

[Pastor John Lawley]

Father,

We thank you for this morning. Thank you for everyone that's here. Lord, we pray for those that are sick and that You would bring your hand of healing upon them.

Lord, I pray right now in the midst of this series, in midst of this season, that You would be glorified in all things including this message. So Lord, I pray that You would use my words as a man to penetrate the hearts and the soul of other people. Lord, I pray that your Spirit would use it. Lord, without You there's no power, and without your truth and without your Spirit. So Lord, we pray that You would make an impact and You would convict some in this room that need conviction; that You would bring about new life for those souls that are slaved.

Lord, I pray that You would also be glorified in our words and in our praise. So we lift this up to You and we ask that You would lead and guide us.

In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen. Amen.

Well, if you don't know, my name is Pastor John, I'm one of the pastors here and I'm privileged to teaching you the Word of God this morning. If you have your Bibles open, if you want to take notes we're gonna be kind of all over the place but mostly in Isaiah, so you can kind of get into Isaiah and float around there and you'll be quick to go to the passage I'm talking about. Just for those that were with us last week as we started our new series called THE KING HAS COME, Pastor Lee talked about, uh, really the nativity scene. He talked about the Magi, the kings, and really their journey to Jesus and how we find that they kind of saw a star and it took about a year and a half before they got to Jesus. And when they got to him they kind of fell to their face in worship, and they fell to this posture of surrender. And they recognized who Jesus was as King and His truth, as Pastor Lee really profoundly talked about last week which is there's only one king and there can only be one king.



So there's this beautiful picture we talked about last week of these kings, these earthly kings, these Magi's, that really fell before the King of kings with all of their possessions and all of their powers, that basically held up to be nothing when they saw the Messiah come. And so in light of that, I kind of had a couple of thoughts leading into this sermon. One is the anticipation. Can you imagine being a year and a half following a star to see a baby, a child? Like, first of all, that's kind of, that's patience, but can you imagine when you actually got there how much you probably I talked about it, you know, around the fire on the way there and just what it would be like, what the experience would be like, just the anticipation of that?

It got me thinking about anticipation in general and, like, how many of you—be honest, you can even raise your hand because it's not an embarrassing question—how many of you decorated before Thanksgiving for Christmas? Don't lie. Okay. All right. Guilty. All right, I did, too. I did, too. Now, so here's the trick, don't decorate outside because then that's, like, expose, like, your neighbors. Decorate inside and then outside after Thanksgiving so you look normal. Right? That's the game plan

for me. And so I love the season, I get it, but let me just talk about a couple things. So one is anticipation in general. How many of you kind of get caught up in the TV commercial version of like Thanksgiving where you have like the perfect table with all, the turkey's not burnt and everything looking good, and you have your family gather around the table, and in your mind leading up to Thanksgiving you have this, like, anticipation for what it should look like and how it should feel, how it should smell, and then reality came. Right? Kids were fighting, Thanksgiving came and went like that, and you had all these dishes that you had to wash and it wasn't in the commercial and you're like, "How dare you!" Right?

Or like how many of you, honest, anticipating Christmas—you're anticipating these moments that you have in your head of what should happen but what happens usually is what? It doesn't really meet our expectations. Like, how many of you anticipate Christmas morning and that all of your children won't fight with each other? I certainly anticipate that only to be reminded that that is nonsense, [Laughter] but I want these feelings. Right? There's this kind of feelings a part of this season and you want those



2020 Lexus Merry Christmas!

feelings, you want those moments. You see these things on commercials and TVs, and somebody's gonna get a Lexus. Right? [Laughter] Like, some—I'm not getting a Lexus, but somebody's getting a Lexus. I personally always think how cool would it be to get a Lexus? But that's just not in my range, I work for Jesus, that's below my range, and this is the thing. Like, I know somebody's getting a Lexus, somebody's going to Jared's apparently [Laughter] often, and this is kind of how we're pushed all this stuff. And we kind of, we don't think we do, but we consume it and we want to anticipate.

But here's the thing, I believe that most frustrations are birthed from unmet expectations. And I believe that as Christians we are to expect and anticipate things differently than the world when it comes to this season, we should.

