

December 2015

Thomas Village Baptist Church

# Merry Christmas!

## A Gift From God

*2 Corinthians 9:15 Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!*

As we quickly approach this Holiday season, I wonder how each of us would describe the most precious gift ever given, the gift of eternal life found only in a relationship with Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.

I believe for most of us, just like the verse above, would readily agree that this gift is indescribable. Yet, I believe we all have our thoughts and expressions of what this gift means to each of us. So many times though, through the hustle and bustle of the world we live in, we forget to reflect upon what this gift not only means to us but to every person across the planet we live in. Let's take a few minutes to reflect upon this most precious Gift and no greater place to start than where it all began.

*Luke 2:7 And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn.*

*8 And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night.*

*9 And, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid.*

*10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people.*

*11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.*

*12 And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.*

Yes, well over 2000 years ago, our Savior was born. Not in a castle, but in a stable. No huge announcement to world leaders, but to some lowly shepherds. When I reflect upon those things, my first description of this precious gift is the **HUMILITY** in which it was given. No, this most valuable gift was not meant for just the rich and famous, the ones with the best personality or the most attractive, but for the whosoever that would believe in him, regardless of your social or financial status. There is no greater example of humility for each of us to follow in how we view others.

*Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."*

The second description of this gift was the **ATTITUDE** by which it was displayed. No, this most precious gift was not given to be admired and blessed, but instead, was a blessing to others. Even though this gift was greater than all, He rather chose to be last, a servant to others. Also, the gift didn't come to live, but this gift came to die so all of us could live. What if our attitude was like this? Always putting others first.

*Romans 5:8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

The third description I would give would be how this gift was truly one given through **LOVE!** We often give gifts to people we love, but how often do we give gifts to those who hurt us or we view as an enemy? No, this gift was given entirely for one reason and one reason only, "For God so loved the World!"

*Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,*

The last description, and the one we should always remember, the reason this gift is so valuable to us is because it is a gift of **GRACE!** No, not one of us deserved it, could earn it or could buy this gift. This gift was given freely and willingly to all mankind by God the Father, and he held nothing back. He gave us his most prized possession, HIMSELF, in the form of his only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

So as we go into this wonderful time of year, let us always remember the greatest gift of all, The indescribable Gift from God!!!

Merry Christmas and God bless you all!

Pastor Buddy

## Food For Thought...The Birth of Christ

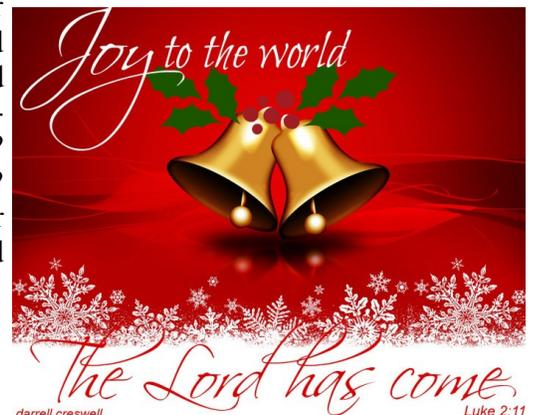
During this time of year, I always like to look back and read of the story surrounding the birth of our Savior. But this year, I have been looking at it from a different perspective; a perspective that does not look only at the birth, but looks at prophecy and human reaction.

You see, there was a miracle foretold of a Savior to come centuries before it actually occurred. Isaiah 7:14 reads "Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a Son, and shall call His name Immanuel." Immanuel, the Messiah, only mentioned twice in the Old Testament and specifically, only in Isaiah foretelling of the time where God would walk on this earth with us. For over 700 years, the Jews held on to the hope that, as God's chosen, they would be able to establish a kingdom where God set up a kingdom specifically for them.

In the next chapter of the story, we see a young couple, engaged to be married, that had their earthly and spiritual lives changed forever. Mary was met by an angel proclaiming in Luke 1:30-33 "Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus. 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. And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end." The angel has told of Isaiah's prophecy coming true! But, there is a problem. Mary is not married to Joseph yet! What will his reaction be? How will others view their pregnancy announcement? As with many things in life, God already had this covered, as an angel appeared also to Joseph as written in Matthew 1:18-24 "Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. Then Joseph her husband, being a just *man*, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins." So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: "*Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,*" which is translated, "God with us." Then Joseph, being aroused from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord commanded him and took to him his wife". You see, the true miracle was not that Immanuel, God with us, was coming to earth; but that there was obedience in the midst of uncertainty and fear. It is just like us church, in the midst of uncertainty and fear, we can still rejoice in God's sovereign knowledge!

