

'Twas the Days After Christmas

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Date: 26 December 2010

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[0:00] Let's take your Bibles and turn to Luke chapter 2.

This is where we're going to begin, Luke chapter 2 and find verse 51. This morning, when I read it, you're going to be thinking, is there a sermon there?

Well, there is. Luke chapter 2 verse 51 says, Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth and was subject to them.

But His mother kept all these things in her heart. The part of the verse that I want to use as kind of the kickoff for this message is that first part.

Though we will, in the course of the message, get to the second part of it as well. But again, let me read. And He, of course, it's in, you know, capital H. We're speaking of Jesus.

[1:24] He went down with them and came to Nazareth and was subject to them. The story of Christmas is a beautiful story.

In fact, I debated whether I would just go ahead and read the Christmas story in Luke chapter 2. But you know the story so well.

And we've been hearing bits and pieces of it over the last several weeks. Not only from this pulpit, but other places and Sunday school classrooms and other places outside of the church building. And we know the story so well. The Christmas story. It's a beautiful story. It really is a story from heaven itself. Especially when you kind of put together in your mind all the various elements of it. You know, the miraculous star that, I believe, not only seemed to move, but did move. And lead those wise men to Jesus.

[2:28] You have the angelic choir there in the heavens. As the shepherds looked on and were in awe and wonder. And not only that, but in terror.

You have that element of the story. You have the awesome announcement of the angels. You have the worship of the shepherds. When they finally did come to the manger.

To the place where Jesus was. You have the coming of the wise men, eventually. And as they opened up their treasures. And they gave to Jesus beautiful and precious and extravagant gifts. All these various elements of the story. And it's a beautiful story. And a wonderful story. And it's really difficult when Christmas is over. And we have to get away from that story.

You know. Revisit it again next Christmas. Somehow it just doesn't seem appropriate to look at Luke chapter 2 at any other time of the year. You know. Which is ridiculous, of course.

[3:35] Beautiful story. All these things took place. And the wonder of it. And then for 12 long years. There is absolute impenetrable silence.

And then. We have the remarkable story. Of the now 12 year old Jesus. Visiting Jerusalem with his family. And talking theology with the great scholars there in the temple.

We have that little kind of tidbit of a story there. I've read somewhat from that. And after that. Approximately 18 years.

Again of absolute silence. Interesting, isn't it? That God just decided in his wisdom and in his providence.

Not to give us. Information during those periods of Jesus life. But that's what we have. After Christmas.

[4:40] After the Christmas story. Now we have more. Of course the story is taken up again. With John the Baptist making the announcement and pointing. And there is the Lamb of God.

That taketh away the sin of the world. And he baptizes Jesus. And inaugurates his ministry. And of course in the Gospels we have. A lot of details. About things that transpired after Christmas.

But in the days. Those days immediately after Christmas. We don't really have much at all. 'Twas the days.

After Christmas. That's what I want us to consider. This morning. When the angels are gone. You know. Angel Gabriel is gone now. The angels that visited with the shepherds. There. And gave the announcement. They're gone. And the star is gone. It's faded away. And the wise men. They have returned back to their country. And the shepherds are back.

[5 : 39] There to. Involved in their vocation. Watching over the sheep. And so forth. And so. All that is gone. It's done with. And that's kind of the way it is for us.

I mean. Just. Just to mention those things. It's kind of. A downer. All that's over. And all that's done. And the shepherds. And the wise men.

And they've gone back to their lives. And so forth. And. Kind of a downer. Isn't it. In sense. At least we might be tempted to experience that. And that's the way it is for us.

You know. When Christmas day. Is passed. For us this year. It is. Very recently passed. I mean. Just yesterday. Some of us are still.

Kind of. Whew. You know. From all of the food. And desserts. The Christmas day is over. And the carols. Are all but. Finished.

[6 : 36] That is in our singing. Though we have sung some this morning. And I'm glad that we did. The gifts have all been open. Probably. Some of you may be experiencing.