And so here's my goal with the message. One is to kind of make fun of some of those things that we love but we also get frustrated with; with all these expectations of what things should be like. Like, I got another one—how dare, like, if we never had candlelight on Christmas Eve, what kind of enemies would we create? Right? There are these things that we just love, and I love them, too, but it's just funny how we do that. Right? We make it about anything but, but here's what I want to do. Two things, one is I want to look back on some Old Testament prophecy and look at who the King is, who He was, who He is, because He's alive. Amen? What does the Old Testament prophecy say about this King in Isaiah? What is He gonna be like? What is He gonna do? So we want to look back to remember why we're celebrating this season, what the season's actually about. And also, I want to look forward a little bit and redeem anticipation because as believers we have something that we can long for that's coming that we can anticipate that will not let us down. Amen? The coming back of the King, and so that's what I want to do, I want to talk about those two things together.

But in the midst of that I do, I do believe that most of our frustrations are really a result of unmet expectations. Like, I think that's true with holidays. I think that's true with relationships. I think that's true in your workplace. How many of you in college anticipate that you will have this job that's perfect,

with the office that's perfect, with a boss that's perfect? Guess what? Not gonna happen. How many of you expect as young college kids that you're gonna have a spouse that's perfect. OH! I'm just gonna tell you that's

Most of our frustrations are really a result of unmet expectations

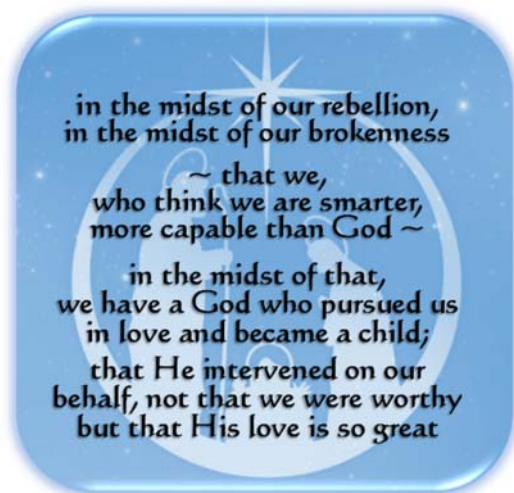
not gonna happen. How many of you expect to have a son? I'm going to tell you with four daughters [Laughter] maybe not. But I love them, I love them, and I appreciate of them. But here's the thing is our frustrations are often birthed out of unmet expectations, and if we do that enough we find that we attach God to those expectations. We do. We think that God let us down. If those things that we don't want happen do happen, or worst of all, the enemy tries to use your unmet expectations to say it's actually your fault. You're not good enough to be loved the way you think you should be loved. You're not a good enough parent, that's why your kids are acting that way. And so the enemy attacks us in our expectations. Doesn't he? Even though they're not God's expectations of us, they're ours.

And so here's what the reality is, is when we build up anticipation for the holiday season what I don't want to have happen is for us to anticipate things that isn't what it's about, because what it's about is far greater than the presents or the moments. It's greater than, the story is greater than those moments and the King, who's alive today seated on the right hand of God, came for a greater reason than to have a couple moments fleeting with our families.

And so why we call it THE KING HAS COME, why we want to call the series THE KING HAS COME, is a couple of things. One is that when we look at this we want to point out something; that there is obviously brokenness in our world. The Bible tells us very clearly that we have a severed relationship with the Lord from The Fall, and you are by nature sinful and you are in a sinful, broken world. So what we understand is this: That we are in a broken world—broken government, broken political system, broken families, broken relationships. We are surrounded by brokenness. Why? Because we have sinned and separated ourselves from God. You would have to be a blind fool not to see that. If you think that mankind are good, just study the history of mankind. And so what we need to understand is, as is culture, we pretend that there is a lot of great things happening, but truth, there's a lot of darkness in our world. And a lot of us are really good at hiding it—Right?—and staying in our houses.



