

**'THE REST OF THE STORY'**  
***('Rightly dividing the Word' About Christ's Life)***  
**Applications of Luke's Gospel to Our Lives**

**Those Christmas Presents**



Like most people, nearly two weeks into the New Year, we've made Christmas a memory by taking down the decorations and returning to life as usual. About 20 messages and devotionals from God's Word, like oratory presents from God the Holy Spirit have been delivered, heard, considered and hopefully, are being experienced as new things in our growth in grace as Christians. Of course, we can't remember everything God spoke to our heart about during the Christmas season, but unless it was just a sentimental journey through the Christmas story again, some meaningful spiritual-moral progress has been made to help advance *'the happy new you'* God intends us to become this year.

Now we move on in our Sunday Bible exposition series *'The Really Good Life'* about the life and times Christ to build upon the Bible study knowledge we got from God for Christmas. Like those material presents people gave you, and you are now enjoying in the New Year, let's enjoy weekly the new *'growth in grace'* God will be showing us AFTER each Lord's Day ahead.

To do this, each Friday I want to elaborate on the Sunday message we heard with a review, evaluation of how what we learned worked (*or didn't*) and then bring in *Matthew, Mark and John's* supplemental information (*and any other references relative to the Sunday passage*). This approach will help us get the most out of the life of Christ studies and how it works in our lives today. It will also be a great time to get a sneak-preview look at what we will be studying each coming Sunday morning.

My prayer is that this approach will help you (*and me*) understand God's gift of His Word, to the fullest extent possible and that we will appropriate better the 'growth gifts' He wants to build into our personal lives and relationship with Him. Hopefully, all we will be learning about the Lord Jesus Christ will not be like some Christmas presents we either left unopened or used a time or two and have just left it forgotten in a box, drawer, or closet someplace. Please pray that God will lead us all into greater depths of wisdom and understanding of God's holy Word and His perfect will in the year ahead, or until He comes (*whichever comes first*).



~PtL

**So, Let's Get Started...**

What was the study two Sundays ago in **Luke 2:21-24** about? (*Separation & dedication by the parents of Jesus in the temple*) What do you remember about how God spoke to your heart in the service, what did you pray for God to help you with and what action did you take about it?

***Any testimonies to share about dedication and separation that you've done or intend?***

What was last Sunday's message in **Luke 2:25-38** about? (*Church affiliation, fellowship, influences that are positive and spiritually motivational to you and your family/ Simeon & Anna at the temple*). What do you remember that God spoke to you about regarding the message and what He wants you to do with what you heard? Did the Spirit comfort and affirm that you don't need to make any changes or was there something He wants you to do better? If something needs to be changed, have you done anything about it yet? If 'no' why not? When do you intend to follow through on these things?

*Any testimonies about application of this passage to life?*

Last Sunday's message also included **Luke 2:39-40** about the childhood home of Joseph, Mary and Jesus (*and eventually at least 6 other brothers and sisters/ Mark 6:3, Matthew 13:55, Acts 1:14*). Why did Luke omit all the information about the wise men, Herod, the trip to Egypt and back? Also, why is so little said about the childhood home Jesus lived in during the age 2 to 11 years? Don't you think knowing more about the kind of typical Jewish home Jesus lived in would be valuable?

*Share about possible answers to these questions.*

### **Looking Ahead to Sunday...**

It is true that very little is written in Luke (or any other gospel account) about the early childhood home and family life of Jesus in the household of Joseph and Mary. However, since it is safe to assume Joseph and Mary were dedicated Jewish parents, passages like **Deuteronomy 6:1-9** were no doubt descriptive of what Jesus saw and heard all the years He lived at home in Nazareth. And since the pre-incarnate Lord gave the 10 Commandments, it is safe to assume He and His parents lived according to **Exodus 20:1-12** (*especially the first 5 of the 10 commandments – I doubt if laws #6 through #10 ever needed much enforcement*).

- *Discuss what the mood, conversation and behavior must have been like, with Jesus in the house.*
- *Do you think it was ever hard for age 2-11 Jesus to lovingly obey Commandment #5 with good, but human and fallible parents?*
- *How hard do you think it must have been to be Jesus' little brother or sister? Discuss how you think He must have been with them and His parents.*
- *Without being critical of your parents or guardians, how could a **Deuteronomy 6:1-9** home have been more helpful to your maturation (especially in spiritual things)?*
- *How could (can) you have been a more 'Jesus-like' kid in your home during those formative years?*
- *Please notice hardly anything is said about those early years, much said about the adolescent and teen years and then very little about the young adult period (20's) of Jesus' life. What conclusion can be made from this obvious age division growth arrangement of the text?*

***Don't know? Stay tuned... Answers are on the way Sunday!***