“The Covenants of Christmas: A Promise Anticipated”

Rev. 11:15-19; Isa. 65:17-25

(Notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 12/25/22)

 Anticipation.

 For many children, Christmas eve is the longest night of the year… sleeping with one eye open, waiting and waiting and waiting to open those presents on Christmas morn! In a comparable way, God’s children live between two great joys. The thrill of the new birth by God’s sovereign grace starts another season of anticipation: so much more is yet to come at Christ’s second coming. To celebrate our Savior’s first coming is to anticipate His certain return to establish an eternal, global kingdom of righteousness, peace, and perfection. Is this your hope? Christians live toward a day when all distinction between what is heavenly and what is worldly will be erased forever. Jesus is bringing heaven to this earth; a redeemed humanity, a renewed earth… all for the glory of God and the joy of His people. Every last corner of the earth will be under His rule. Is He your King now?

 In Revelation, God gives John a glimpse of the future of all things. God keeps His promise to redeem humanity, erase sin’s curse, and bring promised redemption. Christ is the only ark of safety from God’s wrath. Christ is the only sacrifice provided for our salvation. Christ is our eternal Shepherd King. (Q1)

 The seven angels and the seven trumpets of Rev. 11:15 denote completion. This is IT! Jesus lived the perfect life that we are unable to live. He paid the debt we owe our Creator. God’s promises, even those yet to be fulfilled, are as good as done! This is Good News beyond Good News! But here is the key: YOU WILL NEVER DELIGHT IN THE GOOD NEWS UNLESS YOU UNDERSTAND WHY YOU NEED IT! (Q2)

 Read Rev. 11:17-18 again. When Christ returns, His authority will no longer be despised, or even resisted. When Christ returns, the role of God will no longer be hidden. When Christ returns, He will receive all the honor due Him. When Christ returns it will mark the end of the sin around us and the sin within us. (Q3)

 Now take a look at Rev. 11:18. When Christ returns, He’ll reward his people for the lives they’ve lived for Him. The scandal is this: we are to be rewarded for all that He has done for us! It’s like when Dad gave you **his** money to go buy a gift for Mom! What can we give that He has not first supplied?! What’s more, our King delights to be with His people for all of eternity. When Christ returns, all turmoil and tears, all disease and death itself will be forever vanquished. All that man and woman were created to do and be will one day happen for His glory and our joy. Unending peace and joy await the King’s people! Are you ready? Are your friends ready?

**QUESTIONS**:

1. What is the significance of Jesus being born “the son of David, the son of Abraham”?
2. Pastor Steve said, “You will never delight in the Good News unless you understand why you need it.” Why do **YOU** need the Good News?
3. How is the Good News hidden from people? How do people hide it from themselves?
4. Is your daily life influenced by the certainty of your citizenship in the Coming Kingdom, and the certainty of judgment for those not giving allegiance to King Jesus? What changes do you need to make in 2023?
5. Read John 3:16-19 and Phil. 2:9-11. You can be very sure that every knee will bow before Jesus when He returns. Some are marked for eternal life with Him, others for eternal judgment. What makes the difference?

“Angels From the Realms of Glory” (Montgomery)

1. Angels from the realms of glory,
Wing your flight o’er all the earth;
Ye who sang creation’s story
Now proclaim Messiah’s birth.
	* Refrain:
	Come and worship, come and worship,
	Worship Christ, the newborn King.
2. Shepherds, in the field abiding,
Watching o’er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing;
Yonder shines the infant light:
3. Sinners, wrung with true repentance,
Doomed for guilt to endless pains,
Justice now revokes the sentence,
Mercy calls you; break your chains.
4. Though an Infant now we view Him,
He shall fill His Father’s throne,
Gather all the nations to Him;
Every knee shall then bow down: