

Xmas Eve 2020
Luke 2

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 ^sunto you is born this day ^tin the city of David ^ua Saviour, which is ^xChrist ^ythe Lord. ¹²

In the Name of Jesus.

This angel means business. Christ the Lord is dead-set on being Savior—listen up!—for all people. You, my dear Christian; and your enemies. Merry Christmas to our ENEMIES!

(‘Ugh. Here he goes again! It won’t be long before pastor starts talking about our Baptism, no doubt!’)

You can tell this message is meant for mass consumption. Because in order to get our attention, the Holy Spirit Who dwells in since our Baptism is playing politics with...US! He is PANDERING...to US! That’s how serious He is about still being our Savior!

^s Isai. 9:6.

^t ver. 4.

^u Matt. 1:21. Acts 5:31. & 13:23.

^x Matt. 1:16. & 16:16.

^y ch. 1:43. Acts 2:36. & 10:36. Phil. 2:11.

He sends to the shepherds, to the manger and now to all the nations JUST...WHAT...WE....WANT...TO...HEAR!
 ‘Finally, someone is going to care for me, hear me, SAVE me!’

The only problem is that the Gospel according to Saint Luke is another 20-some chapters long after tonight’s reading! Beyond the quaint pictures of Jesus in a barn surrounded by sheep and shepherds and Santa and his reindeer. Luke ruins the ride with...well, just a few chapters on.

²⁰ And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples, and said:
 “Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the kingdom of God.

²¹ “Blessed are you who are hungry now, for you shall be satisfied.

“Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.

²² “Blessed are you when people hate you and when they exclude you and revile you and spurn your name as evil, on account of the Son of Man! ²³ Rejoice in that day, and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven; for so their fathers did to the prophets. ¹

²⁴ “But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation.

²⁵ “Woe to you who are full now, for you shall be hungry.

¹ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 6:20–23). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

“Woe to you who laugh now, for you shall mourn and weep.

²⁶ “Woe to you, when all people speak well of you, for so their fathers did to the false prophets.

²⁷ “But I say to you who hear, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, ²⁸ bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. ²⁹ To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either. ³⁰ Give to everyone who begs from you, and from one who takes away your goods do not demand them back. ³¹ And as you wish that others would do to you, do so to them.

[Just an aside here. I’m not gonna do any of that. Maybe kicking and screaming, or gritting my teeth. But I have YET to FIND THAT...IN...MEEEE!]

³² “If you love those who love you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them. ³³ And if you do good to those who do good to you, what benefit is that to you? For even sinners do the same. ³⁴ And if you lend to those from whom you expect to receive, what credit is that to you? Even sinners lend to sinners, to get back the same amount. ³⁵ But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind

to the ungrateful and the evil. ³⁶ Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. ²

I cannot love my enemies. My therapist says that's a bad, negative sentence. OK. I DO NOT love my enemies! THAT is not PSYCHOLOGY! That's Lutheran-ology! I SIN! Against Moses, like everyone. But against my Savior. The One Who gives me His Body to eat and His Blood to drink so that what's going on with me and Him is all HIM and not at all MEEEEEE! Or you.

Merry Christmas! This is CHRIST'S big day!
NOT...OURS!

All I wanted to do was pick up a few more flowers to decorate the altar in anticipation of the Christ-Mass tomorrow morning. Usually, I keep my eyes glued to the floor. They have nice footsteps now installed just for people like me; where to stand; it's so comforting.

But I broke the pact I made with my eyes. And with my Baptism. And with the Apostles' Creed. And I looked up and saw pictures; beaming pictures of all the christs, the saviors of the world, smiling at me from all the magazine covers. What a lovely bunch of people we CHOOSE—

² [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 6:24–36). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

that's OUR VOTES, my lovelies!—CHOOSE, OURSELVES, to rule over us! Please, someone. Please explain to me why there is NEVER a god, lord and master on the magazine or news-trasher who says, 'Paul...You've paid enough. I don't need any more money from you!' Why are all the happy people the ones whose faces you can read? 'You THOUGHT you were taxed BEFORE! Welcome to the FUTURE!'