But there's a brokenness in this world which matters when we talk about the season, because this season we're talking about the fact that in the midst of our rebellion, in the midst of our brokenness that we who think we are smarter, more capable than God, in the midst of that we have a God who pursued us in love and became a child; that He intervened on our behalf, not that we were worthy but that His love is so great that He came for us and for His glory. But that's the story that we are celebrating. So regardless of how you feel—you see, feelings oftentimes in our culture are confused as truth, but they're not—regardless of how you feel the Bible is going to tell us here, and I'm going to dive into it, that from the very moment that God begins to pursue us He has a plan to save the world; in the very moment of our rebellion God has a plan. I'm gonna show you that in Genesis Chapter 3.



So turn to Genesis 3, I want you to notice something that sometimes we often miss in Genesis Chapter 3. I'm gonna pick it up in Genesis Chapter 3, verse 15. But Adam and Eve believed that they could make a better god than God, and so

in that despite His goodness, despite His grace towards them, they chose to sin and that fractures their

relationship with God. And God brings about His judgment and this is what we're about to read, He brings about the judgment on the world. And He says this:

15 I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your offspring and her offspring, he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

~ GENESIS 3:15

So I want to stop there. What you just saw there was the first Messianic promise. The first prophecy—stop, think about this, from the moment sin entered the world God says, “I have a plan and it's to rescue you.” I want you to see the heart of God here. That in the midst of our rebellion God says I have a plan to rescue you back [*snaps his fingers*], right after. It's a powerful truth that we see right in the beginning of Scripture that God has a plan to destroy the devil, to redeem us for His glory right then. It's an amazing thing.

Look with me in Isaiah Chapter 7, verses 14-15, look at what the Word says here as the prophet Isaiah speaks of this King to come, he says:

14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. 15 He shall eat curds and honey when he knows how to refuse the evil and choose the good.

~ ISAIAH 7:14-15

So how does the King come? How does this plan come out? We see that God has a plan, He talks about it in Genesis 3. How does this plan roll out? Well, we just get two things here from Isaiah to start with. One is this, that there will be a sign, that there will be this miraculous sign, and the sign is that there will be a woman who is not with man who will give birth; the virgin is the miraculous sign. And that the Son will come and He will not be of man, that's the miracle, that's the sign.

And then we see the second thing here and we often miss this, that He shall eat curds and honey—what does that mean? Why is that important? It says that this King will know poverty, that this King will have the diet of the peasants, this is what the peasants ate, and so He will be of poverty. That He will not come as an earthly king, that He will come from a virgin and he will know poverty, these are two promises of what this King will be like. How is God going to rescue the world? He will be born of a virgin and He will be acquainted in poverty, we get that right there from Isaiah.

By the way, if you don't think Scripture is true, one of the greatest evidences, there's a lot of evidence, one of the greatest evidences we're reading a prophecy written before any of these events happened. I want you to think about this as we're talking about this, that Jesus fulfilled all of these things but at the time they're speaking of Jesus and He has not yet been here, and so this is a powerful truth. Prophecies in Scripture give great evidence, one is the validity of Scripture and also the promises of God. Amen? And so in this we see that this King will be born and He will be born in Bethlehem and He will be raised in Nazareth.

Nazareth, in my research, was only about 200 people. Like, take a moment, like, there's no town around here with like 200 people. So when Jesus is alive and He says, like, “Who am I?” and they're like, “We know You.” You know, that's because they had 200 people in their town and it was pretty hard to hide. And so in that background it says that there's a prophecy that's gonna happen and here's the prophecy: He's gonna be born of a woman, we talked about this; the King is gonna crush the head of Satan, we just saw that in Genesis 3; that He will bless all the families of the earth, that He will be in the line of the

people of Israel, the line of David. And here's the amazing thing about this King who's coming, He will be both prophet, priest, and king, and He's the only one that can claim all three.

Now, look at Isaiah Chapter 9 with me. He's gonna continue to talk about things but in Isaiah 9 we're gonna see a game-changer. Okay? Isaiah 9, Isaiah flips the script on what people thought this King would be and he made it a whole new level of awesome. Are you ready? Isaiah chapter 9, verses 2-7.

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.

³ You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as they are glad when they divide the spoil.