Some. You know. Some. Kind of Christmas celebrations. After Christmas day. As you get with other parts of the family. But. But. By and large. All that's over with. And the. Holiday foods and desserts. Are. Almost gone. We still have some. In our home. And we'll be eating those today. I'm sure. And all that's over with.

And the Christmas parties. Are over. And the decorations. Soon. Will be pulled down. Not only here. And by the way. Men.

Next Saturday. About five o'clock. No. No. Not Saturday. Is it Saturday? Yeah. Saturday. We need some help. Pull some of this down. But in our homes. You know. Pretty soon. We'll be pulling all that down.

[7 : 32] And packing it away. And I'll be. Walking up the ladder. And putting it in the attic. And all the color. Will be gone from our homes. And you know. You know how that is.

After Christmas is over. And. We'll get back. To the. Daily humdrum. Of life. Won't we. And have to. Deal with the. After Christmas challenges. And there will be some of those. All of us have heard. The poem. Twas the night. Before Christmas. But I wonder. If you've ever heard. The poem. Twas the day. After Christmas. Written by David Frank. I had to edit. Some of it. Twas the day. After Christmas.

And all through the house. Children sat. Slack jawed. Bored on the couch. Wrappings and toys. Littered the floor. An incredible mess.

[8 : 28] That I did abhor. With mom in her robe. And I in my jeans. We waded in. To get the place clean. When suddenly. The doorbell. It started to clatter.

I sprang to the security view. To check out the matter. The new fallen snow. Now blackened with soot. Was trampled and icy. And treacherous to foot.

But suddenly. In view. Did I gasp. And pant. An unhappy bill collector. And eight tiny accountants. The door flew open.

And in they came. Stern looking men. With bills in my name. On discover. On visa. On American express. On MasterCard 2. I sadly confess.

Right to my limits. Then beyond my net worth. Over the top. I had charged. In a frenzy of mirth. The black suited men. So somber. So strict.

[9 : 23] I wondered. Why me? That they had first picked. They stared at me. With a look I couldn't miss. That said. Buddy. When are you paying for this?

I shrugged my shoulders. But then I grew bolder. Went to the cabinet. And pulled out a folder. As you can see. I said with a smile. It's bankruptcy. That I'll have to file.

And with a swoop of my arm. It fully extended. I threw the bills in the fire. The matter had ended. The scent of the burnt ash. Came to my nose.

As up the chimney. My credit worthiness rose. Without another word. They turned and walked out. Got into their limos. But one gave a shout.

You may think that's the answer. To all your fears. But it's your credit rating. You've ruined. For at least seven years. Hmm.

[10:20] Well I hope that's not going to be. Your experience. On the day after. The days after Christmas. Christmas. And it is a wonderful thing.

Isn't it Christmas? Kind of a mountaintop. Christmas. Is such a high. Emotion. Especially for us. This Christmas. My wife opened up a gift. From. Our kids in Atlanta. And there in the package.

Was a little bib. That said. What did it say? I'm a grandma. Well not I'm a grandma.

I didn't get one that said. I'm a grandpa. But of course we're not yet. But. I guess in about. Nine months. Close to it.

[11:24] And. Right now. I'm probably in big trouble. My son's going to say. Dad. Why did you do that? Well I couldn't help it.

It was a wonderful Christmas. Tremendous. Christmas. And now it's over. Christmas is over. Isn't it? Pretty much.

And so now what? That's the question. That I want you to ponder. Here. And I have some answers for you. What now? What do we do now?

What does God. Want to say to us. Now. We know the message. At Christmas. I mean I've been preaching it. And we know it well. But what about the message.

After Christmas. Can we find that out? I think we can. And I think we can discover that. From some of the key characters. Of the Christmas story itself.

[12:22] Because the Bible. Though it gives us. Scattered information. About the immediate days. After the birth of Christ. And we have big gaps. Years. Of silence.

That we just don't know anything about. And yet it does give us. Some tidbit information. Comes to us. Through the. Kind of. Through the lives. Of the major characters.

