

Songs of Christmas
Sermon Series
December 2017
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It just would not be Christmas without singing. The songs of Christmas add a special spirit to the celebration of the holiday. The tone, tempo, melody and rhythm of Christmas songs greet our ears with excitement and wonder concerning our Savior's birth. The message that rings out during Christmas through these songs often can be heard in the most unlikely places. People who have not attended church in years go through the shopping mall singing "Christ the Savior is Born". There is no doubt that our nation is in love with Christmas, and the tool that awakens it to the season is Christmas songs.

The first Christmas in many ways was the same way. Sometimes we don't realize that imbedded into the Christmas story are the "Songs of Christmas". Rich in wonder, worship and praise, the songs of Christmas accentuate the coming of our Savior. This is why I have chosen these songs for my Christmas sermon series. The personalities of that first Christmas were so filled with joy that they burst forth with singing. In their songs, the message and the theology of Christmas is brought to life. They tell the unfolding story of God's redemption for us through the birth of His Son, baby Jesus. They all had a song worth singing about Christ's birth; from the aged Simeon, to the Virgin Mary and even up on high with the Angels. The first Christmas was filled with wonderful singing. So come join us on Sunday mornings as we rediscover the first songs of Christmas.

The Song of Simeon
Sermon #1

Luke 2:25-35

Simeon's Song is One of Grace

“I do not at all understand the mystery of grace—only that it meets us where we are but does not leave us where it found us.” *Anne Lamott*

“More a verb than a noun, more present tense than past tense, grace didn't just happen; it happens.” *Max Lucado*

I. There was the perception of Simeon in his song.

A. He perceived the supernatural because he was a spirit filled man.

Luke 2:25 *And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him.*

“Simeon, who was controlled, counseled and conditioned by the Spirit of God, received the revelation concerning Christ in the same way that Jesus reveals Himself today.” *David Jeremiah*

B. He perceived the supernatural because he was a sensitive man.

Luke 2:26 *And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.*

Amos 3:7 *Surely the Lord God will do nothing but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.*

I Corinthians 2:14 *The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*

II. There was the praise of Simeon in his song.

A. He praised the Lord that he had seen what the Spirit had revealed.

Luke 2:28 *Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, (V.29) Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: (V.30) For mine eyes have seen thy salvation,*

B. He praised the Lord that he had seen the sword of revelation.

Luke 2:34 *And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against;*

John 15:22 *If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin.*

III. There was the prophecy of Simeon in his song.

A. He prophesied that the light of Salvation had come to all people.

Luke 2:31 *Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; (V.32) A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel.*

What is Grace?

“Grace is God freely giving you what you need even though you don’t deserve it and can never repay him. Grace is when God solves your greatest problem before you even know it is a problem. Grace is the face of God when He looks at your faults, failure and fears. Grace is God’s Riches at Christ’s Expense.”

Rick Warren

B. He prophesied that the price of Salvation would pierce Mary’s heart.

Luke 2:33-35 *And Joseph and his mother marvelled at those things which were spoken of him. (V.34) And Simeon blessed them, and said unto Mary his mother, Behold, this child is set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel; and for a sign which shall be spoken against; (V.35) (Yea, a sword shall pierce through thy own soul also,) that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.*

Simeon Stopped Praising and Started Prophesying

In his song he used three important images: the stone, the sign and the sword.

1. The stone is an important image of God. (Corner Stone/Stumbling Block) Because of Jesus Christ, many in Israel would fall in conviction and then rise in salvation.
2. The word sign means “a miracle,” not so much as a demonstration of power but as a revelation of divine truth.
3. The image of the sword was for Mary alone and it spoke of the suffering and sorrow she would bear as the mother of the Messiah.

Warren Wiersbe

**The Song of Zacharias
Sermon #2**

Luke 1:66-79

Luke 1:64-66 *And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God. (V.65) And fear came on all that dwelt round about them: and all these sayings were noised abroad throughout all the hill country of Judaea. (V.66) And all they that heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, What manner of child shall this be! And the hand of the Lord was with him.*

I. It is a song of redemption's promise fulfilled. (V.67-70)

A. It was a long awaited fulfillment of the promise of redemption.

Luke 1:68 *Blessed be the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people,*

“Jesus was the infinite who became an infant, born of a virgin so we could be born again, the sinless sacrifice who would make blood atonement for the world.” *Adrian Rogers*

B. It was a long anticipated fulfillment of the promise of a redeemer.

Luke 1:69-70 *And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David; (V.70) As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began:*

Matthew 1:21 *And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*

II. It is a song of a rescue from the plundering of the foe. (V.71-75)

A. We have been released from the enemy who hates us.

Luke 1:71-73 *That we should be saved from our enemies, and from the hand of all that hate us; (V.72) To perform the mercy promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy covenant; (V.73) The oath which he sware to our father Abraham,*

Ephesians 2:1 *And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;*

B. We have been released to enjoy the one who loves us.

Luke 1:74-75 *That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, (V.75) In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life.*

“He set us free, not to do our own will, because that would be bondage, but to do His will and enjoy His freedom.”
Warren Wiersbe

III. It is a song of a resounding praise for the prophet of the father. (V.76-79)

“The greatest forces in the world are not the earthquakes and the thunderbolts,” Said **Dr. E.T. Sullivan**. “The greatest forces in the world are babies.”

