



Paradise Lost ... The Need for Christmas

NorthRidge Church

Dr. M. David Myers

December 9, 2018

When I consider your heavens, the work of your fingers, the moon and the stars, which you have set in place, what is mankind that you are mindful of them, human beings that you care for them? Psalm 8:3-4 (cp. Heb. 2:5-13)

Our Journey in Psalms has reminded us that mankind struggles in this life. It is not only our generation that struggles with loss of perspective, lack of forgiveness, the weight of the world on our shoulders, nor even the depths of depression. Yet, we return to where we began. Psalm 8 declares that God has created us in His image and graciously crowned us with glory and majesty. Yet, our existence here is far less than glorious. Our destiny has been marred. The writer of Hebrews uses Psalm 8 to remind us that Christ came to resolve this dilemma. Yet, if Christ remains only an event we celebrate in December, we shall never find hope in this life nor in the life to come.

The Need for Christmas – Hebrews 2:5-13

1) God's Plan for _____ – vs. 5-8a

a. Destined for _____

b. Destroyed by _____

2) The Gift of _____ – vs. 9-13

a. Made _____ Possible

b. Birthed us into a _____

Closing Thoughts ...

Be Encouraged ... What God did for _____, He has not done for the _____.

As long as You are the center of Your Life ... “_____ and _____” ... will always be a Probability.

Don't lose sight of the distinction between the “_____” and the “_____.”

Truth for Life

For the week of December 9, 2018

(Questions and Scriptures for further study)

1. What was your greatest memory of Christmas? What made it so great? How did you celebrate it? How long did the greatness last? What brought it to an end?
2. As a result of sin, God's plan for mankind was marred ... both in this life and potentially in the life to come. The topic of judgment can be uncomfortable or confusing to many people. How does the Bible describe the reality and consequences of judgment in each of the following verses?

Ephesians 5:6

Matthew 25:41

Ezekiel 7:8

Revelation 14:9-12

If God forgives us as followers of Jesus, why might it be important to keep in mind God's wrath and judgment?

3. In the gift of Christmas, we realize that Jesus' life, death and resurrection satisfies God's wrath against us. He then takes us, flaws and all, and gives us a new identity. This truth impacts everyone differently but can be hard to embrace if you feel undeserving. How do Paul's words to the Colossians describe a person's new identity in Christ as a Jesus follower?
Colossians 1:13-14 Colossians 1:21-22 Colossians 2:9-14
4. Consider the Closing Thoughts from Sunday. Which of these catch your attention? Why? How is God desiring to use that in your life?
5. Here are some more challenging questions that will be great to ponder among your small group.
 - a. How, practically, can we keep our focus on our eternal destiny in the midst of life's problems?
 - b. Sometimes Psalm 8 is used to teach the unbiblical concept of “self-esteem.” Read back through Psalm 8 and discuss whether David's effort here was to glorify himself or God? Is it proper to have a sense of significance as those created in God's image?
 - c. To what extent do the effects of the fall remain in believers? To what extent are these effects removed?
 - d. Is the Christian life just “pie in the sky when you die”? To what extent should we experience the abundant life now? What exactly does that mean?



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The Need for Christmas – Hebrews 2:5-13

1) God's Plan for Man – vs. 5-8a

a. Destined for Greatness

b. Destroyed by Sin

2) The Gift of Christmas – vs. 9-13

a. Made Restoration Possible

b. Birthed us into a New Family

Closing Thoughts ...

Be Encouraged ... What God did for You, He has not done for the Angels.

As long as You are the center of Your Life ... "Gloom, Despair, and Agony" ... will always be a Probability.

Don't lose sight of the distinction between the "Now" and the "Not Yet."

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