

Advent 2021 - Christmas Sunday
The Slow but Sure Plan of God.
Luke 2:21-40
Dec. 26th, 2021

I. A life ROOTED in OBEDIENCE. (v.21-40)

- A. A NAME filled with MEANING. (v.21; 1:31)**
- B. Every act in ACCORDANCE with the LAW. (v.21-24,39)**

Luke wants us to be clear on one thing. Jesus' life was rooted in obedience even before He was old enough to decide to obey. The Law of God is mentioned 5 times in our text today. In the rest of the book Luke only uses that term 4 more times. He's putting the emphasis on Jesus obedience to the law, even as a baby.

1. Kid's Question: What does your name mean? Why did your parents choose that name for you?
2. How important do we find the "law" of God to be? What is the law's role in your life today?

II. A mission AFFIRMED by OTHERS. (v.25-38)

- A. WHAT Jesus will BE. (v.30-31)**
- B. WHO Jesus will be FOR. (V.32)**
- C. ENCOURAGING yet DIFFICULT words. (v.34-35)**

As is often the case, God sends others into our lives to help us remember and discern the calling He has for us. At times their words are life giving, and at times they strike us with fear. But they remind us of the fact that we are God's and not our own, and our calling is in His hands.

3. What does salvation mean to you? How would you describe it to someone who is outside the church?
4. Saying "Jews" and "Gentiles" was like saying insiders and outsiders. Who are the outsiders that "Jesus will be for" today? How does that impact your life?
5. When has what God had planned for you been difficult or painful? What has come out of that experience?

III. The WORK of CHRISTMAS. (Gal 4:19)

- A. REFLECTING the light of REVELATION. (v.32; 2 Cor. 2:14)**
- B. The two SIDES of SALVATION. (v.34-35; 2 Cor. 2:15-16)**
- C. The WEIGHT of standing in the MIDDLE. (v.35; 2 Cor. 4:8-11)**
- D. The SLOW but SURE plan of God. (v.25,38; 2 Peter 3:9; Rev. 21:5)**

We've spent 4 weeks building up to Christmas, preparing our hearts to celebrate the gift we have been given. Now the real work begins. Our whole lives are to be a re-communication of the truth of what God is up to in our world. Jesus is still coming to us and through us. That's the work that Christmas has begun.

6. When have you felt "the weight of standing in the middle"? How can you do that with grace and mercy toward those around you?
7. What does it look like to reflect the light of revelation in your own day to day life? What are some practical ways to do that?
8. What helps you to hold on to the "sure" of God's plan in the middle of the "slow"?

The Work of Christmas

When the song of the angels is stilled,
When the star in the sky is gone,
When the kings and princes are home,
When the shepherds are back with their flock,
The work of Christmas begins:
 To find the lost,
 To heal the broken,
 To feed the hungry,
 To release the prisoner,
 To rebuild the nations,
To bring peace among others,
To make music in the heart.

— Howard Thurman