Unfortunately, though, even through the excitement of Christ's birth there was selfish nature of man is shown through Herod's reaction. Matthew 2:1-3 "Now after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, behold, wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, saying, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him." When Herod the king heard *this*, he was troubled, and all Jerusalem with him." Now, think of this for a while. Even in the most rejoicing of times, the birth of our Savior, Immanuel, God with us, there were those unhappy and troubled. Today we should evaluate our relationship with God and our fellow Christians to evaluate where our true relationship is. Are we looking forward to God's moving in our church? Are we rejoicing with others where God is working and moving? Or, are we troubled and unhappy? This Christmas, let our focus turn to the true happiness found through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Scott Jerrell, Deacon



# Birthdays

1-Dec	Danny	Carter
3-Dec	Teresa	Glines
12-Dec	Sheila	Cantrell
13-Dec	Trey	Pennington
13-Dec	Larry	Prevatte
13-Dec	Jackson	Worley
15-Dec	Carolyn	Dishner
16-Dec	Tammy	Bledsoe
17-Dec	Phyllis	Baker
17-Dec	Maraceli	Harris
19-Dec	Teresa	Cobb
19-Dec	Lisa	Phipps
20-Dec	Zachary	Tester
21-Dec	Bill	Bowen
22-Dec	John	Stanley
22-Dec	Meghan	Tester
23-Dec	Vanessa	Jessee
25-Dec	Jessica	Jessee
27-Dec	Helen	Bowen
27-Dec	Jennifer	Tester
28-Dec	Robert	Chapman

2-Jan	Phillip	Smith
3-Jan	Jessi	Adams
3-Jan	Seth	Chambers
3-Jan	Rachel	Glines
4-Jan	Linda	Arwood
4-Jan	Kathy	Pierson
7-Jan	Jessica	Roach
7-Jan	Nancy	Hartsock
8-Jan	Chris	Collier
10-Jan	Jamie	Carter
11-Jan	Dan	Bates
12-Jan	Sharon	Collier
12-Jan	Kristie	Quillen
13-Jan	Cassidy	Hammonds
13-Jan	Jay	Keck
13-Jan	Sarah	Walsworth
15-Jan	Michael	Fields
16-Jan	Kent	Lawson
16-Jan	Rick	Swanson
21-Jan	Kay	Jessee
21-Jan	Tommy	Tester
21-Jan	Keith	Walsworth
22-Jan	Andy	Legg
24-Jan	Carol	Arwood
25-Jan	Jared	Worley
25-Jan	Whitney	Worley
26-Jan	Keith	Baxley
26-Jan	Sharon	Holland
29-Jan	Corrine	DiMondi
31-Jan	Ruth	Bowen

# Anniversaries

7-Dec	Morgan & Mardi	Stewart
15-Dec	Nathan & Jessica	Jessee
24-Dec	Jay & Ruby	Keck
24-Dec	Dennis & Catherine	Ward
31-Dec	Toddy & Fleda	Kern
7-Jan	Chet & Margaret	Wheeler

## Sunday School Perfect Attendance-November 2015

<b>MEN</b>	Paul Arwood
	Roy Baker
	Bill Bowen
	Joe Carter
	Jimmy Edwards
	James Hartsock
	Rick Holland
	Jay Keck
	Kent Lawson
	Keith Roach

<b>YOUTH</b>	Katie Bledsoe
	Jake Boyd
	Colby Dillon
	Hannah Goins
	Frank Pennington
	Trey Pennington
	Connie Smith
	Emily Ward

<b>SINGLE YOUNG ADULTS</b>	None
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<b>YOUNG COUPLES</b>	Scott Jerrell

## Sunday School Perfect Attendance-November 2015

<b>PAIRS &amp; SPARES</b>	Ken Flanary
	Kay Jessee
	Phillip Smith
	Wanda Tester
<b>WOMEN</b>	Linda Arwood
	Ruth Bowen
	Mozelle Carter
	Sabrina Holland
	Sharon Holland
	Ruby Keck
	Nathaniel Smith
	Rhonda Smith
<b>LIFE LESSONS</b>	Anna Carter
	Pansy Flanary