Of the Christmas story. And we can learn something. About. What now? Towards the days. After Christmas. And so. What now? Let's consider.

First of all. The shepherds. You know. Who they were. Don't you? They were just shepherds. Just common shepherds. They. You know.

Were. Earthy. Kind of people. And. Kept. Watch over their flocks. And. They had a very. Hard life. In fact. In their culture. They were considered.

[13:17] Way at the bottom. Of the. The social. Kind of. Status. For the day. They were just. Common shepherds. So. We know. Who they were.

But. What did they experience. During the biggest day. Of their lives. That is. These particular shepherds. We don't know. How many there were. What did they. Experience. On that. Big day. Well. Just. Simply. A face-to-face. Encounter. With one of God's. Mighty angels. What an experience. That would have been. And not only that.

But they also. Experienced. The very. The very first. Direct. Message. From God. Concerning. His gift. Of salvation. To the world. Just that.

After. 400 years. Of silence. They experienced. The very first. Christmas. Cantata. Jonathan. That night.

[14:12] As they heard. The heavenly host. Choir sing. I don't care. What the Bible says. The Bible. Angels. Said. I think. They sang. Okay. They experienced.

That. And they were also. The first. Humans. Outside. Mary and Joseph. To look. Down. Into the very. Face. Of God.

Their Messiah. They looked. Into the very. Face of Jesus. What a. Mountaintop. Experience. I mean. What an. Incredible. Christmas. They had.

And then. What? They went home. Didn't they? That is. They went back.

To their daily work. As shepherds. A pretty hard life. By the way. They went back. There. And the Bible says. In Luke chapter 2. Verse 20. And the shepherds. Returned. That's not all.

[15:08] It said about them. Because you see. Something had. Dramatically changed. In their lives. Didn't it? Something. Forever. Changed. In.

These. Shepherds. Outlook. On life. And eternity. They had. Had an encounter. With Jesus. Albeit. In the form. Of a baby. They had.

Had an encounter. With the Messiah. And so. Don't miss. This part. Of the Christmas story.

Because it is. What comes. After Christmas. By the way. That is most important.

Luke chapter 2. Verse 17. You have Luke chapter 2. Opened. Hopefully. You still have that open. Your Bible's open to it. Luke chapter 2. And verse 17. The Bible says.

Now. When they had seen him. They made widely known. That's how my translation puts it. Widely known.

[16:10] The saying. Which was told them. Concerning this child. And what was told them. Concerning this child. They said. For unto you.

Is born. This day. In the city of David. A. Savior. They made widely known.

The saying. Which was told them. Concerning this child. And all those who heard it. Marveled. At those things. Which were told them. By the shepherds. I do.

This is an amazing part. Of the story. That we don't really consider. Very often. As often. As we ought to. T'was the days. After Christmas. See. The most important thing. And these shepherds. Everywhere they went. They made widely known. All that was said to them. By the angel. And we know what the angel. Told them.

[17:05] And all those who heard it. From these shepherds. They wondered at it. They marveled at it. Verse 20. Then the shepherds returned. Glorifying and praising God.

For all the things. That they had. Two things. Both heard. And seen. As it was told them. See. Incredible.

The shepherds. Witness. Of. The Savior. That's the first thing. We need. To know.

About the days. After Christmas. The shepherds. Witness. Of. The Savior. T'was. The days. After Christmas. And all. Through the world.

The message. Of salvation. Is. Of. In Jesus. Is. Being. Proclaimed. To the whole. World. To all. People. And that's. Exactly. What. We must.

[18:01] Be. Involved. On the days. After Christmas. Secondly. Let's consider. The wise men. Pretty.

Major. Players. In the Christmas. Story. Luke. Does not. Mention. Them. Matthew. Does. Who were. They. Well. We don't. Really. Know.

For sure. In the Greek. Text. They are. Called. The. Magios. The. Magi. Or. Magi. We get. Our word. Magician. From that. Word. Though. I don't. Think. They were. Magician. Or. Sorcerers. As. Some. Have. Thought. They. Most.

