

glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had
when eight days were completed for the circumcision of the
given by the angel before He was conceived in the womb.
according to the law of Moses were completed, they brought
Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord 23 (as it is written in the law of the Lord, "Every male who
opens the womb shall be called holy to the Lord"), 24 and to offer a sacrifice according to what is said in
the law of the Lord, "A pair of turtledoves or two young pigeons." 25 And behold, there was a man in
Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of
Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he
would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. 27 So he came by the Spirit into the temple.
And when the parents brought in the Child Jesus, to do for Him according to the custom of the law, 28 he
took Him up in his arms and blessed God and said: 29 "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in
peace, According to Your word; 30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation 31 Which You have prepared
before the face of all peoples, 32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people
Israel." 33 And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. 34 Then
Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising
of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against 35 (yes, a sword will pierce through your
own soul also), that the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed." 36 Now there was one, Anna, a
prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a
husband seven years from her virginity; 37 and this woman was a widow of about eighty-four years, who
did not depart from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. 38 And coming
in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in
Jerusalem. 39 So when they had performed all things according to the law of the Lord, they returned to
Galilee, to their own city, Nazareth. 40 And the Child grew and became strong in spirit, filled with
wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him. "

"Christmas Everyday"

Well I thought I was going to be very clever by picking up on a Christmas song as a theme for my sermon, and then Mike had to go and do the same thing last week!

- I do appreciate Mike and Theron bringing the Advent and Christmas messages this year!
- And I have decided to stick with my sermon title anyway!

It was inspired by one of the local radio channels that played Christmas songs throughout the Christmas season [*the great carols were few & far between*].

However, it was one of the secular songs that caught my attention:

It was entitled Christmas Every Day and basically asked the question 'why can't every day be like Christmas?'

- What would drive an unbelieving world to ask such a question?

I think it is what they would refer to as the spirit of the season: Most folks are more joyful, people are giving gifts and trying to be more polite...

[Except maybe in the parking lots!]

- People give a friendly greeting of Merry Christmas or at least happy holidays.

... because we are more focused on Jesus this time of year
neighbors with Christmas caroling or huge Christmas pageants.

... Christmas Spirit throughout the year, it is sin that should be confessed!

... lack of confession that prevents an unbelieving world from
experiencing the real meaning of Christmas, on Christmas Day or any other. The author and singer of
this song, along with the rest of the unbelieving world want the experience of Christmas without the
reality of Christmas.

- They are perfectly comfortable with the nice manger scene with all the animals and a little baby Jesus.

They don't even mind the singing angels; as long as they are portrayed as the sweet chubby cherubs who
would NEVER cause anyone to be afraid! *[remind them of the Christmas angels]*

However, they want NOTHING to do with the real meaning of Christmas...

- The reality that Jesus has come to save his people from their sins!

Any fleeting thought of that truth is long gone just a few days after Christmas, as everyone is focused on
the big parties on New Year's eve! The world, and sadly much of the Church, immediately get caught up
in another day off at work, a time to party and a chance to make resolutions about how we will better our
lives... **IN OUR OWN STRENGTH!**

The world is more than happy to leave Jesus in the manger because they do not want to be confronted
with His claims nor convicted of their sin.

- At bottom this is why the world cannot have Christmas everyday... or ANY day.
- They reject the truth that Jesus is the Son of God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, so His
birth in Bethlehem becomes just another touching story of poor parents?
- They reject the whole concept of sin so how can they believe there is any need for a Savior?

They like to hear those angels proclaiming peace and good will...

- But they have no interest in bringing glory to God or how peace is brought forth in a fallen world.

However, before we get the tape measure out to see just how big the specks are in the eyes of those who
have not been given the gift of faith, perhaps we might want to make sure there are no logs in our own eyes!

- Christmas Day fell on Sunday this year & sadly we drove by many churches that decided to take
the day off!

