

It's Christmas

Illus: An old pioneer traveled westward across the Great Plains until he came to an abrupt halt at the edge of the Grand Canyon. He gawked at the sight before him: a vast gorge one mile deep, 18 miles across, and more than 100 miles long! He gasped and said, "Something must have happened here!"

A visitor to our world at Christmas time, seeing all the lights, decorations, trees, parades, festivities and religious services, would probably say, "Something must have happened here!"

Indeed, something did happen. God came to earth on the first Christmas.

In Luke 2 we read, ¹ *And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus, that all the world should be taxed. ² (And this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria.) ³ And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city. ⁴ And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem; (because he was of the house and lineage of David:) ⁵ To be taxed with Mary his espoused wife, being great with child. ⁶ And so it was, that, while they were there, the days were accomplished that she should be delivered. 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 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 Savior, 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. ¹³ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ¹⁴ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:1-14 KJV*

Just as the angel said, a Savior was born. And that Savior has impacted each of our lives bringing us salvation, forgiveness, hope, joy, peace and eternal life. Our lives are filled with meaning and direction because of our Savior; Jesus Christ.

We must never stop remembering what Christ has done for us.

Tonight on the eve of the day we celebrate His birth, we remember in a special way. Tonight we obediently observe the Lords supper. As our Lord commanded, we partake of the juice and bread as we worship. The bread symbolizing His body and the juice His blood; we worship as we remember they were both given freely for us.

Tonight we worship in remembrance.

Prayer -

Communion -

Illus: In her book, "The Whisper Test," Mary Ann Bird writes: I grew up knowing I was different, and I hated it. I was born with a cleft palate, and when I started school, my classmates made it clear to me how I looked to others: a little girl with a misshapen lip, crooked nose, lopsided teeth, garbled speech and impaired hearing.

When schoolmates asked, "What happened to your lip?" I'd tell them I'd fallen and cut it on a piece of glass. Somehow it seemed more acceptable to have suffered an accident than to have been born different. I was convinced that no one outside my family could ever love me.

There was, however, Mrs. Leonard the 2nd grade teacher. Everyone adored her as she was short, round, and nice -- a sparkling lady. Annually we had a hearing test. ... Mrs. Leonard gave the test to everyone in the class, and finally it was my turn. I knew from past years that the teacher would whisper something, and we would have to repeat it back -- things like "The sky is blue" or "Do you have new shoes?" I waited there for those words that God must have put into her mouth, those seven words that changed my life. Mrs. Leonard said, in her whisper, "I wish you were my little girl."

We are all deformed by sin and shortcoming in our life. We carry the burden of sin and guilt. But God whispers in our ear, "I wish you were my child and I have gone to extravagant lengths to make it possible."

Merry Christmas, God loves you.