⁴ For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.

⁵ For every boot of the tramping warrior in battle tumult and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire.

— here it is —

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

~ ISAIAH 9:2-7

And so things to consider in this text as Isaiah is talking about this promise that God is going to rescue us, that He has a plan. Isaiah is going to flip the script here because he's going to talk about this Messiah and he's gonna say listen, He's not just gonna be born of a virgin, He's not just gonna be poor. He's gonna bear our sins, He's gonna bear our iniquities, but look at here—don't miss this, he says—He shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God. So what does Isaiah say here? He says this Savior, this Messiah, is going to be God Himself; that He is going to come down as a child to rescue us.

Jesus is not just a teacher, He's not just a prophet, He is greater than Mohammed, greater than Buddha, He is God as a child—stop and think about this with me. This just rocked me. He was a child. He was a baby while holding the universe together. That the God who created all things, sustains all things, became a child, became a baby—I have a newborn baby—surrendered all of that power in a sense of He became a helpless child and the Scripture is going to say that is an act of deep love, deep humility. That His nature never changed but He became a person because He loves you and only He could do what we celebrate He did. And so this Messiah was going to be God.



Why is this so important? It's because though this prophecy was available, they missed that. What they loved about this was they loved that He was going to become a King David. Man, we can't wait for this person to be born who's gonna take over Rome, who's gonna establish the Kingdom of God. They loved the fact that Jesus was supposed to be this powerful earthly king, but what they missed was that His Kingdom is not of this world, and that He didn't want to just offer us earthly kingdom which is gone

in a couple years; that He wanted to come to establish a kingdom that will never end, a peace that will never end. That He was greater than a prophet. He was God in flesh. Amen? That's our King. That's our King, and that is what Isaiah is speaking of. It's easy for us to see that now and say, "Oh, that's amazing." We get that, but at that time do you see how they missed that? And man, we sometimes miss it today. We think of Jesus in a manger and we're like, "Oh, what a cute baby." Can you imagine Mary knowing that this child is also the author of all that is? What an amazing powerful truth that is. And it's the God that we worship; that our God is radically in love with us to the point of humbling Himself in that way. That's a humble, humble, humble act of love. There's nothing less powerful than a child.

But I want to turn your attention to the beginning part because I wanted to bring some context to why I think the people when they heard that they were hoping for some earthly help. So in Galilee, the background of Galilee where they're talking, really northern Israel, there's this path that oftentimes was where these towns were located and when invading armies would come they would have options, like mountains, sea, or this kind of path. They would often come in the northern part of Israel. And so they would pass through these towns, these invading armies. So they would pass through these towns and they would rape and they would pillage and they would steal and women and children – Right? – had no chance in these environments. And so they would come through, these armies, and then if they lost they would turn around and they would go right back through and the only difference is now they're angry soldiers who were just defeated going back through that town, and that was what these towns knew. So if you lived there the only reason you lived there is because you couldn't live anywhere else. That's the type of poverty we're talking about and that's the type of darkness that we're talking about here.

Like, take a moment and think if there was no local police in your life and that was the reality, can you imagine the people and the scars that these people have? Like the depth of darkness that is their life and they hear that out of that darkness, the people of the darkness have seen a great life. They wanted Jesus to be helping them to be saved from this situation that they were around, and Jesus had compassion over the situation, but he spoke, Isaiah spoke, listen, what He's gonna bring you out of is greater than just this physical situation you're in. But in the midst of the darkness of the world this King is gonna come to save us not just of the world but to establish a kingdom and that's where our peace comes from. And so in the midst of their grief, we're gonna talk about this later, in the midst of their grief of their reality that this Savior was gonna give them something great for eternity. That He wasn't just gonna fix the flesh, He was gonna fix their souls, and that's just so much greater than the flesh.

So our King from the very beginning, the promise of this King was repeated throughout Scripture that He will crush the head of the enemy, That He will bless the families of the earth. That those who have a relationship with Him—it's not based on religious practice, it's based on the righteousness that He has given us through the cross—that He will bring about ultimate destruction of sin. And He will bring about a reign of peace; that He will be the new ruler of our hearts, this King, and that He will save us from our sins. That is the King, Jesus Christ. Amen? That's the King. That's who we worship.