Are we showing the world that we believe what Isaiah proclaimed about Jesus being Emanuel, God with
us when we think family time is more important than the worship of the God who became flesh? But
again, lest we think that the problems are only with eyes that reside elsewhere, how have WE done this week?

- Did we have ANY discussions this week about the significance of today?
- New Year's Day also fell on Sunday, so does it mean anything more than having to party less last
night & taking tomorrow off?

Might there be a reason that our calendars are arranged so that January 1st, the beginning of our new
year each year falls on the eighth day after Jesus was born? *[mention Hebrew counting]*

- What happened on the eight day?

That's right it was the day that the baby in the manger was circumcised and named Jesus, meaning Savior.

As the angel told Joseph, "And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will
save His people from their sins."

aid about Jesus being called Immanuel, meaning God with us!
The men came from the east to visit Jesus on the 12th day which
January 6th and we have songs about the 12 days of Christmas.
On the 41st day, Jesus is brought to the Temple and dedicated

according to the Law.

This is why, year after year, it is the prayer that Simeon offered up with the baby Jesus in his arms which we sing each and every week here at Church of the King as we are commissioned...

- In a very real way you could argue that we are sent forth to make every day Christmas Day!

We need to understand that the angels, which we will sing about after the sermon today, and Simeon proclaimed the same message...

- The angels because they had been sent from the Father in heaven to deliver this message of Good News.
- And Simeon because he was a man of great faith.

Holding the baby who was now just a few weeks old, Simeon knew that God had kept his promises.

- God had kept His promise to Simeon and to the world.

God had promised Simeon that he would not die until he had seen the Lord's salvation...

- God had promised Adam, and all of mankind, that one day the seed of the woman would crush the seed of the serpent so we could be saved!

Simeon prayed, "For my eyes have seen Your salvation. Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel."

This baby had been given the sign of circumcision and the name Jesus because He was the promised Messiah.

The star of Bethlehem had brought wise men from the East as the baby is revealed to the Gentiles.

- Jesus came as the Light of the World to the very world that He had created and John tells us that His own did not receive Him.
- But John goes on to proclaim that God gave new hearts to many who would receive the Savior.

These are the proclamations that must continue down to our day:

Yes many in the world have rejected God and see no need of a Savior...

- But God is still on the throne and He still turns hearts of stone into hearts of flesh!
- He does so through the power of His Word and His Spirit!

So, as we approach a New Year and reflect on the faith of Simeon and those wise men, how can we learn from them and be more faithful servants of our Lord and King who came as that baby in the manger to save us from our sins? I want to suggest that we can do so in part by reflecting on what I have shared with many as my favorite and most personal Psalm... Psalm 51!

- A Psalm penned by King David after he had reached the climax of his power and fallen into grave sin.

Now we do not have to be those who have committed adultery or murdered a loyal soldier to need this Psalm.

- IF we understand God's view of sin, then we know it rightly applies to all of us!

Remember Jesus said that any man who lusts after a women has committed adultery in his heart or anyone who is angry with a brother is guilty of murder.

mother and father or those who fail to help the poor and

that Paul was right when he proclaimed in Romans three,
the glory of God.

So as we approach this New Year, let's remember that we ALL need the power of the Gospel by taking a few moments to reflect on the lessons of Psalm 51... [thinking of ourselves and not the other guy]

The first thing to notice is that God leaves no doubt about when and why this Psalm was written by King David: Psalm 51:1 "To the Chief Musician. A Psalm of David when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba." *[remind them of the Nathan account]*

The second thing to note is that King David truly confesses his sin and knows that it is only because of God's mercy that he can find a way of salvation...

"Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, And cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions, And my sin is always before me."

The third thing to note is that King David does not begin with apologies to Bathsheba, the family of Uriah or even the people of Israel...

4 "Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight-- That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge. 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me."

King David knows that the true offense of his sins were against God Almighty and he knows that his problem with sin, as Pastor Wilson would say, goes all the way down.

