

**Scripture Reading: Luke 19:28-44**

**“28 When [Jesus] had said this, He went on ahead, going up to Jerusalem. 29 And it came to pass, when He came near to Bethphage and Bethany, at the mountain called Olivet, that He sent two of His disciples, 30 saying, "Go into the village opposite you, where as you enter you will find a colt tied, on which no one has ever sat. Loose it and bring it here. 31 And if anyone asks you, 'Why are you loosing it?' thus you shall say to him, 'Because the Lord has need of it.' " 32 So those who were sent went their way and found it just as He had said to them. 33 But as they were loosing the colt, the owners of it said to them, "Why are you loosing the colt?" 34 And they said, "The Lord has need of him." 35 Then they brought him to Jesus. And they threw their own clothes on the colt, and they set Jesus on him. 36 And as He went, many spread their clothes on the road. 37 Then, as He was now drawing near the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works they had seen, 38 saying: "'Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the Lord!' Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" 39 And some of the Pharisees called to Him from the crowd, "Teacher, rebuke Your disciples." 40 But He answered and said to them, "I tell you that if these should keep silent, the stones would immediately cry out."**

**41 Now as [Jesus] drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, 42 saying, "If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. 43 For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, 44 and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation."”**

## ***"The Coming of Jesus"***

**I am sure that “The Coming of Jesus” is not the most original sermon title, especially at Christmas! After four weeks of Advent sermons, some might think, what more could be said? Obviously there is always more to say when it comes to Jesus and this morning I want to make sure we do not leave Advent with too narrow a view of the coming of Jesus. This Jesus who was announced by the Angel Gabriel is the one who came that first Christmas morning in the manger. He is also the Jesus who came to Jerusalem at His appointed time, as we just read from Luke, to offer Himself as a sacrifice on the cross as the propitiation of God’s wrath, saving His people from their sins. He is also the Jesus who comes to us each and every day of our lives**

**He is the Jesus who calls us to worship each week and meets with us at this Table**

**And of course we look for the day that this same Jesus returns as He ascended for the final judgment of all mankind.**

- **So what I would like to do this morning is to have us follow Mary's example from the account of the first Christmas morning:**

**In Luke 2:19 we read that Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart."**

- **What does it mean to ponder something?**
- **It can cover a wide range of our experiences...**

**From the little newborn who first notices that those little hands belong to them... holding them up and pondering how they can move them!**

**To the national security officer who is tasked with pondering what the latest video message from some terrorists might mean: Considering not only the words, but the visual and subtle messages as well.**

**As we ponder the coming of Jesus at any point in history you will see that it is often something so simple a child can grasp it while at the same time so profound that it can be pondered for thousands of years by the best minds and still leave more to understand.**

- **Let me begin with that first Christmas morning: The coming of Jesus as a man, the Word made Flesh...**

**It was proclaimed by the angels to the shepherds: Luke 2:8 "Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. Then the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"**

**The shepherds make haste to where the child was born and told those present what the angels had said, which leaves Mary pondering. Here is the simple manger scene that we display in many of our homes because the youngest child can see what is happening:**

- **Ask any child who the baby is and they will say Jesus!**

**This is the child-like faith that Jesus tells us we all should have!**

**As we grow older and get ‘smarter’ we learn to be more skeptical...  
And maybe a little bored**

- **Same old season, same old manger scene**
- **We start to doubt, saying did this really happen?**
- **How could God really become a man?**
- **Isn't this just like all the other myths that we see in other religions?**

**However, if we are wise and IF we walk in faith we are drawn to this precious scene with child-like faith and the same pondering that Mary experienced that first Christmas.**

- **She was trying to take in how the birth of a child could mean so much, and that is exactly what we should do as well.**

**Each year when we remember that manger scene we should ponder again the wonder of God loving us so much that He came to be a man, a man that would be willing to give His life for ours!**

- **This is why it was very timely for us to be at the point in Luke's Gospel where we see Jesus coming to Jerusalem at His appointed time.**

**The baby has become a man and now we must ponder what it means for Him to be the sacrifice for sin: Again, very simple and yet very profound!**

**That same young child can grasp that Jesus died for our sins....**

- **Ask Jane why Jesus had to die and she will happily proclaim, “so we can go to heaven!”**

**As we grow older we run the risk of becoming like the Pharisees who put their religion ahead of the Savior or the crowds who just wanted to be entertained... I don't mind going to church, as long as it is like going to a rock concert! Instead we should approach Jesus with the same awe and fear we saw in those Shepherds that first Christmas morning: Pondering the Son of God in all His Glory!**

**Those angels announced that Jesus had come to save His people from their sins and to fill the earth with His Kingdom: Big changes are coming and this is what should make us excited about gathering as God's people... His Bride!**

**As we move forward in Luke & Acts, Jesus really shakes things up:**

- **He is raised in power**
- **He gives the Great Commission**
- **He ascends to the right hand of God the Father in Heaven**
- **And He sends His Spirit to empower His Church**