He's not just a baby, He is our Savior. And He's not just a baby, He is God in flesh. This is a powerful truth and so I want to stop there and look back together and say this is the Messiah that we celebrate. This is the powerful thing about when you see a manger and you see a child, I want you to see all of that. That when you look at this Christmas season you don't just see presents, you see a Savior; and not a Savior who *was*, a Savior who *is*. That in your life you can look around you and say, "These are the things I'm dealing with, but the Christmas season reminds you that you have a different King over your life than you. That there's a greater King that now has invaded your life, if you believe in Jesus, and is ruling over you and He's established a peace in your heart that is not based on the perfect Thanksgiving

dinner, it's not based on having the perfect presents, it's based on who He is, what He's done, and where He is now. That's our hope that King Jesus lived, that He does live, He did the things He did. And so here's the point of looking back is when we read the book of Isaiah, we read Micah, we read all of these Scriptures—like, look at Micah real quick, it says in Micah 5:2, it says:

² . . . you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days.

~ MICAH 5:2

And so we see these prophecies and we say, okay, when we look back we know that this Messiah that we celebrate was God. He has always been. He wasn't just born a baby. He has existed for all of eternity. That the God who created the world was also a child. He is two/one in the sense that He is by nature God, He was God—this is huge—He wasn't a person, and so what He said and what He did matters to us because it's not man, it's God. But also, the things that were spoken of where He was born, how He was born—I could get into more prophecies—what He would eat, where He would be from, all of those things came true in Jesus. They came true so we're reminded as we celebrate Jesus that what the Word of God says about what's gonna happen happened, and why does that matter? Because now we can stop here and look at what's coming. What the Bible says is going to come and we can have faith that what's going to come is going to come because what came out of the Old Testament prophecy was Jesus, and so we can trust the Word of God to be true. And we can find our anticipation in what's to come. But I want to stop and I want to talk about what are we celebrating the next few weeks. I want to sum these things up. I want to make these real.

Here's the first one, and for those that aren't interested in the Gospel, I'm praying right now that you would soften your heart to what I'm about to say. I'm praying you would soften your heart. If you're here because your parents are making you come, your spouse is making you come, I'm telling you right now that there is a Gospel, there is a good news that's for you. It's not for them, it's for you. Don't disconnect from this because “every knee will bow” — that means you, too.¹ And so you have an option: You can bring God glory by surrendering to the Gospel, a gift that He's given to you, or bring Him glory through judgment, but He will be glorified in your life. So listen to what the Messiah means, listen to what this King means for you.



The first thing is this, that we are powerless to crush the head of the devil. We are powerless. We are powerless to fix this broken world. We are powerless against the lies of the devil upon our lives, but King Jesus can. So in the midst of feeling like you have no control over your life, that is the very reason you need to surrender it. That because He came we have power over the enemy and we can crush his temptations and his lies in our lives through the Gospel of truth, redeeming who we are in Christ Jesus, not what he thinks and defines us as through lies in our minds.

Here's another one that we can't do but He can, that we can't bless the families on this earth. We can't fix the brokenness of this world. You can't even fix the brokenness of your families. Right? You look at your family, you look at your relationships, and you see your children walking away from the Lord

¹ **PHILIPPIANS 2:9-11** – *Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.*

and you feel helpless and you feel like you can't fix it. And you try to fix it and you try to be the counselor to everyone, what we just said here in King Jesus is that you cannot fix the world. You cannot even fix your own home—but King Jesus can. That I promise you. If you want restoration in your marriage, surrender it. If you want hope in your life that looks hopeless, give it to the One who created it. That we cannot bless the world, we can't fix the world, but He can. What does that mean? The government shall be on our shoulders—that means there is not a person or a politician or a king that will fix our problems. They are vessels for God's work, but they are not God and so we don't place our faith in government. We don't place our faith in the rule of law, we place our faith in Jesus Christ, the conquering King who has established His Kingdom for all of eternity and is coming back, and so we set our eyes on those things.

