

“Whose Birthday is it Anyway?!”

Matthew 1:18-25

Intro. – Birthdays hold special significance, or at least they should. For instance, not a person here that doesn't pay some kind of attention to their birthday. Is there?! O, we all remember being excited when we were younger... couldn't sleep, wait etc.! Even when we get older, we act as though it is no big deal or that we really don't want anything special for our birthday... Yet, if our loved ones failed to help us celebrate our birthdays we would really be hurt would we not?!

Want to use this to introduce the term *NOEL*. Do you know what the term means? It means “birth or born on that day.” We hear and use this term a lot during this time of the year. Why? Because this is the time of year we celebrate the birth of Christ. And well we should, for the birth of Christ is an intricate part of the Gospel.

Purpose: to better understand WE are the reason for the season

We've been told again and again that *Jesus is the Reason for the Season* and we understand the sentiment behind this; however, the birth of Jesus was/is all about you and me

I WE Struggle in Our Celebration of His Birth

- with the birth of Christ being such an intricate part of the Gospel... there is the ever present danger of reversing the celebration of His birth and celebrate this time of the year the way the world has introduced...
- Illus. – cartoon that showed a half filled church building. The day was Sunday, December 25th. A little boy is looking up at his mother after having observed how few were present. The caption read “Whose birthday is it anyway?”
- brethren and friend, may we never cease to see the need to celebrate *the first Noel* – God came in the flesh in the person of Jesus, born to die on a Cross and yet be resurrected to return for His Church... How we need to celebrate the birth of Jesus for He came to provide a way back to the Father!

II JOB Would Have Struggled in the Celebration of His Birth

- how can we be so sure that Job would have struggled in the celebration of Jesus birth.
- In God's rebuke of Job, God reveals the joyous coming of Christ. He referred to His Son as “The Cornerstone.” You know what a cornerstone is don't you?
- Illus. – remember a game use to play called “Booby-trap.” It had several round wooden disks – object was to remove as many of these as possible without triggering the board with a spring on it... Key is determining what disks was not the main support...
- No guessing with Jesus. We know He's The Cornerstone. Listen to what God told Job several hundred years prior to the birth of His Son – Job 38:4-7 “*Where were you when I laid the foundation of the earth? Tell Me, if you have understanding. Who set its measurements, since you know? Or who stretched the line on it? On what were its bases sunk? Or who laid it cornerstone, when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy?*”

III ALL Struggle in the Celebration of His Birth

- Illus. – little magazine “Wit and Humor” told of a true happening with a family. This family celebrated Christmas each year with a birthday party for Jesus. They would place an extra chair at the table to remind them that Jesus was present. A cake was baked and decorated and then covered with candles. All would then join in singing “Happy Birthday” as part of their celebration of Jesus' birth. One year a friend of the family was visiting with them during Christmas. They asked the little five year old, Ruth “Did you get everything you wanted for Christmas?” After a short moment's thought she answered, “No, but it's not my birthday.”

- from the mouths of babes! It really is His birthday isn't it? Indeed it is and because it is, let there be joy!
- don't let the ways of the world blind us in properly celebrating the birth of our Lord!

Conclusion: Dare we ask on December 25th if Jesus received everything He wanted on His birthday? What do you suppose He really wants and can you and I be a part of supplying these wants?

- He wants harsh/festering feelings between two people whom He loves, but, who consistently refuse to love each other to change...
- He wants those for whom He died, who have procrastinated and have yet to accept His gift of grace on His terms...
- He wants those who are already immersed believers in Christ to identify with a solid faithful church to worship and serve together in that body of believers and to grow together in grace...
- He wants His people to mature – live grace responsive lives. To have a better understanding of His purposes...
- He wants solid, Biblical homes – homes that add strength and stability to His Church...

I pray that we all have a blessed time in celebrating the birth of our Lord. Pray even more that our Lord will receive some special gifts from each of us. After all “Whose Birthday is it Anyway?!”