

Luke 1

Your sin runs deep. It runs to the bone. It permeates your being. The filth upon you is palpable and disgusting. In your natural man, you are detestable, deplorable and dejected. Try and cleanse yourself and you bring folly and ruin. Try and save yourself and you end up in hell. There is no salvation for you in your own works. There is no peace in your works. Where do you leperous turn too? Where can you look to for salvation? You cannot. How do you look for something when you are blind? How can you search when you have no life in you. You are dead. There is no hope for you.

This is terror, this is darkness, this is hell.

This is what you face this is what the Israelites faced, this is what humanity faces. However, God did not leave us to our condemnation. Thank God that this is not where it ends! Just as Christ came to Adam and Eve in the cool of the garden and sacrificed the animal to clothe them, just as God delivered the ram in the thicket to Abraham to be the sacrifice instead of Isaac, just as Christ came to Moses in the burning bush, just as Christ came to Jacob and wrestled with him. Christ comes to us. He leaves the company of heaven, He leaves the songs and adoration of the angels to come to this dark silent planet. He comes to the very place that hates Him and wants His destruction. He comes to the place of the walking dead and demon possessed.

Christ comes back and in Him is light and life. He illuminates the darkness, and breathes the breath of life into the dead. God promised this to humanity when he came to Adam and Eve, and the generations since then have hoped in this. Eve's Seed is the only thing you can hope in. This is what Elizabeth and Zechariah hoped in. This is what Mary and Joseph hoped in. They understood that they could bring nothing to the table. Yet, God came these unworthy people and had promised Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob a Savior. He promised the world a Savior.

In the Gospel reading the promise is fulfilled. The Word becomes incarnate. In Luke, the verses right before this is when the Holy Spirit overshadowed Mary. In today's verses Christ is here, He is with us. He is in Mary's womb. Flesh and blood, skin and bone. The Savior that has been promised since the fall is now here and at the same time not yet.

God is coming! Blessed is the fruit of Mary's Womb. Come Lord Jesus! His Word has gone forth and called you to repent. Sweet relief is here. He is the way to remove the filth, He is the breath to revive the dead soul. Deplorable, detestable, dejected you no longer are. He took those titles on. He took on the yoke of sin, He bore humanities' hatred of God, He took on death and the devil so that He could bring us salvation. He could bring us Himself Immanuel God with us. Hope is truly alive. This is why Mary proclaims My soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior. He is here and not yet. The Savior is coming. Jesus has come to die on the cross. To face the wrath of God, to face the reckoning you could not. This is a time of excitement and great anticipation. A time of elation that the bonds are about to be loosed. The chains are about to be broken.

Mary, the first sinner to receive Christ in the flesh, to receive her Savior within her being is blessed. Generations will continue to mention her because she was chosen. The mother of God blessed among women. Not because of her honor or her dignity or her righteousness. She had none of that. She is blessed because God chose her to carry Jesus. He overshadowed her and is within her. Generation after generation will call her blessed. Not because of what she had done, but what God accomplished through her. This is the turning point of humanity. God has come to redeem His creation. He came to right the wrongs humanity has done. Mary is front and center in the fulfilled promise. Jesus, Mary's son, the 2nd person of the Trinity, will die and rise from the dead. This was her Savior, this was God growing in her belly, this was the Lamb that would be sacrificed so that God would passover us.

You all are on the other side of this Gospel. Christ came, died and rose from the dead. He was slain and rose again. God comes to you also. You too receive Christ. The Holy Spirit has

overshadowed you in your baptism with water and the Word. He comes to you because he knows your condition. You are not the first, nor will be the last, but he has chosen you as well. You are His children. He has made you blessed by His all availing sacrifice. He enters you with His flesh and blood through the Lord's Supper. He is here now and not yet. He has joined Himself to you. He has suffered your suffering's. He has faced and been there through your trials and temptations. He has taken your sin from you, and paid for it on the cross. He has given you life in His resurrection. You have been made new. You have been given a new name. He is with you and not yet here.

However, the devil wants you to stay in that despair. He wants you to remember your sin. He wants you to see yourself as you were before you were baptized. He wants you to abandon God because you feel like you don't deserve it. He wants you to forget God's promises and lead you away in mourning.

Do not be afraid! Stop being afraid!

You have a sure and certain hope. You are God's elect. You have Christ. He has exalted those of humble estate, He has fed the hungry, He has shown strength with His arm. For the sound of His greeting makes us jump for joy! The bonds of this world are about to be loosed, the chains of this old man are about to be broken. He is with you now, and yet we will be seeing Him in the flesh soon. Look with great anticipation and the excitement of the present you have and are about to receive. You have been healed. You have been brought into the body of Christ. He has given you joy, He has given you light, He has given you heaven. Rejoice in the now and not yet! Rejoice in your coming Savior!

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