

Promises, Provision and Peace

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[0 : 0 0] Well, good morning again and welcome to faith. So good to see everyone here this morning, family and friends together. I know that Christmas time means different things to different people. For some, it is a time of joy, a time of giving, a time of relaxation as well from being off work and enjoying the times together.

For some, it's a time of sadness. There is maybe no family, no relationships that they have. For some, they are mourning the loss of family members from years past and families are not together during Christmas time.

And I know that it can be a difficult and a joy-filled time at the same time as well. As we are spending this Christmas Eve together in God's Word, we're going to be looking primarily at some promises.

And we'll be in Isaiah chapter 7, verse number 14. But we're calling this a season of miracles. And if we think about it, Christmas is a season of miracles because there are many miracles that took place in order for the Savior to be brought into the world.

We have the miracle of the Virgin Mother, something that has never been seen before, never been seen since. We have the miracle of the manger, the miracle of the messengers, the miracle of the magi, those wise men and the star and all the events surrounding.

[1 : 3 4] The birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, were in fact miraculous. And I believe that each of these miracles teach us something about God.

These are the messages of Christmas. And for the next few moments, as we spend the time together this morning, we will be considering the miracle of the virgin birth and what this miracle teaches us.

And we're going to see it being a message of promises, a message of provision, and a message of peace.

So what does Christmas, what does the birth, the virgin birth of Jesus Christ, tell us about this time that we're looking at together? First of all, we'll see that God, in this, God is the great promise maker.

Sure. God has promised us many things, as we're going to start back into the Old Testament and see that we were in need of a promise. God created mankind in the Garden of Eden.

[2 : 4 3] Man, Adam, and as well Eve enjoyed relationship with God. They enjoyed God's presence in the Garden as they spent time together each and every day.

But then Adam chose to disobey God. Acted as what we call the federal head of the human race. He acted as the representative in that when Adam sinned, Adam represented the entire human race.

So everyone born after Adam was born with a nature, a propensity, not only an ability, but with a bent toward sin.

With a sin nature and are, in fact, sinners. So after creation came the fall, and then we will see the promise of redemption.

Because God is the great promise maker. Turn with me together this morning in your Bibles. We will begin with Genesis chapter 3 and verse number 15.

[3 : 49] Where it says, God says, And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed, and he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.

We see the promise of a Redeemer, that the Redeemer would come, the Messiah would come to earth. He would take care of Satan, and he would bruise Satan.

He would be victorious over death. The serpent's head would be bruised. And the work of the enemy, the work of the enemy that Satan accomplished in the Garden of Eden by tempting Eve, ultimately Adam choosing to disobey God.

Jesus Christ would undo the result of the fall. And we know that the result of the fall is we're all born with a sin nature.

The earth was cursed. Mankind would have to eat by the sweat of his brow. He had to work a garden. He had to till it. He would have to weed it. And all the things that were the result of the curse, Jesus Christ, because he won, because he was victorious at the cross of Calvary, all of this would be ultimately undone.

[5 : 11] So what did the promise of redemption entail? What did it involve? Well, God's love, first of all, would cause him to require that a Savior would be provided for sinners.

Because otherwise, mankind had no hope. There was nothing that we could have ever done to be good enough and to deserve the forgiveness of God. We could never work hard enough.

So what involved here, the redemption would involve God's love, causing him to provide a Savior for sinners. And that's Jesus Christ himself.

And God's grace would bring salvation to those who do not deserve it. Think about that. Who deserves salvation? We live in a society where we believe we deserve only the best, right?

We deserve good. We deserve to be blessed. We deserve a job. We deserve whatever. Well, the reality is, we deserve, as human beings, is eternal separation from God, because we disobeyed him.

[6 : 17] And we continue to disobey him, even those who are in the body of Christ. Well, think about that. Even though you love your family, even though your family is always going to be your family, at times, children disobey parents.

At times, we hurt one another. That is going to be this way until we are glorified, and until we receive our glorified body, and we are in heaven.

But because of the work of redemption that took place at Calvary, God's grace would bring salvation to those who don't deserve it.

So the virgin birth would have the coming of the Redeemer. Let's look at Isaiah. Our passage this morning, Isaiah chapter 7, in verse number 14, where the promise is this.

God is the great price maker. Isaiah 17, Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel.

[7 : 25] So that's the great promise. That there would be one who would deliver. There would be one who would be born of a virgin who would deliver the world from their sin. But problem, how would a virgin give birth?

We have a physical, not only improbability, but we have a physical impossibility. So here is God as the great promise maker makes the greatest promise ever.

So how can this promise come to be? Well, we see that in the next main point that we see in the miracle of the virgin birth.

God is a great problem solver. And aren't you glad about that? How many of you lack problems? Nobody does. We all have problems. It might be physical issues. It might be relationship problems.

It might be financial problems. There are some that splurge on Christmas and are paying for it until November or December of next year. Those are financial problems.

[8 : 26] problems. So God is the great problem solver. The promise of a redemption called for a Savior. So he says, a virgin shall conceive and shall bear a son and his name shall be called Emmanuel.

The Savior would be born of a virgin. Look again Isaiah 7.14 Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. And this is the sign.

Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son and shall call his name Emmanuel. Now let's consider all the things that have taken place but also look at what would be necessary in order for this promise to be fulfilled because we have a big problem.

How can a virgin conceive and bear a child? Well consider the creation of Adam and Eve. No conception just creation.

What was that? That was a miracle. God making something out of nothing. He took dust, made, fashioned a man, breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he came alive.

[9 : 44] So we have a miraculous creation. What about all people since creation?

What about Abel? What about Cain? What about everyone since then? Your great grandparents, your grandparents, your mama, your daddy, you, everyone else.

what surrounded or what was necessary for that? Well God continues his natural laws and so through procreation human beings are born.

But then we have the virgin birth. It stands alone. It is a special miracle. A special miracle and a sign.

But remember God is the great problem solver. Because miracles are no problem to God. That should come as no surprise to most of us. God is the great problem solver.

[10 : 47] God is the miracle worker. God specializes in miracles and that's simply what he does. What does the virgin birth tell us?

Think about all other religions ever known to man. What is religion? When we boil religion down into a nutshell really what is religion?

I will say that it's this. Religion is man's attempt to reach God. Man's attempt to please a deity.

Religion is mankind's attempt to please a deity and in our case to please God. But we know that Christianity is not a religion.

Ultimately it's a relationship with Jesus Christ. So the virgin birth says that God is big enough to solve our problems. And what makes Christianity unique?

[11 : 49] Among all the world religions. Because every other, every religion began as a concept within a human being's mind. and then gained followers, propagated that teaching, gained more followers, and more followers.

And for many of the world's religions, it is man's attempt to figure out what pleases their particular deity. Christianity stands alone and stands apart because we believe, the Bible teaches, that God said this would be the sign that a virgin would conceive, supernaturally, and would bear a child.

And this child shall be called Emmanuel. And what does Emmanuel mean? The Bible tells us. God with us. God in human form. So what does the virgin birth mean?

The virgin birth means God worked a miracle in order that Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, could take out our sin upon him, and could bear the penalty of death, penalty of sin was death, and could bear an eternal penalty, and when he would rise again would be the answer to mankind's needs.

So the virgin birth says that God is big enough to solve all of our problems. do you remember in Luke chapter one when the angel told Mary what would happen?

[13 : 27] Do you remember Mary's response? She says, how can this be? I don't know a man. Meaning she's never had physical relationships. So that there was no way that she would be able to conceive and bear a child.

Let's look at Luke chapter one. What was the angel's response in verse 37? Don't worry Mary, because nothing is impossible with God.

For with God, nothing will be impossible. Think about the worst problem that you and I could ever face. Think about the biggest obstacle that you and I could have in our lives, whether it be relationship, physical, relational, emotional, psychological, financial, whatever, with God, nothing is impossible.

Do you feel that today, during this season, you're facing some insurmountable odds, maybe an obstacle, maybe something that to you is earth shattering, and maybe is something that would cause depression, anxiety, fear, whatever we can find ourselves up against, when we trust God and place our situation in God's hands, we can know beyond a shadow of a doubt that with God nothing is impossible.

And it's up to him and he can provide the miracle because God is the great miracle performer. God is the great miracle man.

[15 : 12] And so, we know that God is a God of miracles. God took a virgin, Mary, and said, through you will be born the Son of God, Emmanuel, God with us.

So God is the great miracle worker. God is the great problem solver. He is the great promise. You know, we make promises all the time, do we not? Sometimes we make promises that realistically there's no way that we could keep.

But with God, he makes an audacious promise. He can keep it because he is the great problem solver. And what else does the virgin birth teach us?

It teaches us, I believe that God is the great peacemaker. God is the great peacemaker because today, remember, we're talking about promises, provision, and peace.

