**Luke 2:1-20 December 24, 2020**

**Advent Midweek Series IV: A Child is Born: Jesus**

 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

 Throughout these last few weeks we’ve looked at the significance and comparisons of children being born in the Bible to the birth of Jesus Christ. Cain was born to Adam and Eve, they hoped that this child would be the Savior, but instead he was a walking personification of sin who commits the first murder. Isaac was the long promised child to Abraham and Sarah who would pass on the covenant promise of a Savior. Solomon was a child born in the midst of controversy. All of these children were significant, but none born to you. None were your child. None were born, to you. Which changes tonight. Hear again the words of the angel: “For unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Savior who is Christ the Lord, and this shall be the sign for you, you shall find the baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in the manger.” This child was born, to you, and for you. You are a member of God’s family on account of this child’s birth, life, death, and resurrection. This isn’t a birth announcement of a friend or hearing some good news from an acquaintance. This child is born, to you. A child is born! And His name is Jesus.

 It has been a while now, but if you remember the birth of a son to Prince William and Katherine in England, you remember that there was a great deal of anticipation amongst the locals as to whether it would be a boy or a girl; what the child’s name would be; what day he would be born on; and what effect the child would have on the monarchy.

 And perhaps you also remember the circumstances on the news, and the phrase they used repeatedly: this was the next king or queen of England. There was also a lot of debate as to what William and Katherine would be like as parents; and what sort of education the child would receive. Now, years later, they have had 3 children, Prince George, Princess Charlotte, and Prince Louis.

 Yet, before this first child was even born, the son born to Prince William and Katherine had his entire life mapped out, at least by the media, if not also by his parents.

 What will become of the child remains to be seen. He may one day in fact sit on the throne of England, but just ask Prince Charles how long he might have to wait for that opportunity. Either way, while everything has been planned out, those plans are also subject to change; perhaps by circumstances, but also based on the whim of the child.

 Today, another birth is announced to us: it is the birth of Jesus. He is not born into a family of great wealth and power; instead He is born to a couple that has been hastily married upon the discovery that Mary had conceived by the Holy Spirit. And while Joseph may be a member of the house of David, he is not on the short list to become the next king.

 Nor is Jesus birth announced with much pomp and circumstance in worldly terms. He is born in a stable; spends His first night in a manger box; and is greeted by lowly shepherds. He does not even come at a particularly optimistic time in Israel, as the Romans are the current occupying force making life inconvenient, if not miserable for the people.

 To those in Israel, the future for this child is that of a carpenter; just like His father. He will get some education at the local synagogue on the Torah; later raise a family, and that will be the last that we hear of this child. That’s the trajectory that his family may see for him, his future is mapped out in their minds.

 But this is no ordinary child that Mary and Joseph are now charged with caring for. This is the child that Adam and Eve had hoped for. This is the child whom God was pointing Abraham to in addition to his own son Isaac. This is the child, who unlike Solomon, will reign on the throne of David forever.

 This is the child, as we will see this upcoming Sunday, whom Simeon declares will bring about the rising and falling of many in Israel. This is the child who John the Baptist will declare to be the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. This is the child whom Peter will declare to be the Christ, the son of the living God. This is the child who the demons will recognize, just by the sound of His voice. This is the child who with a word will still the storms and the waves and who will command the stones to shout out. This is the child who will draw all nations to Himself.

 This is the child who will be crucified as a common criminal; and who will rise from the dead on the third day. This is the child who will ascend into heaven, promising to return in glory with shouts of acclamation. This is the child at whose name every knee will bow and every tongue confess that He is Lord. This is the child who will rend the heavens on the Last Day and come with angels and archangels to judge the living and the dead.

 Today, He sleeps on Mary’s lap; one day He will rest in a tomb. Today, He is placed in a wooden manger box; one day He will hang from a wooden cross. Today, His birth goes unnoticed; but His death will require the consent of the regional Roman governor. Today the donkey stands in the corner looking on; eventually a donkey will be used to carry Him into Jerusalem. Today, Mary and Joseph will do anything to protect their newborn child; on Good Friday, God the Father will forsake Him, just like all the rest.

 Today, we look in the manger, and see what is both the present and what is the future. For the present, there is a family huddling together, celebrating the mystery that is a newborn child. For the future, there is a cross and a tomb and a place in glory at the Father’s right hand.

 What does it mean for you?

 The message of the angels makes it clear: for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

 A child is born: but not just a child: a Savior. A Savior who was first promised to Adam and Eve. A Savior who is pointed to throughout the entire Old Testament by the prophets. A Savior who will save His people from their sins. A Savior who will open to you the gates of Paradise. A Savior who will restore creation. A Savior who will make all things new.

 He is here. He is finally here.

 And now that the Christ child has been born; no one will ever again be born into a world without the presence of a Savior. Everyone who is born after that first Christmas night, is born into a world that the Savior of the nations has walked upon. Everyone who is born after that first Christmas night, is born into a world that lives in the joy of that first Christmas night. Everyone who is born after that first Christmas night, no matter where they are born, or where they live, lives in a world that can look in the stable and know that the Savior is here.

 Every child who is born after that first Christmas night, can rejoice, that your salvation has been secured; because on a night 2000 years ago, a child was born, and that child would be called Jesus, and He would save His people from their sins.

Amen.

The peace of God which surpasses all human understanding keep our hearts and minds through faith in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Amen.