Likely. Were. Astrologers. Or. Astronomers. Because. They. Were. Looking. For. Stars. One. They.

[18:53] Were. Apparently. Very. Wealthy. They. Brought. Extravagant. Gifts. Gold. And. Frankincense. And. Myrrh. They. Brought. To the baby. Jesus. Expensive. Gifts. Though.

They. Were. Kingly. Gifts. It's. Not. Likely. That. They. Were. King. The. Him. We. Three. Kings. Not. Withstanding. So.

Who. Were. They. Well. I. Don't. Know. But. What's. Important. Is. What. Did. They. Experience. On. The. Biggest. Day. Of. Their. Lives. What. Did. They. Experience.

Well. They. Experienced. The. Star. There. In. The. East. That. Again. Moved. And. Led. Them. And. They. Follow. That. Star. See. These. Wise. Men. Were. Followers.

And. There. In. Bethlehem. They. Also. Experienced. An.

[19:47] Encounter. With. Herod. The. Christ. Hater. We. Experience. A. Little. Bit. Of. Herod. Every. Christmas. Don't. We. Those.

Who. Want. To. Stop. The. Life. Of. Christ. In. Christmas. They. Experienced. That. And. They. Experienced. The. Visit. To. The. House. There. In. Bethlehem. Where. Mary. And. Joseph. And. Jesus. Were.

Staying. While. They. Were. There. In. The. In. The. Town. And. They. Look. Just. Like. The. Shepherds. They. Were. Able. And. Allowed. To. Look. Into. The. Very. Face. Of. God.

The. Savior. The. Lord. Jesus. Christ. And. They. Opened. Up. Their. Treasures. And. They. Gave. Gifts. And. They. Worship. What?

They. Went. Home. Didn't. They. That's. What. The. Bible. Says. They. Made. The. Arduous. Long. Arduous.

[20:50] Journey. Back. To. Their. Country. Wherever. It. Really. Was. And. They. Continued. On. With. Their. Life. Whatever. Kind. Of. Life. It. May. Have. Been. The. Bible. Says. In. Matthew. Chapter. Two.

Verse. Twelve. They. Departed. Into. Their. Own. Country. They. Went. Home. But. Something. Happened. On. The. Way. That.

I. Think. Is. Instructional. For. Us. Don't. Don't. Miss. This. Part. Of. The. Christmas. Story. It's. What. Comes. After. Christmas. That. Is. Most. Important. Because. You. See. God.

Redirected. Their. Path. You. Remember. That. Part. Of. Story. When. They. Came. To. Jerusalem.
The. First. Time. And. They. Inquired. Of. Where. Jesus. Would. Be. Born. This.
New. King. Would. Be. Born. And. They. Had. Contact. With. Herod. Of. Course. The. Christ. Hater.
And. Herod. Lied. To. Them. And. Said. When. You. Find. Him. Bring. Word. Back. To. Me. So.
[21:43] That. I. May. Worship. Him. To. Well. God. Had. Warned. Them. Not. To. Go. Back. To.
Herod. And. So. He. Led. Them. In. A. Different. Direction.

Matthew. 12. Is. Where. We. Read. About. That. Matthew. 2. Rather. And. Verse. 12. The.
Bible. Says. Then. Being. Divinely. Warned. In. A. Dream. That. They. Should. Not. Return. To.
Herod. They. Departed. For. Their. Own. Country. Another. Way.
Another. Way. Now. What's. The. Lesson. Here. See. I believe. With. The. Shepherds. We. Have.
This. Lesson. For. Us. For. The. Days. After. Christmas. That. The. Shepherds.
Witnessed. Of. The. Savior. The. Wise. Men. We. Have. The. Wise. Men. Willing. To.
[22:39] Be. Led. By. God. Was. The. Days. After. Christmas. And. In. The. World. Of. Christian.
Life. God.