**In the Book of Acts, we will see Jesus and His followers confronting both the religious and civil rulers of the day: And powerful they were!**

- **Yet just a few hundred years later the Temple of Jerusalem will be leveled and the Roman Empire will have collapsed...  
But the Kingdom of Jesus will be filling the earth!**
- **As we ponder this, how can we be anything but optimistic during this Christmas season?**

**Sure we can wring our hands and depress ourselves as we consider the advances made by Muslims across the world or how the Mormons are at times the fastest growing group here in the United States...**

**We can rail against the incoming Obama administration or the liberals in Congress or be outraged at the folks at the Federal Reserve who think they can create money out of thin air...**

- **We can let this all get us down and join with those who think Jesus must be coming back soon!**
- **OR, we can ponder how the coming of Jesus, as that baby, as the Savior and now as the King has already changed history in ways we can hardly imagine even when we are able to study them – Powerful changes that WILL continue in our day!**

**An honest study of Church history will encourage us to roll up our sleeves and prepare to serve our risen and reigning Savior!**

- **This is where the rubber meets the road when we talk about the coming of Jesus...**

**Yes, Jesus came as the baby in that manger, but if we stop there, we get those sappy pictures and a milk-toast Jesus who does not do much in our lives.**

**Yes, Jesus entered Jerusalem and gave His life on the cross and was raised for our justification...**

- **But if this is only theology or personal then we become navel gazers who do not make much difference in the world around us:**
- **Our witness is reduced to telling someone who does not find their yoga exercises to be fulfilling that they should try Jesus instead.**

**This baby who grew to be a man, this Savior who was raised in power and ascended to the right hand of God comes in history through His Church**

- **His Kingdom is going to fill the earth, all of the nations will be discipled and all things will be under His feet before He comes to defeat the final enemy death at the end of history.**

**These are the promises that we have from Genesis, Daniel, the Great Commission, the Apostle Paul in his letter to the Corinthians and yes the Book of Revelation!**

- **The bookends of this final book in the Bible talk about the coming of Jesus!**

**John tells us that these are things that must shortly come to pass:**

**Rev. 1:7 “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. 8 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty."**

- **In the final chapter we again see Jesus, His Bride the Church and John himself talking again about the coming of Jesus:**

**Rev. 22:16 “"I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star." 17 And the Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely...**

**20 He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!"**

- **It is a joy to remember the coming of Jesus during Advent & Christmas.**
- **It is important to know that Jesus comes to us each day of our lives and here each week at His Table**
- **It is also important to remember that Jesus comes again at the end of history to judge the world...**

**Luke tells us it will be just as He left and Revelation 20 explains that it will bring the final White Throne Judgment where the scales of justice will be fully balanced. While we don't want to be so future oriented that we are no earthly good, this is an important perspective to remember when the battles of this world wear us down... And wear us down they will!**

➤ **In psalm 73, Asaph is brutally honest about how he felt during one such time: He tells us that “my feet had almost stumbled; My steps had nearly slipped. 3 For I was envious of the boastful, When I saw the prosperity of the wicked... 7 Their eyes bulge with abundance; They have more than heart could wish.”**

- **The Psalmist not only sees the wicked prospering, but is amazed that they can be so arrogant...**

**“They say, "How does God know? And is there knowledge in the Most High?" 12 Behold, these are the ungodly, Who are always at ease; They increase in riches.”**

- **And while he sees the wicked prosper Asaph wonders why more blessings have not come his way...**

**“13 Surely I have cleansed my heart in vain, And washed my hands in innocence.  
14 For all day long I have been plagued, And chastened every morning.”**

- **Asaph struggles to understand these things and only finds comfort when he considers the big picture, which he sees in the imagery of the Temple and we are blessed to see so much more clearly in the Book of Revelation..**

**“16 When I thought how to understand this, It was too painful for me-- 17 Until I went into the sanctuary of God; Then I understood their end. 18 Surely You set them in slippery places; You cast them down to destruction. 19 Oh, how they are brought to desolation, as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors.”**

- **In closing the Psalmist reminds us of the importance of drawing near when Jesus comes...**

**28 “It is good for me to draw near to God; I have put my trust in the Lord God, That I may declare all Your works.”**

**What we must remember this Christmas Sunday, is that this Jesus who came as that baby in the manger, this Jesus who comes to us as our Lord & Savior and this Jesus who will come in judgment is that same Jesus who was proclaimed to Mary by the Angel Gabriel:**

**Luke 1:31: “And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. 32 He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. 33 And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”**

**We truly do serve the risen and reigning Savior!**

**Let us not be like those in Jerusalem long ago who missed their day of visitation...**

**Rather let us cry with John, “Even so, Come Lord Jesus!”**

### **Communion Meditation:**

John 4: “10 Jesus answered and said to her,

"If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."

11 The woman said to Him, "Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep. Where then do You get that living water? 12 Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?" 13 Jesus answered and said to her, "Whoever

drinks of this water will thirst again, 14 but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst.

But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.””

Christmas fades if not centered in Jesus!