

The Rebirth of Hope #2

Mary's Realized Hope

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I. Introductory Remarks.

In this message today we will want to look at the birth of Christ and see that it was in simplicity that this very special baby was born. As we saw in last week's message, the birth of this child represented a rebirth of hope for the nation of Israel and for the whole world as well. In this message, we will also see how the birth of this child was the realized hope for Mary, the mother of Jesus. It gave her the faith that was needed as she raised this child for God. But first let's look at this very special birth as recorded in Luke's Gospel.

II. The Birth of Christ.

1. In Simplicity The Child Was Born - Luke 2:1-7.

Luke 2:6-7 *So it was, that while they were there, the days were completed for her to be delivered. And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling cloths, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.*

As human beings we have a tendency to long for the sensational -- for the great miracles and startling evidences of God's presence. But the greatest miracle ever known to mankind was done in quietness and in simplicity of daily life common to millions of men. Mary's realized hope came forth in this manner.

I believe the rebirth of hope that God desires to come forth in each one of our lives comes forth in a much similar manner. The great things God desires to do in our lives often bear this same stamp -- the stamp and seal of commonness -- of God's mighty, yet unobtrusive, work in the lives of men and women everywhere.

When God came to each one of us, it wasn't necessarily with a big splash or shining light for the most the most part. He came in the simplicity of daily life that is common to mankind.

As we mature and grow in Christ, His mighty work in our lives is often done in this same manner -- in simplicity and quietness. This is the work of Christ that continually brings forth the rebirth of hope in our lives. It begins with the birth of His Spirit in our lives and continues as we faithfully follow His quiet leadings.

2. The Birth of Jesus Represented Realized Hope For Mary.

As we saw last week Mary had received a visit from the angel, Gabriel about the child she was to bear and how He would grow up to save His people from their sins. Mary had received some wonderful promises that brought a great sense of hope to her spirit.

Luke 1:30-32 *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.*

As we saw last week, Mary's response was one of simple childlike faith without hesitation and doubt. She replied, "Let it be to me according to your word." Now with the birth of Christ, all of this hope was being realized and fulfilled in her life. Mary knew in her heart of hearts that only God could have impregnated her. The birth of the Christ Child revealed to her the reality of God, with all of her hope fully realized. But the seed of hope was planted when she believed without doubting.

III. Lessons from Mary's Faith and Hope.

God had given Mary an awesome responsibility. How would you have liked the responsibility of raising God's own Son, who had been entrusted to your care? Mary would need plenty of faith and hope for the days ahead and the trials she would surely go through in raising this special child.

1. It Is God Who Births Faith & Hope Into Our Lives.

As we saw with Mary, it was God who chose her and selected her to be the mother of His only begotten Son. Mary had simply allowed God to prepare her heart along the way for this intervention of God into her life (John 6:44-45). Through the circumstances of life, she had kept her heart soft and pliable.

John 15:16 *"You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.*

When we respond in simple childlike faith and obedience to the drawing of the Father just as Mary did God is able to birth faith and hope into our lives as well.

2. God Continues to Add Faith & Hope Through Simplicity and Commonness.

Let's remember the thought we began with -- that is that God's leadings and further work in our lives are often accomplished in quietness and in the simplicity of daily life common to all of us. As we are faithful to follow Christ and serve Him in the simplicity and commonness of our lives, He is able to strengthen and add to the faith and hope that is constantly needed for the struggles we face. This is what happened to Mary.

- **She ponders the things of God in her heart - Luke 2:16-19.**

God not only chose to visit Joseph, Mary and others by the angel of the Lord, but also on this special night of Christ's birth chose to visit some shepherds who were keeping watch over their flock. After receiving the message from the angel and the host of heaven the shepherds go to visit the Christ Child and share with Mary the wonderful things that were told to them. Mary keeps these things in her heart as a testimony of God's faithfulness.

Luke 2:18-19 *And all those who heard it marveled at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart.*

Where is Mary at and what is she doing as God's sends these special messengers to witness the birth of her child? She's simply being the mother of her child in the simplicity of her surroundings. But in this God once again speaks to her heart in a very strong and confirming way of His purpose for her and this child. The point is that she takes the time to really ponder and drink in all that God is doing and speaking in her life.

How often do we allow the little things that come to us from God in the simplicity of our daily routines to slip away, because we don't take the time to ponder them thoroughly when they were fresh in our heart? This is what builds faith and hope in our lives and gives us the ability to cope with the many struggles we incur as we go about our daily chores.

- **She does what is customary and her duty to do - Luke 2:21-35.**

Again, we find Mary and Joseph doing something that was customary and not out of the ordinary. They were simply following the customs that had been set forth in the Law of Moses concerning the birth of the firstborn. And as a result, God chose to once again intervene in an unusual way.

Luke 2:33-34 *And Joseph and His mother marveled at those things which were spoken of Him. Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, "Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against.*

There are many things that God desires for us to do as Christians, which are simply our duty to do as we serve Him in our daily lives. These are opportunities for God to use us or to impart faith and hope through a circumstance in which we sense His hand at work.

Luke 17:10 *"So likewise you, when you have done all those things which you are commanded, say, 'We are unprofitable servants. We have done what was our duty to do.' "*

John 12:26 *"If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there My servant will be also. If anyone serves Me, him My Father will honor.*

IV. Concluding Remarks.

As we come to a close, let's keep in mind that it is God who gives birth to the faith and hope in our lives, but when we continue to respond through simple obedience in the midst of the simplicity and commonness of life, God is able cause that faith and hope to be further realized and rewarded. We grow from faith to faith, just as Mary did.

The measure of faith is given when Christ is birthed into our hearts and then begins to grow from faith to faith.

Romans 12:3 *For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.*

Romans 1:17 *For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, "The just shall live by faith."*

This was just the beginning of Mary's new walk of faith and hope. She would experience many trials and hardships in being the mother of our Savior. She would have to flee to Egypt to avoid having her Son killed and then she would be called back to her native land and even lose her child for a short time at the age of twelve. But these precious promises and God's interventions from time to time would keep her going from faith to faith. And in the end she would release her Son to be our Savior.

Remember! It isn't necessarily in the sensational and great miracles and startling evidences that we experience God's intervention in our lives. It is often in the simplicity and commonness of daily life that we experience Him quietly at work doing mighty things in us. Take the time to ponder the times you sense God at work in you! This is what continually brings forth the rebirth of hope in each of our lives.