God made a great promise in the Old Testament. He would bruise Satan's heel. He would send, in the Old Testament, Isaiah, He would send the Redeemer. And also, that God would provide peace.

[16 : 23] God, the great peacemaker, the virgin born child, would be called Emmanuel. God with us. Old Testament, prior to that special birth in Bethlehem, mankind was really not in a unique relationship with God as you and I are today.

Because God, the Holy Spirit came upon certain people at certain times in order to accomplish a certain task. Holy Spirit was upon David, Holy Spirit upon Samson, Holy Spirit upon certain prophets at particular times.

But, there was always a waiting, an expectation to be, to have God with us.

The moment that child was born, God was with humankind and has not left ever since. Because what happened when Jesus went up to heaven?

What did he say? I will not leave you without a comforter. because he says, Terry, here in Jerusalem, because it's not very long, the Holy Spirit is going to come. And since that point in time, everyone who's trusted Christ, everyone who trusts Christ, as their Savior, is indwelt by his Holy Spirit.

[17 : 50] His down payment, so to speak. God is going to return for us. Man separated from God to be reunited with him.

God is the great provider of peace. This virgin-born Savior would redeem us at the cross of Calvary. And we see in Luke chapter 2, verse 14, peace, goodwill toward men would be the message of Christ's birth.

As we think about what was said, as we think about what was proclaimed at the birth, was peace and goodwill toward men.

Verse 14 of Luke chapter 2, glory to God in the highest. Think about that. If you were there at that moment in time, expecting your Messiah, and you hear glory to God in the highest, and on earth.

Because what was Jerusalem lacking at that particular time? Peace. They were under Roman rule. They were under the thumb of Rome. And they were wanting someone to redeem, someone to come and to take over and to provide some peace in their lives.

[19 : 20] Peace on earth. Peace, goodwill toward men. We have peace with God through the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. Let's look at Romans chapter 5, verse number 1.

Therefore, having been justified, how are we made right with God? There's only one way. The Bible says we have been justified, we are made right with God, not by our good works.

Because the Bible says it is not of works. Salvation is by grace through faith, not of works, because if it were of works, we could boast about it. So we are made right with God, not by being a good person.

We are made right with God, not by being a member of a particular church. We are made right with God, not by going through certain rites and rituals. The Bible says we are made right, we are justified with God through faith.

What kind of faith? Faith in Christ. Faith that Jesus is God, faith that Jesus died on the cross in our place, faith that he rose from the dead and provided the penalty, the payment for the penalty of our sin, and we can become a part of God's family.

[20 : 38] We have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Jesus, God is a great promise maker, God is a great problem solver, God is also the great peacemaker.

Personal peace comes through full surrender to him. Let's look at Philippians chapter 4 verses 5 and 7 or 5 through 7.

Let your gentleness be made known or be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. Be anxious for nothing. Don't worry, the Bible says.

Don't allow yourself to be in a panic about things. He says be anxious for nothing, but in everything, by prayer and supplication.

Praying, talking to God, asking God for provision through prayer with thanksgiving, thanking God for what he's already provided. Is that something that you do each and every day thank God?

[21 : 49] It's the way I begin every morning. God, thank you for this brand new day. God, thank you for your mercy and your grace. God, thank you so much for your forgiveness.

I know I don't deserve your forgiveness. God, thank you so much for your provision. I don't deserve the awesome provision that you provide to me and to my family every day.

I don't deserve that. God, thank you so very much for being who you are. I praise you for your greatness. I praise you for your majesty. I praise you for your holiness.

God, you are an awesome God. That's pretty much the first words out of my mouth as I start my day, as my feet hit the floor.

It's not the same necessarily every day, but it's the same general concept. God, you are awesome. Thank you for this day. And then my next prayer is, God, make me a blessing today. Make me a blessing to someone else today.

[22 : 52] Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God, and here's the promise of peace. And the peace of God, the peace of God, peace with God comes through the last section that we talked about.

We are redeemed, we are justified by faith. By faith in Jesus Christ as our Savior, we are able to attain peace with God.

Because the Bible says, prior to us trusting Christ as our Savior, we are God's enemy, and we are destined to the lake of fire, or destined for the lake of fire. So prior to coming to Christ, we are God's enemy, we have no peace with God.

Through faith, in Jesus Christ, we are able to make peace with God, and through following Christ, through prayer, and through what the Apostle Paul is telling us here this morning, by prayer, supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God, and here's the promise, and the peace of God.

God's peace, which he says, surpasses all understanding. You can't understand it. How can that be? We are weighted down with problems, and we pray to God, trust him, and he floods our minds and floods our life with peace.

