, on this Feast Day, we come and kneel before Him, just as the shepherds did, and we do not offer Him anything, for there is nothing of ourselves that is worthy enough to offer Him, but He offers His very life for us; He gives us Himself, so that we might become His brothers and sisters, and share with Him all the great things in the eternal house of our Lord in Heaven.

Coming to this place of worship and receiving our Savior Who is born to us this day is the reason for all our joy. It is the reason why we sing psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs this day, for the joy that is in our hearts at the birth of a Savior shines forth on our lips and tongues. We cannot keep ourselves from singing with great joy this day, for we sing in our hymns the Gospel story that tell us of our Savior born to us this day. That is what we celebrate today, my dearly beloved friends, a Savior, Who is Christ the Lord; Who is born to us and for our salvation. This Child is the only Savior. He is the only One Who can save us from sin, death, and the power of the devil. He is the only One Who can forgive us our sins, grant us salvation, and promise us the gift of eternal life in Heaven.

When we believe that the main thing about Christmas is getting together with friends or family,

we replace the one, true Savior, with a false savior. Can our friends or family redeem us from the devil? Can they forgive us our sins against God? They can certainly forgive us the sins that we have committed against them, but they cannot take away the sins that condemn us to God's wrath and displeasure. Only our Lord and Savior + Jesus, the Christ, can save us from our sins. Only He is the true Savior of mankind.

When we believe that the main thing about Christmas is the gifts under the Christmas tree that we open, we also create a false savior. Especially when we receive the "gift we've been waiting for." Can our material possessions grant us eternal life? No, in fact we lose all material possessions the day we die. We cannot carry any of them with us into the grave. But, we never lose any of spiritual gifts which our Lord gives us. When He forgives our sins, that is an eternal gift. Certainly, we can reject that gift; we can live our lives as if His forgiveness grants us license to live however corruptly we choose, or as if our sins are not so great as to need forgiveness. But, when our Lord forgives, He desires us to keep that forgiveness with us into eternal life, where there is no longer any need for forgiveness. That is why daily we live in our Holy Baptisms; we daily drown the Old Adam in repentance—in contrition and faith—so that a new Adam will emerge and live before the Lord God, clothed in the righteousness of the Christ.

This is why the best and most awesome gift that anyone can receive this Christmas, or any Christmas, is faith that the Baby born *to* us today, is born *for* us, and for our salvation. The gifts He brings are eternal gifts that will not be taken away from us. In His gifts, true joy and happiness are to be found.

Therefore, my dearly beloved friends, let us not celebrate this Christmas as if the only thing that is important is hearing the historical events, as if believing that as long as one believes the events recorded in St. Luke's Gospel are true, then we have celebrated Christmas. For, this is how the rest of the world celebrates Christmas, and no matter how much of a nod of their head they give to the Christmas story, they do not possess saving faith. Not until they cling to the Baby + Jesus as their Lord and Savior, do they possess saving faith. Let us cling in faith to our Savior, the Lord + Jesus, the Christ, for from Him and through Him are forgiveness, life, and salvation. He is both the Gift and the Giver of even greater gifts. He is our Savior. He is born to you this day. Let us rejoice and sing of the good things that He has done for us, and let us celebrate today, and every day, that our Lord God came down from Heaven and was incarnate of the Holy Ghost and was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to be our Savior from sin, death, and the power of the devil. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus, the Christ. Amen.

Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:

Almighty God, be pleased to accompany Thy Word with Thy Holy Spirit and grant that Thy Word would increase faith in us; bring into the Way of Truth all such as have erred; turn the hearts of the unrepentant; and for sake of Thy Name grant succor to all heavy hearts and those who are heavy-laden, that they may through the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ be relieved and preserved so that they succumb not to the temptation of despair but rather that they gain the victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil; through the same Jesus Christ, Thy Son, our Lord, Who liveth and reigneth with the Thee and the Holy Ghost, ever One God, world without end. Amen.

The Votum:

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

Soli Deo Gloria!