

Luke 2:1-20

¹In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. ²(This was the first census that took place while Quirinius was governor of Syria.)

³And everyone went to his own town to register.

⁴So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. ⁵He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, ⁷and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

⁸And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. ⁹An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, "**Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.** ¹¹**Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.** ¹²**This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.**"

¹³Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ¹⁴"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests."

¹⁵When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

¹⁶So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. ¹⁷When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, ¹⁸and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. ¹⁹But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. ²⁰The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. (NIV)

INTRO - Merry Christmas!

Or, maybe that Greeting is a little late. Our big candlelight services were last night. I would guess that most of you have opened presents already. I guess, all that's left is the meal, or is it? Is it too late for Merry Christmas?

I. On this Christmas Day, when much of the excitement is over, please look with me at Mary for one of the most important parts of celebrating the good news of the birth of God's Son as our Savior.

A. In verse 19 we are told, ¹⁹**But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.**

1. This was after the trip from Nazareth to Bethlehem. That had to be tiring.
2. This was after the birth of the baby. That is always an exciting time, and a difficult time.
3. This came after the visit by the shepherds with the marvelous story about angels saying, **I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.** ¹¹**Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.**
4. But, when the shepherds had left, Christmas wasn't over. We're told Mary did two things, She treasured what had happened and what she had been told, and she pondered them.

B. As I studied for this sermon, I looked at the Greek words. Treasure means to keep together, or keep safe and guarded.

1. Do you understand what Mary was doing?
2. She committed the events, and the words to memory.
3. She made sure she would not forget the events of the birth of Jesus, including the visit to her by the angel, and the visit to Joseph by the angel, and the news that the shepherds had told her.

A. She wanted to remember things like - He shall sit on David's throne forever, which Gabriel told Mary.

B. She wanted to remember things like - You shall call His name Jesus, because he will Save his people from their sins, which the angel told Joseph.

C. She wanted to remember things like - Unto you is born a Savior, who is Christ (or Messiah), the lord (or the name for God himself.)

- 4 These words were perhaps a little overwhelming, and beyond immediate understanding, so she worked to remember them for later.

C. And, the Greek word for ponder means to throw together.

1. Sometimes you throw a ball against a wall and see how it will bounce.
2. Mary was putting all these words together, and not just remembering them but thinking about them, and trying to understand them, and seeing how she should react to this great gift of God in her son who was to be the Savior of the world.

II.. I would suggest to you that Christmas is not over, but the joy and blessings of the gift of the Savior are just beginning.

A. It is time for us to commit to memory the events that we have heard.

1. We may not even understand everything God is telling us, but we need to know who this Jesus is.
2. We need to remember and know that He is the fulfillment of God's promise, the King of all creation.
3. We need to remember and know that This savior is God himself.
4. We need to remember and know, even if we don't totally understand, that This promised messiah, that God himself is our Savior.

B. Mary's example of pondering or thinking about the events will cause us to know some blessings that are not over when Christmas day is over, but blessing that last.

1. We can begin to understand that when God makes a promise to us, He keeps His word.
2. We can begin to understand that God does not leave us alone, but He is with us.
3. We can begin to understand that when we have gotten ourselves into trouble, that God is there to save us by forgiving us in Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION - It may seem like Christmas is over, but in another way it really isn't. Let me share with you some of the gifts I got. I got a sweatshirt, I plan to wear that in the future. I got an ice fishing pole. I know I'm going to use that Thursday. I got a parking pass to the Alaska state parks. I'll use that all summer. Some of my favorite gifts are pictures I received. Those gifts will bring me joy for years to come.

And, the gift of Christmas from God, may be opened, but they are still there to use. We'll count on His promises being faithful. We'll Trust in His presence in difficult times. We know He will save us for eternity. The gifts may be opened, but God himself is there to bless us through out the year, and into eternity.