

Experience the Wonder of Christmas
“RESTORING YOUR SENSE OF WONDER”

Pastor Chuck Wysong
Sunday, December 18, 2011

4 WAYS TO RESTORE YOUR SENSE OF WONDER

1. RECEIVE

“The angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid. I bring **you** good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born **to you**; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign **to you**: **You** will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.’” Luke 2:8-12

• Jesus always makes it PERSONAL

“Do **you** believe that I am able to do this?” Matthew 9:28

“But what about **you**? Who do **you** say I am?” Matthew 16:15

“Who do **you** say that I am?” Mark 8:29

“Who do **you** say that I am?” Luke 9:20

“I am the resurrection and the life... Do **you** believe this?” John 11:25-26

“When 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.’” Luke 2:15

“At the first Christmas God took a journey of a billion steps... to come to us, but he always leaves the last step up to you” — *Max Lucado*

2. REJOICE

“Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, ‘**Glory to God in the highest**, and **on earth peace to men on whom his favor rests**.’” Luke 2:13,14

And Mary said: “My soul glorifies **the Lord** and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for **he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant**.” Luke 1:46,47

3. REACH OUT

“So **they hurried off and found** Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. When they had seen him, **they spread the word** concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.” Luke 2:15-18

“Go out into the country lanes and behind the hedges and **urge anyone you find to come**, so that the house will be full.” Luke 14:23

4. REFLECT

“But Mary treasured up all these things and **pondered them in her heart**.” Luke 2:19

“From the **cradle** in Bethlehem to the **cross** in Jerusalem, ponder the love of your Father. What can you say to that kind of emotion? Upon learning that God would rather die than live without you, how do you react? How do begin to explain such passion?” — *Max Lucado*

TIME WITH GOD

MEMORY VERSE: “For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” *Isaiah 9:6*

Monday

Read Matthew 9:28, 16:15, Luke 2:8-12 & John 11:25-26. These verses are full of which personal pronoun?

When did you realize Jesus came for you?

How has that realization changed you?

What has your journey of receiving God’s free gift been like?

If you are not certain you have ever personally received this gift from God, settle the issue today! In your own words (since this is personal) tell God that you receive the Savior born in Bethlehem into your life!

Tuesday

Please read Psalm 40 & Luke 2:1-40. Who do you see rejoicing in the Christmas story? What are their reasons for rejoicing?

As you read through Psalm 40 how does it encourage you?

What reasons for rejoicing do you see in this psalm?

Thank God today the reasons to rejoice that you saw in Psalm 40. Thank Him for the strength He has given you. Pray that you will focus on joy as you go through the week. Ask God to use you as a beacon of joy in the lives of those you encounter today.

Wednesday

Please read Luke 2:1-40 again, but try reading it in a different translation today. If you have access to the internet you can read different translations for free at www.biblegateway.com. In what way did the people involved in the first Christmas reach out?

How can you apply their example to your life this Christmas season?

Read John 4:35-38. How does Jesus describe the opportunities to reach out in these verses?

Think of your spiritual journey. Who were some of the “seed planters” in your life?

Over the next two weekends thousands of new people will be exposed to the Good News of God’s love and grace through the Christmas concerts and candlelight services. Write down three people you can be a “seed planter and harvester” to during this time.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Thank God today for those who planted seeds of truth in your life. Pray for the courage and boldness to reach out to people around you and share the story of God’s grace to them and in your life.

Thursday

Please read Luke 1:26-56 & 2:19. What do you learn about Mary, who was just a young woman at this time, in these verses?

What does she reflect on in her prayer of praise?

Life is busy. Life during the holiday season is super-busy! What are some practical ways you can build in times of reflection?

Write down your own prayer of praise to God today and spend time reflecting on the many things God has done for you.

Friday

Since we’ve been in Luke for much of this week, let’s wrap up by reading Matthew 1:18-25. In verse 21, what does the angel say Jesus will do?

In verse 23, who does the angel say Jesus will be?

Read John 3:16. According to these verses, what was God’s motive for sending the Son into the world?

Based just on these verses, write one sentence explaining who Jesus is, what he came to do, and why:

As you go to prayer today thank God for His love and grace. Thank Him for intervening in your life. Pray that you will focus on God’s joy and peace as you go through the Christmas season.

Saturday

Please be sure you know this week’s Bible verse and finish up any devotions you may have missed. Please pray for the Christmas Eve services this weekend. Pray for the health of those involved and pray that they will be effective at sharing the Good News of Jesus’ birth and grace.