



Remembering the Forgotten

A Christmas Message



“It’s the most wonderful time of the year...” For many of us, this well-known refrain succinctly captures our sentiments during this holiday season. We delight in giving and receiving gifts, hopefully remembering that our giving is rooted in God’s marvelous gifts to us.

However, the original socio-historical context for the Christmas story was far less characterized by jubilation and excitement and much more shrouded in resignation and despair. The long-anticipated promises of God failed to materialize year after year. Despotism ruled the landscape. Had God forgotten his commitments to the world he created? Worse yet, was God’s power no longer effective? Against this backdrop, we hear the good news proclaimed in the birth narratives of Matthew and Luke.

Luke articulates a key element I love most about this time of year. Luke powerfully reminds us that God entered our world not among the mighty and influential, but among those often forgotten by society! Luke’s story engagingly introduces us to those in our society often ignored: Mary, Joseph, Zechariah, Elizabeth, Simeon, Anna, and most tellingly, the nameless shepherds. For me, this is a time of year to reflect on how I might best “remember” those regularly forgotten in our society and communities. For some, this time of year painfully reminds them of their status as outsiders, disadvantaged, disenfranchised, and have-nots. They may wonder if God has forgotten them.

As we celebrate this “wonderful time of the year,” may we remember those often forgotten in our community. May we acknowledge through our actions that God “remembered” us when we felt forgotten. May we live our lives in such a way that the declaration, “Joy to the World, the Lord has come” rings true!

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And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.”

Luke 2:8-10