

WEDNESDAY

DECEMBER 16, 2015

EVERLASTING FATHER

Isaiah 9:6

It is helpful for me to remember that I have an everlasting Father. That phrase literally means ‘one who cares for his children forever.’ At Christmastime I miss my momma and daddy. They both loved Christmas. What I miss most about my daddy was he was my go-to guy. When I needed some advice, some wisdom, or needed to talk something out, I would always call him. There are times even today when I wish I could pick up the phone and call him and gets his advice. While he was alive there was comfort in knowing he was still the man, the one in charge, the authority figure. But our earthly fathers are not going to be here forever. When my father died it was a stunning realization that now I was in charge, that I had to be the go-to guy for my family. Where do I go now? It was good to remember that in Jesus I have an everlasting father and so do you. We have an everlasting Father who will always be there for us, who will never leave us, who will always love us, provide for us, and take care of us. This life can be scary at times, and we can feel overwhelmed and helpless, but we have an everlasting Father who protects us from evil and provides our every need. He is the go-to guy who will never let you down. Jesus is the everlasting Father who is for you, who is with you, and you are safe in His hands today, tomorrow, and forever. - *Dr. Tim Thompson*

THURSDAY

DECEMBER 17, 2015

SLEEP LOOSE

Psalms 121

The psalmist reminds us that God is watching over you and me. He never falls asleep. He never lets His guard down. He never nods off or takes a nap. God never falls asleep at the switch. God is qualified to be our greatest source of help because He has a track record of faithfulness to the faithful. God is faithful and dependable. He is 24 hours a day watching over you and me. When you were children do you remember your bedtime rituals? Do you have bedtime rituals with your children and grandchildren? Sometimes getting children to bed is a chore and requires a few well-spoken threats. For most of us there was usually some last word of the day when we were tucked in and the lights were turned off. Words like “I love you,” “Good night,” “See you tomorrow,” “Sleep tight and don’t let the bedbugs bite,” “Get some sleep.” I love the words that Susan Stiles speaks to her two girls every night. She says to them, “Remember, you are special to God. Remember how much He loves you. Sleep loose.” Isn’t that cool? Sleep loose. She wants her children to sleep loose in the security and protection of God’s love. Many of us adults are tight, tensed up, on the edge, tossing, and turning. Sleeping tight is a hard way to do life. Sleep loose. God knows you, God loves you, and God is watching over you. He is not sleeping. I hope you will sleep loose tonight knowing that God is awake all night watching over you. - *Dr. Tim Thompson, Senior Pastor*

FRIDAY

DECEMBER 18, 2015

MARY

Luke 1:26-38

Mary knows that life as she knows it is over. Her world will be turned upside down. Who would ever believe this crazy story? Her parents will be stunned, her reputation ruined, her upcoming marriage to Joseph will be canceled, and everything is going to be one big, hot mess. What would you do? What would you say? Mary says the most amazing thing in Luke 1:38, “I am the Lord’s servant,” Mary answered. “May your word to me be fulfilled.” That is not a statement of passive resignation over circumstances she can’t control. No, that is a heroic offering of her life. It is the sacrifice of her dreams, her plans, her agenda, and her life. “Whatever you want for my life, Lord, I trust you. I want your plan, your will. I don’t want my plan or my will.” She is humbly receiving God’s word and promising to live a God-centered life, not a me-centered life. I trust my life to You. I wonder if you have come to a place where you are ready to resign as general manager of your universe and to live a God-centered, not a me-centered life. Mary reminds us the very best thing you can do for your life, the place where you will find life’s deepest peace and significance and blessings is when you get yourself off your hands and put your hands in God’s hands. Will you do that this Christmas?

- *Dr. Tim Thompson*

SATURDAY

DECEMBER 19, 2015

GET NOISY

Luke 2:17 “After seeing him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child.”

Did you notice that the first thing the shepherds did with the good news of Christmas was to share it? Good news is for telling. Outside of Atlanta is a growing church. It is always full of activity and noise, lots of cars and music and people. A group of neighborhood folks who lived near the church put together a petition which would require the church to keep quieter. They went door to door to get signatures. They knocked on the door of a Jewish man and asked him to sign their petition. “What’s the problem?” he asked. They said the Christians were too noisy. He said, “I won’t sign it.” They said, “Why? You are Jewish, and you don’t even believe in Jesus.” He said, “I know, but if I believed what those Christians believe, that the Messiah has come, I would be a lot noisier than they are.” The birth of Jesus is for sharing. Be noisy. You don’t have to preach, just look for opportunities that are there every day to share an unpretentious, unrehearsed, simple humble word about the Lord. I promise God’s Holy Spirit will use it. Someone wrote, “Let’s give a little Jesus, a thoughtful word or deed, an act of generosity for someone who is in need. Let’s give a little Jesus to everyone we meet- the sales clerk, the server, or the person on the street. Let’s give a little Jesus. That is what really counts. Not what is bought or whom or what amount. Let’s give a little Jesus to everyone large and small, for Jesus the Messiah is the greatest gift of all.” Share a little Jesus with someone this year

- *Dr. Tim Thompson*

CONTEMPORARY SERVICE

WESLEY HALL - DECEMBER 13, 2015

WORSHIP GUIDE & DAILY DEVOTIONS

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“Go Tell It On the Mountain” by Needtobreathe
 “10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)” by Matt Redman
 “O Holy Night” by Chris Tomlin
 “No One Higher” by Seth Condrey

SERMON NOTES

PEACE IS BORN

Matthew 2:10-16 and Luke 2:8-20

The birth of Christ brought a mixed response.