And we love people and we love these systems, but I can guarantee you human depravity will come in whatever systems we create. It's either greed, selfishness, pride—these things will manifest themselves in anything created by man. That's why when Jesus came as a King He came greater than just a politician or a [an earthly] king because those are temporary things surrounded with depravity. So we can't fix the families of this earth but Jesus can.

You can't eradicate sin and destruction around you. You can't. You can't fix the sin in your life, you can't fix the sin in somebody else's life, and listen, I talked about this earlier, the history of mankind is destruction, its depravity. If you think that the hope of this world is in man—prove it. Because when I look back on the history of mankind I see wars, I see genocide, I see racism, I see anger and pride, that's what I see. And the moments of peace is followed by war, and so we look at that and we say, listen, here's what we rejoice in is that we have no power over the sin of the world but Jesus the King does. And that He is greater than the sins of this world and He we'll restore all that is broken. That is a place of faith and trust, this is what we're celebrating.

We can't usher in legitimate peace. You can't usher in legitimate peace in your own heart. That you make a horrible king of your life. Look at me, you make a horrible king. No one will lie to you and slander you or mislead you or talk down to you more than you, and if you're on the throne of your life you will never be able to properly rule your life. So why do we rejoice? Because King Jesus can. That when He becomes your King and you step off of the rule of your life, He is faithful to lead you, to guide you, to bring about joy and peace in your life, and direction according to His purpose and His glory. So when you step off and you realize that I can't be king of my life, I make a horrible king, we celebrate that because of Jesus we don't have to anymore. Listen, that's the real Gospel.

Anybody ever explain that to you? Let me explain it to you. When you say you place your faith in Jesus, you are not saying, “I don't want to go to Hell.” If that's what you're saying, you may not be saved. When you when you say, “I believe in Jesus,” you're saying: **YOU ARE MY KING. I'M DYING TO MYSELF. NO LONGER MY WILL – YOUR WILL.** I used to think what do I want to do, where do I want to go, how do I want to live. When I say yes to Jesus it's, “What do You want for my life? Where do You want me to go? How do You want me to live?” That's what surrender looks like. Kingship is not, “I have an option, unless You don't like it,” and saying, “Oh, well, then maybe you're not my king.” No, no, kingship is surrender. And so we no longer have to be king, that's something we praise.

Here's another one is that we will never satisfy our souls. This is why Jesus came. We will never satisfy our souls. Solomon, King Solomon, tried with stuff and we rejoice because only King Jesus can satisfy our soul. Stuff will not satisfy. The car will not satisfy, the house will not satisfy, the relationship will not satisfy, your status will not satisfy—all of those things will not bring about joy, peace, and satisfaction in your soul. That's why for some of you, you have a lot of stuff but a starving soul.

HOW TO DEAL WITH UNMET EXPECTATIONS

THE KING HAS COME | WEEK 2 | 12.8.2019

I can promise you, if you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with some people they're gonna come at you intellectually with words—words of anger, words of science, words of depravity, words of conflict, words that that may even sound appealing. But I can promise you something, okay, it's gonna sound arrogant, but it's the Gospel; that if they do not know Jesus they have a void in their heart. I don't care what religion they are. I don't care where they come from. I don't care how old they are. If they do not know Jesus, they have a void and their soul is longing to praise their King. And we as believers rejoice in that we have our King, and we also proclaim that hope to the world around us because we know that without Jesus being King of their life, they're probably king of their own life. What a dark place that would be.

The last one here, that we can't rule over our hearts well and we can't overcome sin in our lives. We can't. How many of you who are walking as lord of their lives, how many of you have tried to fix the sin in your life? I've tried to stop. How are you doing? How are you doing with it? Maybe you stopped one thing only to probably be doing something else. Why? Because you're a slave to it. Only King Jesus can set us free. Only King Jesus can change our hearts which changes our desires which gives us true victory. The rest is just hiding, it's hiding our depravity. This is why we celebrate Jesus as our hope.