Leads. Doesn't. And. He. Guides. And. He. Redirects. Sometimes. We. Don't. Understand. Those.
Redirections. Sometimes.
We. Question. Them. But. He. Guides. And. He. Leads. And. He. Redirects. And. He. Does. So. To.
Preserve. His. Purposes. And.
To. Ultimately. To. Advance. His. Kingdom. Into. All. The. World. And. The. Wise. Men. Were.
Willing. To.
Follow. His. Lead. It. Was. The. Day. After. Let's. Look. At. Another. How. About. Mary. Certainly.
[23:36] A. Key. Character. In. The. Story. Who. Was. She. She. Was. The. Mother. Of. Jesus. Of.
Course. She.

Was. A. Jewish. Girl. Of. The. Tribe. Of. Judah. Of. The. Lineage. House. And. Lineage. Of. David.
She.
Was. Common. Most. Like. Poor. Pensive. Girl. Lived. I'm sure. A. Pretty.
Hard. Life. That's. Who. She. Was. As. We. Know. We. Don't. Know. A. Lot. About. Her. But. We.
Do. Know. Something. About. What. She. Experienced. On. Her. First.
Christmas. Where. Do. We. Begin. Well. I. Guess. We. Begin. Where. It. Began. With. Her. The.
Visit. From. The. Archangel. Gabriel. I. Mean. What. Would. That. Be. Like. To.
[24:30] Have. A. Face. To. Face. Not. Only. Encounter. But. Conversation. With. An. Archangel.
And. She. Also. Experienced.

The. News. That. He. Had. For. Her. That. She. Would. Be. With. Child. That. She. Was. Going.
Have. A. Baby. And. The. Baby. Would. Be. Conceived. Of. The. The.
Holiest. Of. Children. The. Very. Son. Of. God. She. Experienced. The. Journey. To. Bethlehem.
Which. Was. Not. So. Good. I'm. Sure. Being.
Pregnant. She. Experienced. Giving. Birth. To. The. Son. Of. God. Which. I'm. Sure. Was. Not.
Easy. I've. Never. Had. A. Baby. I.
Know. It. Would. Not. Be. Easy. And. Especially. Surroundings. She.
[25:31] Was. Having. The. Very. Son. Of. God. Messiah. The. Savior. And. She. Experienced.
That. She. Experienced. The. Visit. From. The. Shepherds. She. Experienced. The. Visit. From.
The. Wise. Men.

She. Experienced. The. Journey. Into. Egypt. To. Protect. The. Child. From. Herod. And. To. And.
She. Also. Experienced. The. Journey. Back. From. What.
An. Incredible. Christmas. She. Had. What. A. Mountaintop. Experience. And. After. That. What.
She. Went. Home. She. And. Joseph. And. Her. Son. Jesus. The. Little. Baby. Jesus. Went. Home.
To.
Nazareth. And. She. Carried. On. Her. Life. As. A. Mother. And. As. The. Wife. Of. A. Carpenter.
Which. I'm. Sure. Was. Not. An. Easy. Life. Matthew. Chapter. 2. Verse. 23. Says. And. They. They.
[26:30] Came. And. Dwelt. In. The. City. Called. Nazareth. They. Went. Home. But. Something.
Of. Of. Course. Forever. Changed. In. Her. Life. Something.

That. We. Could. Learn. Luke. Chapter. 2. In. Verse. 19. The. Bible.
Says. But. Mary. Kept. Better translation would be treasured. Treasured all these things and
pondered them in her heart.

The word means that she rehearsed it over and over and over again. In fact she not only rehearsed it but she conversed the story.

Conversed the story with others. In fact why do you think Luke has such a detailed. Has all the details of the story. It was not there.

[27 : 30] He learned it from Mary. But the important thing is that she pondered. That is she treasured it. She treasured it. And rehearsed it.

Over and over and over and over again. In fact it says it again. Luke says it again in verse 51. And I read that a moment ago. But his mother that is Mary. Kept.

Or treasured. Again treasured all these things. In her heart. And it's. And it carries with it the idea of wonder. And.

Worship. That's what we're to understand. You see. The shepherds. Witnessed. To the Savior. The wise men.