A. The message that was given to explain the mission of the prophet.

Luke 1:76-77 *And thou, child, shalt be called the prophet of the Highest: for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways; (V.77) To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins,*

Matthew 26:28 *For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.*

B. The metaphor that was given to explain the mission of the prophet.

Luke 1:78-79 *Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, (V.79) To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.*

“Worship does to the soul what a spring rain does to a thirsty field. It soaks down, seeps in and stirs life. Are you stressed? Worship God, who could store the universe in His pocket and the oceans in an eyedropper.”
Max Lucado

**The Song of Elizabeth
Sermon #3**

Luke 1:39-45

Luke 1:39-42 *And Mary arose in those days, and went into the hill country with haste, into a city of Juda; (V.40) And entered into the house of Zacharias, and saluted Elisabeth. (V.41) And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: (V.42) And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.*

I. The supernatural affirmation that initially started the song.

A. There was the quickening of the child that encouraged her.

Luke 1:41 *And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb;*

“The Holy Spirit who had filled John from the moment of conception (1:15), also filled Elizabeth and gave her supernatural knowledge about the child conceived in Mary.” *David Jeremiah*

B. There was the quickening of the Spirit that engulfed her.

Luke 1:41 *. . . and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost:*

II. The spoken affirmation that was shouted in the song.

A. It was an affirmation to Mary who was blessed among all females.

Luke 1:42 *And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women,*

B. It was an affirmation to Mary who would birth the Fruit of the Spirit.

Luke 1:42 *. . . and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.*

“Could we say that Jesus was the ultimate fruit of the Spirit?” *Hampton Drum*

Galatians 5:22 *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,*

Luke 1:43 *And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?*

III. The spiritual application that was spoken in the song.

A. It was an affirmation applied from the facts of the event.

Luke 1:44 *For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy.*

B. It was an affirmation applied from the faith of the event maiden.

Luke 1:45 *And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.*

“Faith had made Mary a magnet for God’s Blessing.” *Hampton Drum*

Hebrews 11:1 *Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.*

“Because Mary believed the Word of God, she experienced the power of God.”

Warren Wiersbe

The Song of Mary Sermon #4

Luke 1:46-56

Luke 1:45 *And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord.*

Elizabeth could see Mary's faith and what it had appropriated for her. Mary couldn't see past her rags, and Herod's palace with his queen in gold, and oriental silk.

Mary was well acquainted with the Bible. In this song of Mary's, she quotes from more than thirty different Old Testament passages.

I. Mary sings about God's personal rescue to her helplessness.

A. She proclaimed God's personal consideration of her helplessness.

Luke 1:46-48 *And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, (V.47) And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. (V.48) For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.*

"Mary's worship was clearly from the heart. She was plainly consumed by the wonder of His grace to her. She seemed amazed that an absolutely holy God would do such great things for one as undeserving as she."
John MacArthur

James 2:5 *Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?*

B. She proclaimed God's personal consideration of her hopelessness.

Luke 1:49-51 *For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. (V.50) And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. (V.51) He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.*

II. Mary sings about God's personal relief to her humility.

A. The Lord proved the vanity of the arrogant and energized the humble.

Luke 1:51 *. . .he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.*

Acts 4:25 *Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things?*

B. The Lord put down prestige of the authorities and exalted the humiliated.

Luke 1:52 *He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree.*

“God’s favor on Mary would call her to die to her reputation, to her pride, to her expectations, to her caution. But out of death arose a life that God could use to do more than Mary ever imagined.”
Jennifer Kennedy Dean

III. Mary sings about God’s personal relief to her hunger.

A. Mary speaks of satisfaction occupying the space of want and need.

Luke 1:53 *He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away.*

B. Mary speaks of sanctification occupying the space of sin and regret.

Luke 1:54-55 *He hath helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; (V.55) As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed forever.*

“Don’t get the idea that Jesus died to save you from hell. He died to save you from sin. And if He can’t save you from sin, He can’t save you from hell.”
Adrian Rogers

Psalms 25:7 *Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD.*

The Song of the Angels Sermon #5

Luke 2:8-15

“I think Angels have been worshiping from the time they first opened their eyes and saw God’s smile . . . They don’t have rest time or recess. They don’t go home at night because there is no night—and they wouldn’t want to leave God’s side even if there was. Shouting and singing praise to the Lord is all they do—and all they want to do—forever and ever.” **Larry Libby**

“Jesus spoke of angels who ‘always see the face of my Father in Heaven’ (Matthew 18:10). I’m sure the result of their unbroken gaze into His face is lots of rich, genuine worship.”
David Jeremiah

I. The audience that the Angels sang to.

A. The alarm that the angels caused.

Luke 2:8-9 *And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. (V.9) And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.*

“The angels came in the night because that is when lights are best seen and that is when they are most needed. God comes into the common for the same reason.” **Max Lucado**

B. The appeasing that the angels used to calm them.

Luke 2:10 *And the angel said unto them, Fear not:*

(In the Bible when Heaven interacts with the human world it often causes fear. One of the reasons Jesus came in love was to take the fear away.)

II. The announcement that the Angels gave in their song.

A. It was an announcement that had an atmosphere of joy.

Luke 2:10 . . . *for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.* (He came with great joy so He could give great joy.)

B. It was an announcement that had the atonement of Jesus.

Luke 2:11-12 *For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. (V12) And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.*

III. The anthem that finished the Angels' song.

A. The anthem was finished with the addition of an angelic choir.

Luke 2:13 *And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying,*

“These were angels. Didn’t they know better? Then again, these were angels. Who knew Jesus better than they? Those who knew Jesus best loved him dearest. Those who had followed him the longest gave him the gift of worship. They placed their love on a pillow of praise and presented it to Jesus. They did that night. They do so still.” *Max Lucado*

B. The anthem’s grand finale that accentuated the celebration.

Luke 2:14-15 *Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men. (V.15) And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.*