

“His Birthday, My Birthday”

3rd In Series: “Why Christmas Is Not Optional”

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INTRODUCTION:

Frederick Leboyer declared: “Birth may be a matter of a moment, but it is a unique one.”

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote: “Youth comes but once in a lifetime.”

William Wordsworth rejoiced: “

*Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home.*

CELEBRATE BIRTH TOGETHER:

1.) **SPECIAL DAYS**

- Celebrating life. Not just any life, but a very special and unique life!
- Lots of family and friends celebrating together.
- Gifts and song to demonstrate personal value, love and appreciation.
- Lots of lights, whether from candles or bulbs.

2.) **PURPOSE**

- To mark the passing of another year. An earlier birth we are grateful for. A look ahead for future accomplishments and blessings. An explanation and plan for it all.
- The birth of male and female:

Genesis 1:26-28 *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness. They will rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, the animals, all the earth, and the creatures that crawl on the earth." So God created man in His own image; He created him in the image of God; He created them male and female. God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful, multiply, fill the earth, and subdue it. Rule the fish of the sea, the birds of the sky, and every creature that crawls on the earth."*

- We were all created from the beginning to live on this earth in such a way as to accurately reflect the character and glory of God!
- Celebrating our physical birthdays should be an annual reflection on this privilege and evaluation of how well we are living out our life's purpose.
- Jesus was born to restore our ability to fulfill this purpose; an ability that had been lost since Adam & Eve chose to sin in the Garden.

John 3:16-21 *"For God loved the world in this way: He gave His One and Only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world that He might judge the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. Anyone who believes in Him is not judged, but anyone who does not believe is already judged, because he has not believed in the name of the One and Only Son of God. "This, then, is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than the light because their deeds were evil. For everyone who practices wicked things hates the light and avoids it, so that his deeds may not be exposed. But anyone who lives by the truth comes to the light, so that his works may be shown to be accomplished by God."*

John 18:37 *"You are a king then?" Pilate asked. "You say that I'm a king," Jesus replied. "I was born for this, and I have come into the world for this: to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to My voice."*

3.) **EXPECTATION**

- Parents, remember the building expectation at the birth of your children? The thoughts and dreams that consumed your mind? The fears, worries and hopes?
- Does a child's birthday ever pass without a parent remembering in particular those final hours, minutes and finally the moment of birth?
- Will it be a boy or girl? Healthy? Who will the child resemble and in what ways? What kind of personality will one day shine through? What purpose will the child's life fulfill? How will he or she be most remembered?
- For young Mary, it was wonder and praise! **Luke 1:46-55.**
- For Jesus' specially called cousin, still in the womb, it was a celebration tumble. **Luke 1:41**

4.) **ANNOUNCEMENT**

- Finally, the babe is born and we are so full of joy, wonder and love beyond our ability to contain that we must announce to any and all alike; sometimes whether they want to hear it or not!
- "This is the best, cutest, most special, loveable baby EVER!" Phone calls, cards, plastic storks, balloons, email, FaceBook, Twitter, you name it!
- Jesus' impending birth was first announced by the great angel, Gabriel to Mary in private. **Luke 1:26-38.**
- At the moment of His birth, God the Father really pulled out all of the 'stops.' A new, unique and unmistakable star in the sky, and an entire choir of angels surrounded by the glow of the LORD's glory in the night sky! **Luke 2:8-14**
- Every year, we continue to celebrate our children's birthday, often with as much or more awe and wonder. Each year, we continue to send announcements, invitations and pictures to remind everyone. Then, we make a cake to remember the sweetness of the occasion and fill it with lit candles to mark their light to our lives.
- *How much more, then, should we continually announce Christ's birth?*

Matthew 5:14-16 *"You are the light of the world. A city situated on a hill cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp and puts it under a basket, but rather on a lampstand, and it gives light for all who are in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."*

5.) PROVISION

- We expect children in our society to be cared for by loving, committed parents to provide for our needs: shelter, food, clothes, training.
- Today, we also expect our pregnant women and babies to be cared for in a modern hospital, comfortable room, expertly trained doctors and nurses, special equipment and a warm blanket.
- The LORD gave the incarnate Jesus two godly, committed human parents – Mary and Joseph - to provide for His physical upbringing. However, Mary did not have the luxury of a modern hospital, but instead gave birth in a common stable. Rather than attended by highly trained doctors and nurses with the best equipment, she was attended by the stable animals. Rather than lay the newborn baby Messiah in a perfectly temperate, sanitized and controlled hospital bassinet, He was placed in a manger – an animal's feeding trough converted just for him. YET, God superintended His birth and that more than compensated for all else!

6.) NAMING

- One of the most exciting, difficult and controversial parts of having a child is settling on a name that will mark and identify this child for the rest of his or her life!
- Some name their children according to family tradition, in honor of someone whose character they would like their child to grow to emulate, something that will separate the child from others and be more unique, or to identify a given purpose or characteristic for their lives.
- For example, my parents named me Todd from an Old English word that literally meant fox and was commonly used as a euphemism for one who is wise (like a fox). Of course, I was supposed to be a girl named Kiersten, but God had other plans. We named our children based on what we desired of their lives. We named our son Isaiah, which means “The LORD will save.” We named our daughter Tehillah, which means “song of praise to the LORD.”
- Mary & Joseph didn't have to worry or fight about naming their miraculous child. Gabriel told Mary at the first announcement what His name should be: Yeshua (Jesus) - “The LORD Saves.”

7.) GIFTS

- What is a birthday without gifts?!
- Even the toddler Jesus – who literally already owned everything in Creation - was given gifts of great value and significance by the wise men to celebrate what was likely His 2nd or 3rd birthday.
- We continue to give and receive gifts at each of our birthdays and even on Jesus' birthday. *But what is His gift to us?*

Romans 6:23 *For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

John 3:5-8 *Jesus answered, "I assure you: Unless someone is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. Whatever is born of the flesh is flesh, and whatever is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not be amazed that I told you that you must be born again. The wind blows where it pleases, and you hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit."*

- **A second, spiritual birth into an unimaginably fuller and eternal life of meaning, significance and endless joy!**

– *And what gift could we possibly give unto Him each year?*

Romans 12:1-2 *Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this age, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may discern what is the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God.*

Micah 6:8 *He has told you men what is good and what it is the LORD requires of you: Only to act justly, to love faithfulness, and to walk humbly with your God.*

8.) **FUTURE HOPE**

Jeremiah 29:11-14a *For I know the plans I have for you"--this is the LORD's declaration--"plans for your welfare, not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. You will call to Me and come and pray to Me, and I will listen to you. You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart. I will be found by you"--the LORD's declaration--"*

Romans 5:1-5 *Therefore, since we have been declared righteous by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Also through Him, we have obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. And not only that, but we also rejoice in our afflictions, because we know that affliction produces endurance, endurance produces proven character, and proven character produces hope. This hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured out in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who was given to us.*

Romans 8:24-31 *Now in this hope we were saved, yet hope that is seen is not hope, because who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with patience. In the same way the Spirit also joins to help in our weakness . . . We know that all things work together for the good of those who love God: those who are called according to His purpose. For those He foreknew He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers . . . If God is for us, who is against us?*

AND MANY MORE . . . ?

Romans 15:13 *Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*