Were willing. To follow God's lead. They followed the star. On that Christmas day. And they followed his lead.

[28 : 31] As he redirected them. And Mary. And Mary. And. And. Worshipped. Worshipped. Because of what. God. Had done. In her life.

In her undeserving. There was no way. That she could ever. Ever. Come to the conclusion. That she deserved this.

In her life. The humble. Handmaiden of the Lord. As she sang to him. In her magnificat. And. She wondered at these things.

Keep. Continuing. Rehearsing it. Over and over. And over. In her mind. And. Conversing. With others. About what had happened. In her life. And she. Treasured all of that.

And. And. We too. I'm just about. What happened. On that. First Christmas day. But the significance.

[29 : 30] Of that. In our lives. And in our eternity. Because we are also. Undeserving. Undeserving. Of our salvation. Mary.

Wondered. And. Worshipped. At all. That God. Had done. In her life. Twas the days. After Christmas. And in every. Christmas heart. The true meaning. And spirit. Of Christmas.

Is always alive. And it. It is never. To be forgotten. Never to be. Unforgotten. And the shine. Of it. Should never dull. In our hearts.

And in our lives. Over what God. Has done. Let's consider. One more. How about Jesus?

Was he. A major character. In the Christmas story. Of course. How about Jesus? Well you know. Who he was. Yes. Right.

[30 : 30] But what about his experience. On that day. That very first Christmas. Well. That's a mystery. And it really is a mystery. Of the Godhead.

We can't delve into that. The Bible. Does not make us privy. Of what. Jesus experienced. And not only that. From a. A purely. Biological. Aspect.

We. We cannot. Know. The experiences. Of a baby. At birth. Now I was there. When I was born. But I don't remember. A thing about it. Do you?

So we don't know. About his experiences. But. But. After. After the incredible story. Of his birth. What? What happened then? Well a whole lot happened then.

Did it? But in the immediate days. What about that? Well. Just. These words. Describe the day. After Christmas. For Jesus.

[31 : 29] Or the days after. In Luke. Chapter 2. And I read part of this. But I want to start with. Verse 49. This of course.

Is 12 years after. And you remember the story. Just to. Kind of give the context. Jesus. Was in the temple.

Mary and Joseph. And. Their caravan. I guess. Left Jerusalem. And it was. Sometime after. That they noticed. That Jesus. Was not with them. Their son.

Which is difficult. For us to understand. But there might be. An explanation for that. But he was not there. With them. And so. Had to go back. And there they found him. In the temple. Again. Having scholarly.

Talks. With the. With the. The educated. Jews of the day. And. And so. You know. Here they find him. And what are you doing here? And he says. In verse 49.

[32 : 27] To them. His parents. Why did you seek me? Did you not know. That I must be. About my father's. Business. About my father's.

Work. But they did not understand. The statement. Which he spoke to them. Then. He went down with them. And came to Nazareth. And was subject to them.

But his mother. Kept all these things. In her heart. And Jesus. Increased in wisdom. And stature. And in favor. With God. And men. But the key. Phrase. The key thing.

I want you to see here. Is what Jesus said. I must be. About my father's. Business. And so. That kind of completes. It doesn't. Jesus.

Worked. The works. Of the father. And then we. Can read all the way through. The gospel of Luke.

[33 : 26] And we can go back to Matthew. And read. The gospel of Matthew. And Mark. And also John. And we can read about. All of the works. And the ultimate work. He had come to do.

That is the work of redemption. So that. You and I could be saved. But I suggest to you. The close of this.

Message. That. We too are to be working. Working. That is the idea. The shepherds. Witness. Of the Savior. We have the wise men. Willingness. To be led. By God. We have Mary's. Wonder. She never got over it.

Her wonder. And worship. And all that God. Had done. For her. And in her. And then we have. Jesus working. The works. Of the Father. The Father's works.

[34 : 22] Of redemption. And isn't it amazing. That God. Would want us to be a part of that. Be a part of that.

It was. The days. After. Christmas. Thank you.