**SUNDAY  
SCHOOL**  
*Make the Connection*

## Christmas Surprise

**James 1:17** *Every good and perfect gift is from above.....*

Every year we have a family tradition of going over to North Carolina to a tree farm and picking out a tree for Christmas. Ever since our kids were little, and until they got older and moved out of the house, we always managed to find a day when everyone could pile in the truck and spend some quality family time picking out that perfect tree for the holidays. This has always been the one event that was just for us - no outsiders. Over the years, we have gone in the rain, snow, bitter cold, and unexpected warm days. We have taken a saw and cut our own tree, and then other years let one of the 'experts' cut it. No matter what, we always ended up having a great time.

One of the things that has always surprised me is how the tree actually looks when you get it home. All of those trees (or almost all) look so lovely while standing so tall in the tree farms, but what they look like when you get them unbundled in your home can sometimes be a

different story. We have been incredibly lucky over the years to not bring home many duds, but this year I thought I had blown it.

The day started out great. It was a beautiful sunny day and off we went to the tree farm. When we got out of the truck there were so many beautiful wreathes and homemade things to look at. And the goodies to eat and drink were delicious! So things were off to a good start. We decided to walk up through the tree farm ourselves instead of riding up in the wagon. So many trees to choose from, and I thought I had found the perfect one for us this year. The tree guy came and cut it, put it through the baler that wrapped it, and into the truck it went. Then we drove over to eat at one of our favorite restaurants in Boone. Ah, a perfect day, and couldn't wait to get the tree into the stand at home.

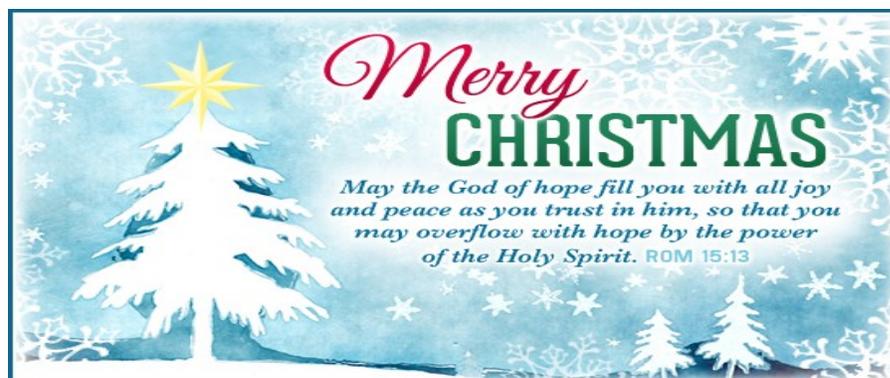
But a funny thing happened when the twine got snapped off this year and the tree branches fell out. It was ugly. Well - I say it was ugly

but maybe I was just surprised at what it looked like sitting in the house. I even thought that maybe they had given us the wrong tree but it had our tag on it so it was definitely ours. But after a few nips, snips, and tucks, it turned into the beautiful tree we had imagined when we chose it.

Surprises can often turn into something wonderful. It made me think, especially during this Christmas season, of how Mary (and everyone else) was so surprised when she found out she was with child. And what a most precious and perfect gift we were given. As it says in Romans 15:13: *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace.*

My prayer is that each and every one of you have a most joyous and hopeful Christmas season. Look to the future with wonderment, surprise, and peace in your heart, and may the Lord show and direct your path in the New Year.

Love from our Lord, Janey O.





## DEACONS

Paul Arwood	431-2666
Otis Bowen	431-2622
Scott Jerrell	940-1261
Kay Jessee	431-2751
Frank Pennington	423-579-2918



## SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

### SUNDAY

Sunday School	9:45 a.m.
Morning Worship	11:00 a.m.
Children's Church	11:00 a.m.
Evening Worship	6:00 p.m.
AWANA-(Sept-May)	5:00-7:00 p.m.

### WEDNESDAY

Bible Study	7:00 p.m.
Youth Group (Grades 8-12)	7:00 p.m.
KIDZ Club (K-7)	7:00 p.m.

*Disclaimer:*  
 Every effort is made to ensure that all submitted articles, pictures, items, etc. are included in the newsletter. Any omissions or reporting errors are unintentional. Please let me know if there are errors or omissions that need to be corrected and it will appear in the next issue. Thank you.