- It is in his nature to sin & he has no other human choice but to sin!

The fourth thing to notice is that King David knows that God desires and takes steps to change that nature:

6 "Behold, You desire truth in the inward parts, And in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom. 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8 Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice. 9 Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities."

God had chosen King David and given him a heart of flesh and even in the depths of his great sins God brings to his remembrance what God does for him through Jesus... David's sins were forgiven because Jesus took the wrath that was justly due him upon Himself on the cross...

David did not have the Gospel accounts to give him all the details of this comfort, but his knowledge of the Old Testament and the sacrificial system that pictured what Jesus would do gave him great confidence! His sins would be separated and cast out, just as they did with the scape goat, he would be changed and offered as an acceptable ascension offering just like the sacrifices made at the Temple and he would be able to stand in the very presence of his Holy God, just as the high priest did each year in the Holy of Holies.

- King David would know the joy of salvation even as he felt the crushing results of his sin! [I.E. broken bones]

[remind them of the child and David's family history]

The fifth thing to notice is that King David is now able to look to the future with great hope and purpose...

renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away
Holy Spirit from me. 12 Restore to me the joy of Your
Spirit.”

verses that are contained in these three short verses:
singing their sin before God:

- The comfort of knowing that our heart has been made clean! God has cleaned up our past messes.
- The knowledge that we have been given a steadfast spirit. God will help us confront our future challenges.
- The assurance that we can always be in God’s presence. God sees only the righteousness of Jesus when we are in His presence.
- The confidence that God’s Spirit is always with us: The comforter that Jesus promised to send.
- The glory of knowing that our joy comes from God’s faithfulness and salvation and not our own works!
- And finally, the amazing fact that God upholds us with His Spirit so that we can continue His work!

As I have often said in going through Acts, the Holy Spirit is filling the earth with the Kingdom of Jesus, using broken vessels... Broken people who have been forgiven, empowered and now held steadfast by God’s Spirit!

- The sixth and final thing to note on this New Year’s Day is that God has great plans for His redeemed children...

King David does not hang his head in shame and wonder about how badly people will think about him...

[From a human standpoint, would any of us written the 51st Psalm?]

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, King David did write this Psalm and now we see that he trusts the promises of God, knowing they are true and that he is now able to go forward in service to the Kingdom...

13 “Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You. 14 Deliver me from the guilt of bloodshed, O God, The God of my salvation, And my tongue shall sing aloud of Your righteousness. 15 O Lord, open my lips, And my mouth shall show forth Your praise. 16 For You do not desire sacrifice, or else I would give it; You do not delight in burnt offering. 17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit, A broken and a contrite heart-- These, O God, You will not despise.”

- In the end we see the forgiveness and service of King David is not just for him... It is for the world!

18 “Do good in Your good pleasure to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem. 19 Then You shall be pleased with the sacrifices of righteousness, With burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then they shall offer bulls on Your altar.”

We know from the New Testament that King David was not referring to just the City of Jerusalem or its walls nor just the sacrifices that were made at the Temple as they pointed to Jesus...

King David was seeing through a glass darkly the great sacrifice that would be made for sin by Jesus on the cross and the New Jerusalem that would be His Bride the Church...

Paul is saying in Romans 12:1,

ificed:

thren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a
ch is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to
this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and
acceptable and perfect will of God.”

So if you want to experience and be a part of making every day Christmas,

- Make Psalm 51 your own personal and favorite Psalm...
- And make Romans 12:1&2 your resolution for the New Year,
The Year of our LORD 2012!

Communion Meditation:

Psalm 23:

“The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. 2 He makes me to lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside the still waters. 3 He restores my soul; He leads me in the paths of righteousness For His name's sake. 4 Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; For You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; You anoint my head with oil; My cup runs over. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me All the days of my life; And I will dwell in the house of the Lord Forever.”