[24 : 21] And the next thing he says, he will guard our hearts and minds. That is a military term. Military term, he will provide a garrison, he will provide a guard for our hearts from Satan, from our own emotions.

He will provide that peace, and will guard our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. So we have peace with God by faith in Jesus Christ.

We have the peace of God supplied into our hearts and minds by trusting in him and praying and not worrying. But then we also know that peace on earth will come, not in our lifetime, on earth.

Because what will happen before Christ comes back again? There will be wars, rumors of wars, and things will ultimately get worse. You say, well, pastor, that's kind of some bad news.

That's a downer. I thought we were kind of lifting us up and then all of a sudden we're all the way back down again. No, the reality is we know that on earth there will be no lasting peace.

[25 : 29] But when Jesus Christ comes back again, the second time, there will truly be peace on earth. Peace on earth will come when Christ returns again to reign.

Let's look at Isaiah chapter 9, verses 6 and 7. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government will be upon his shoulder.

I'm glad ultimately the government will be on Jesus and not on Congress and not on the president. You should hear a big amen on that. No matter what your political bet is, you know what?

Mankind will always be a terrible ruler. But Jesus Christ is the only perfect ruler there is.

So the government will be upon his shoulder and his name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace, of the increase of his government, and peace, there will be no end upon the throne of David and over his kingdom to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward even forever.

[26 : 43] The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this. peace. So the promise of peace is going to be ultimately fulfilled when Jesus Christ comes back to earth.

So how do we wrap this up this morning? The miracle of the virgin birth. What does it mean to us? It means an awesome promise from the Old Testament, the promise of a redeemer.

And we also see that God is the great problem solver and he provides that peace through a Savior, a virgin born Savior.

And ultimately not only does he provide peace with him, the peace of Christ as we pray in our lifetimes and he'll provide world peace ultimately one day.

A couple of things this morning. If you have not already done so, come, to Christ in faith this morning and find peace.

[27 : 51] Maybe you found yourself looking to your own self, looking to yourself to try to be good enough, to try to work and try to be good enough, keep the Ten Commandments.

The Bible says all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. The Bible also says there is none righteous. No, not one. But God demonstrated his love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

The Bible also promises that all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. So this morning, come to faith in Christ. Say, Lord, I know I'm a sinner. Lord, I know that I don't deserve to be a part of your family.

This morning, I am trusting your promise. And I'm trusting in Jesus Christ alone for my salvation. and I want to be a part of your family and I will follow Christ as my Lord and as my master.

So I welcome you to come to faith in Christ and find peace. And then secondly, I encourage you to share the good news of his peace each and every day.

[29 : 07] Not only during the Christmas season, but each and every day, share the joy of Christ. You know, we can have all kinds of things to really complain about.

Normally, I don't make a lot of TV references, but for some of you, some, matter of fact, one of our senators did a little thing on Twitter a little while back, and it was in fun.

But best of us, some of you who follow a certain series will know what I'm talking about, where people air their grievances. It's a made up holiday, by the way. But you know what?

Sometimes we're so good at airing our grievances, rather than sharing what we're thankful for. So rather than spend our year sharing grievances, finding out or trying to find what's wrong with things, let's share the joy of Christ throughout 2018.

share peace, share the joy. The Bible says, if we can find it within us, be at peace with all men. Meaning, if there is a problem between you and someone else, don't be the problem.

[30 : 27] Be the peacemaker. It might be at work, it might be within the family, it might be with friends, it might be, because if we let our pride be in control, it might be their family members who haven't spoken to one another for years.

Be the peacemaker. If it all, if it lies within you, if at all possible, the Bible says, be at peace with all men. So let's share the joy of Christ.

Let's be, blessed are the peacemakers. So let's share the joy of Christ each and every day. My prayer is that we would have a prosperous new year.

We have one more Sunday together, by the way, before the new year begins. But my prayer is that God will bless you and your family. My prayer is that God would bless you with his peace and joy, not only during this holiday season, but each and every day.

Let's pray. Father, this morning we are so very, very thankful for your goodness, for your promise, for your provision of a Savior and the peace that you provide.

[31 : 50] Father, thank you so very much for this day, for this season, the reason for this season, the birth of our Savior, the virgin birth of our Lord and our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Father, may we honor you and glorify you with our lives each and every day. We thank you for the ultimate gift of a Savior.

Father, we pray this in Jesus' name. Amen. Let's all stand, please.