But I want to shift gears to the future and say this: I understand that we can look back and say, “I love that Jesus is here. I love that He came with a perfect life, died, came back to life, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father, but how does that help me now in the sense that when I go into the holiday season I'm not the one who can sit around a dinner table with my family. The holiday season is a dark season for me. It reminds me of the losses that I've had.” And so we celebrate these moments. And for some of you, you actually don't like that because it reminds you that you can't have those moments anymore.

And I want to tell you something, that when we talk about redeeming anticipation what we're saying here is that you can have joy in this season because we don't hope in those superficial, like, cliché moments as believers. That we know that we can anticipate that Jesus is coming back and that in Him coming back your relationships that have been taken from you or hurts will be restored, that there will no longer be suffering, no longer be pain, and that you will be restored back to the people that you loved in the presence of God worshipping Him for eternity. For those that are sick, anticipate the perfected body that's coming when Jesus Christ returns. For those without hope because you've lost great loved ones, anticipate that when the coming of Jesus all will be restored, that the consummated Kingdom will come and we will worship the Lord forever. And this is not our home. Think and dwell about those things.

For those who don't know Jesus, anticipate that Jesus is coming back and He's not coming back as a child, He is coming back as a conquering King and the heavens will be torn open, and God will come back. And the Bible says that men will flee before Him and the mountains, they will not be able to hide, but the mountains will flee and bow before the Lord. That's how He's coming back.

And for us we long for that day. We anticipate that day. We plan for that day. We spend our money up toward that day. We talk about that day. And that's where our hope comes, that's where our joy comes. It doesn't come from the temporary memories of man, it comes from the hope we have in Jesus and we can trust that because the same God who said, “I'm coming” – came. And the same God that says, “I'm coming back” – will. And this is how we redeem the holiday season is that we remember what it's about, who the King is—not was but is—and what's coming. And so I'm going to ask you a question: Is that what the season is about for you, or have you been deceived to think it's just about stuff?

Like, I watched a show the other day with my family and my four girls—pray for me [*he laughs*—and in that show, the cartoon that my daughters were watching says, “This season is about family.” And I’m not a Grinch, I’m not Scrooge, but I looked at my daughters and said, “Hey, what’s this really about, girls?” “Jesus.” “Yeah. Why do we celebrate this?” “It’s because Jesus came.” “Yeah, because He loves us. He loves us every day.” But man, isn’t it great to be able to have a season where we remember that and we embrace that and we receive it? Yeah, it’s really what it’s about. So I’m asking you a question: Is that what it’s about for you?

For those who don’t know Jesus, don’t know this Jesus the Scripture talks about, you may have heard of a “Jesus” that has nothing in the Bible, that doesn’t exist in the Word of God, maybe created by man, and you were pushed away from that. Maybe some of you grew up in church and you never were presented Jesus. I talked to hundreds of people like that. I’m gonna invite you to come to know the Lord, to surrender lordship in your life, to step into victory, step into peace, step into joy; not because you’re deserving, man, I’m not deserving, but it was a gift given to you. The sign of God’s love came as a child, He loves you. He wants you to come into relationship with Him. He wants to be lord over your life.

I’m gonna invite some of you to give up. It’s hard to try to pretend to be in control. Give up, give it to the Lord. Say, “Lord, I want You to lead my life.” And for those of you who are broken because this holiday season reminds you of the relationships you lost, I just want to encourage you to have hope, so anticipate what God has done. He knows your pain. He knows your suffering. He bears our griefs.² That’s what the Scripture says, meaning that He lived amongst that culture, He understands pain. Our God intimately understands pain and He wants to be there for you. So as darkness creeps into your life give it to the Lord, ask Him to replace it with the joy that’s found in His Spirit. And don’t let the enemy rob you of this season of rejoicing who He is, what He’s done, and what He will do. Amen?

So I’m gonna ask the band to come up and I’m gonna shift gears a little bit, but I think it’s connected. When we gather together for worship and we talk about the King and we talk about Scripture, we’re reminded that we are not in control of our lives and that as believers we surrender to the lordship of Jesus Christ in our lives. This is what we’re reminded of. And the reason why this church does

something a little different than some churches who are running from this is we do not run from the topic of giving. We don’t. It’s not a superficial thing. It’s not a, “Well, if you feel like giving.” We read Scripture and it says you can’t have two gods. It says you can’t serve both God and money.