- Some Wisemen and Shepherds bowed in **worship**.

Matthew 2:10-12 - “When they saw the star, they were filled with joy! They entered the house and saw the child with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests and gave him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. When it was time to leave, they returned to their own country by another route, for God had warned them in a dream not to return to Herod.”

Luke 2:8-20 - “That night some shepherds were in the fields outside the village, guarding their flocks of sheep. Suddenly, an angel of the Lord appeared among them, and the radiance of the Lord’s glory surrounded them. They were terribly frightened, but the angel reassured them. ‘Don’t be afraid!’ he said. ‘I bring you good news of great joy for everyone! The Savior -- yes, the Messiah, the Lord -- has been born tonight in Bethlehem, the city of David! And this is how you will recognize him: You will find a baby lying in a manger, wrapped snugly in strips of cloth!’ Suddenly, the angel was joined by a vast host of others -- the armies of heaven -- praising God: ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and peace on earth to all whom God favors.’ When the angels had returned to heaven, the shepherds said to each other, ‘Come on, let’s go to Bethlehem! Let’s see this wonderful thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.’ They ran to the village and found Mary and Joseph. And there was the baby, lying in the manger. Then the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this child. All who heard the shepherds’ story were astonished, but Mary quietly treasured these things in her heart and thought about them often. The shepherds went back to their fields and flocks, glorifying and praising God for what the angels had told them, and because they had seen the child, just as the angel had said.”

- A ruthless king plotted **murder**.

Matthew 2:13-16 - “After the wise men were gone, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream. ‘Get up! Flee to Egypt with the child and his mother,’ the angel said. ‘Stay there until I tell you to return, because Herod is going to search for the child to kill him.’ That night Joseph left for Egypt with the child and Mary, his mother, and they stayed there until Herod’s death. This fulfilled what the Lord had spoken through the prophet: ‘I called my Son out of Egypt.’ Herod was furious when he realized that the wise men had outwitted him. He sent soldiers to kill all the boys in and around Bethlehem who were two years old and under, based on the wise men’s report of the star’s first appearance.”

- Most people (including the religious leaders) **missed** the significance of Christ’s birth.

John 1:10-11- “He came into the very world he created, but the world didn’t recognize him. He came to his own people, and even they rejected him.”

We must decide how we will respond to Jesus’ birth today.

- We can choose to **reject** Christ and his “coming” into our life.
- Or...we can choose to **worship** Christ and experience his **peace**.

— Rev. Brandon Dasinger

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Watch today’s sermon on WFRZ-TV, online at frazerumc.org/media or download the podcast at frazerumc.org/podcast. You may also order a CD of today’s service at the Connection Point desk.

God with Us

Matthew 1:22-23 - “²²All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³‘The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel.’”

The first personal ministry that occurred in the Bible was when God talked with Adam. God created Adam and placed him in a garden. And God walked and talked with Adam in the garden. Why? Because without God’s instruction, Adam had no idea who he was. God had to tell him. God knew Adam couldn’t figure it out by himself. The first personal ministry in history is God’s telling Adam who he is and why he was made. It wasn’t because Adam had sinned that God talked with him. It was because he was human. We still need God to tell us who we are and why we are here. We still need God’s personal ministry. At Christmas, we celebrate that Jesus, the Son of God, became fully man and walked among us. The word, *Immanuel* means, “God with us.” At salvation, *Immanuel*, *God with us*, comes into our hearts to stay. God takes up residence in our hearts. God is with us, and we are never alone again. We are never without His love and peace and joy and comfort. And from His guidance, from His revealing, we learn who we are and why we are here. - Virginia Thompson

God’s COMPASS

Isaiah 40:8 “The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.”

I think about a story that Chuck Swindoll told. Imagine that you are exploring the jungles of Africa. You get into a deep, dense area of jungle so thick that it is almost dark. It isn’t long before you have lost your way. You can’t tell where you are or what direction you are heading. There is no sun, no stars, no trail, and no river to follow. You are hopelessly lost, lonely, and afraid. Suddenly a twig snaps behind you and you hear footsteps. Someone calls your name and steps into the clearing and says, “I’m glad I found you. I have a map and a compass. I thought you might need them. Would you like to have them? What do you say? ‘Are you kidding? That map of Africa is old and I’m not sure I can trust it. Look at it. It is wrinkled and worn. And that compass, it may or may not be pointing true north. How can I know for sure? No thanks, I think I will stay on my own and figure it out for myself.’ Would you say that? Absolutely not. You would take the help being offered. The Bible is God’s compass and map. He gives it to us. The compass will always point true north. The map will always guide you correctly. But a lot of people reject the Bible, never read it, never look at it, and ignore it. Some people think they don’t need any help and they can figure it out for themselves. That’s crazy. Isaiah 48 says, “The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.” Fads, feelings, kingdoms, cultures, people, ideas, notions, nations they come and they go, but the truth of God’s word is eternal. You can count on God’s word.

- Dr. Tim Thompson, Senior Pastor