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Title: Proclaiming the Light

Date: December 15 & 16, 2018

Preaching: Randy Spleth, Senior Minister

Scripture: [Isaiah 12:2-6](#)

Text: [Luke 2:8-15](#)

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We are doing here what we are supposed to do. Do you know that? We are proclaiming the light. That's what this worship is about and I hope you are feeling joy. Are you? I hope so because if there is one word that describes what Christmas is all about, it is that little word joy. It's why so many Christmas carols talk about joy.

Joy to the World or, *O Come All Ye Faithful*. How are you to come? Joyful and triumphant. Do you remember what you sang during *O Holy Night*? "Sweet hymns of joy in grateful chorus raise we..." Did you feel it when you sang it? What kind of joy were you proclaiming?

It depends a lot on your definition of joy. Too often, we equate joy with happiness, particularly at this time of year when we are so busy doing Christmas. We think we experience joy when we find a parking spot near the shopping mall. We believe we have joy when seeing old friends at a Christmas party. We think joy is found when we open a present and see exactly what we wanted. We might even proclaim a joyful, "Yes!" But this isn't the kind of joy that we are singing about or should be proclaiming.

Luke tells us what this joy is. You know how the story goes. The shepherds were just minding their business and when an angel appeared and "...the glory of the Lord shone around them." That's Bible speech for light, radiant powerful light that shattered the darkness. No wonder they were afraid. But what does the angel say? You know it by heart. In fact, say it with me. It's there on the screen. Let's say it together. "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." (Luke 2:9-10)

Do you see the definition of what joy is and what you are to do with? The great joy, if translated accurately from the Greek it would actually read,

“mega.” Mega-joy, enormous joy, gigantic joy. What’s this joy about? Three things. Savior, Messiah, and Lord. Those three words that you just read with me never appear together again in any other New Testament verse, even though they sum up the gospel, the good news. Savior, Messiah, and Lord is the reason for mega-joy.

Those three words tell us God keeps promises and meets needs. Those three words tell us that our past, our present and our future is taken care of. Your past is forgiven because Jesus is Savior. Your present is directed because Jesus is Lord. Your future is taken care of because Jesus is the Messiah, the anointed one, the King of Kings sitting on eternity’s throne.

God gave the first Christmas gift, gave us Jesus who came to get us right with God, to get us directed in life and promise us eternity. If you know that, if you own that and if you claim that, it creates something deep down inside that is joy, mega-joy. It is a feeling deep within your soul, promised by Jesus and produced by the Holy Spirit. It comes into the darkness of our lives and shines brightly.

If it shines brightly, you are to proclaim that light; you give it away. That’s why the angel says “for all of the people.” This gift that God gave isn’t just for you or me. It is for all people. And if you receive it, you are to give it away. You are to re-gift it.

Have you ever re-gifted something? Be honest. Have you ever taken something somebody gave you, repackaged it and gave it to somebody else? I’ve done it. In fact, we are doing it this year. There is a gift under the tree that we are re-gifting. Most of the time when we think about “re-gifting” it is giving something away that we don’t like or don’t need. But that’s not what is going on here. The gift we give away is incredibly valuable and when we do, we are modeling behavior, acting like God. Isn’t that what God did?

God had a son. Isn’t a child a gift? Of course, it is. God had the gift of Jesus. And he re-gifted that Son, gave Jesus to us. “For God so loved the world that he gave *re-gifted* his only Son so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” (John 3:16) So re-gifting the good news of Jesus isn’t just a good thing to do, it is a God thing to do. It’s loving like God. If you are a follower of Jesus, you have something to re-gift. The good news of great joy for all people.

That’s why we are here, what we are doing and I hope and pray what will do it with others. Because if you are full of joy, you will be a joy giver, proclaiming the light.