And when I read that I step back as a shepherd and say, “Whoa! What does that mean for my family? What does that mean for me?” And what that means is that when you give your life to Jesus you are to look at every area of your life and say, “What does this have to do with Kingdom? Am I storing up treasures on earth or am I storing up treasures in the Kingdom of God?” And how do you do that? It’s you look at everything in your life and you say, “This is now for Jesus. It used to be for me, now it’s for Jesus. My house, my car, my family, it’s for Jesus for His glory. My finances are now going to be focused in on the things that are eternal.”

And so one of the things the church is called to do is to gather resources that God has blessed us with as a church, to look at those resources and to look around the world and say, “How do we push back the

² **ISAIAH 53:3-5** – *He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.*

HOW TO DEAL WITH UNMET EXPECTATIONS

THE KING HAS COME | WEEK 2 | 12.8.2019

darkness for the glory of God? How do we use our resources to send out missionaries around the world, to plant churches around the world, to take the sex trafficking—a horrible, horrible issue of our time—and fight it with all that we can for the limited time we have? To see struggling churches and to breathe life into them so that churches don't die around the world. To look at our children and our teenagers and say, “We're gonna have people that are gonna be in their lives and we're a staff it so they point them to Jesus so our children don't take their own lives because they don't think they're loved.”

So we take our resources and we say we're gonna redeem it so that we're not just playing the game of stuff. And so that's why we hold giving to praise and a worship here, it's a worship and so we want to invite you to do that. If you don't know Jesus, don't participate in this, but if you have surrendered your life, if not the church—who's gonna push back the darkness in the world? And so I'm gonna pray that you would take giving seriously. And as God measures your heart you would respond to that. Lord, what does it look like for us? In Scripture, Jesus doesn't look at the amount, He looks at the heart, so what does that look like for you to give sacrificially? We welcome you into that. Why? Because that's gonna be for your joy and the Lord blesses those who honor Him. He does. And if anything, He just gives you the joy of knowing that that you're not wasting it. But I would just pray that you would join us in our giving and in our praise as we celebrate the King who has come and will be coming. Amen? There's victory.

Jesus,

We love You. We think of this giving, Lord, let it be a reflection of your lordship over our lives. We thank You for King Jesus establishing His throne, Lord, conquering sin, bringing peace upon this world through Him, for rescuing us from our sins.

Lord, I thank You for the people who have placed their faith in You today. I pray they would step out and reach out for discipleship and mentorship. I pray for those that have walked with You for a long time but have forgotten the hope they have in You. That Lord, in the darkness of these seasons for some that they would bring about light by remembering who You are and the promises that are coming.

We love You and we thank You. Please be blessed by this. In Jesus' Name we pray. Amen.

SCRIPTURE QUOTATIONS ARE TAKEN FROM
THE HOLY BIBLE, ENGLISH STANDARD VERSION. ESV® TEXT EDITION: 2016.
COPYRIGHT © 2001 BY CROSSWAY BIBLES, A PUBLISHING MINISTRY OF GOOD NEWS PUBLISHERS.

Graphics/Image Credits: Images used were obtained from the sermon video, DuckDuckGo images [search aggregate images attributed as follows: [Pg 2–Lexus (blog.lexusofhighlandpark.com); Pg 3–Cracked earth (genius.com), Nativity scene (freepik.com); Pg 5–Baby (kidbiblelessons.com); Pg. 7–Jesus (twitter.com); Pg 10–Giving (goaim1.org); Pg 11–Watch Now (onlinehsa.com)], and/or created in whole or in part by the transcriber.

Keywords: anticipation, Jesus, Savior, Christmas



Calvary Fellowship Website: <https://www.cfdowningtown.com/watch>

YouTube: <https://youtu.be/xDI-CkzwTkU>

Facebook 11AM: <https://www.facebook.com/CFDowningtown/videos/501817823874790/>

COPYRIGHT © 2019 – JOHN LAWLEY – ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.