No surprise there. We NEVER change the way we vote.

¹³ Pilate then called together the chief priests and the rulers and the people, ¹⁴ and said to them, "You brought me this man as one who was misleading the people. And after examining him before you, behold, I did not find this man guilty of any of your charges against him. ¹⁵ Neither did Herod, for he sent him back to us. Look, nothing deserving death has been done by him. ¹⁶ I will therefore punish and release him."

¹⁸ But they all cried out together, "Away with this man, and release to us Barabbas"— ¹⁹ a man who had been thrown into prison for an insurrection started in the city and for murder. ²⁰ Pilate addressed them once more, desiring to release Jesus, ²¹ but they kept shouting, "Crucify, crucify him!" ²² A third time he said to them, "Why? What evil has he done? I have found in him no guilt deserving death. I will therefore punish and release him." ²³ But they were

urgent, demanding with loud cries that he should be crucified. And their voices prevailed. ²⁴ So Pilate decided that their demand should be granted. ²⁵ He released the man who had been thrown into prison for insurrection and murder, for whom they asked, but he delivered Jesus over to their will. ³

By killing OTHERS, Barabbas and his political chums promise to save us. Well, those they don't murder, that is.

The Babe of Bethlehem saves us by killing...US!
 'Love...your...enemies!' Who can attach himself to the ones who keep pushing us away?! He goes first! 'Follow Me!'

²⁷ After this he went out and saw a tax collector named Levi, sitting at the tax booth. And he said to him, "Follow me." ²⁸ And leaving everything, he rose and followed him.

²⁹ And Levi made him a great feast in his house, and there was a large company of tax collectors and others reclining at table with them. ³⁰ And the Pharisees and their scribes grumbled at his disciples, saying, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" ³¹ And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a

³ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 23:13–26). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

physician, but those who are sick. ³² I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” ⁴

That includes...[sorry, my love!] The Gospel Joy INCLUDES.....REPUBLICANS! The Romans condemned Jesus; they invented this thing we live in called a Republic. Stalwart Republican guardian soldiers, writes Saint Luke:

³³ And when they came to the place that is called The Skull, there they crucified him, and the criminals, one on his right and one on his left.

Barabbas would have spat at them with his last bit of strength! What does Mary's Boy do?

³⁴ And Jesus said, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”⁵

And if they are forgiven it means they are in with Heaven. The Republican soldiers who crucified Jesus, our Savior.

⁴ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 5:27–32). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

⁵ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 23:33–34). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Once, maybe twice a year, I also give in to temptation and read that blasphemy rag I used to deliver as a boy and spread fear. What did I know?! Once a year I read what I used to throw on people's lawns. And it is no surprise to me that those 'wascally wePublicans' are STILL around and STILL as odious as 2000 years ago. And I learn THAT just by reading the SPORTS section!

But I am here this Christmas Eve to tell you that Christ has prayed for forgiveness for people who must admit it: I am a sinner; I am crooked; and even I am a Republican! I know this is a shock to many. There may even be a closet-Republican hiding in fear amongst the holy people of God here tonight. I tell you also that, despite what TV and the rag and social media tell you, Christ prays still for your pardon, which TV tells me you desperately need.

There are others who do not need so much. When the Baptizer called all people a brood of vipers, there were those in that day who would not be glad to hear that AND be baptized.

The same people mocked Jesus when He was on the cross. And they ROARED with laughter when this occurred:

³⁹ One of the criminals who were hanged railed at him, saying, "Are you not the Christ? Save yourself and us!"

⁴⁰ But the other rebuked him, saying, “Do you not fear God, since you are under the same sentence of condemnation?

⁴¹ And we indeed justly, for we are receiving the due reward of our deeds; but this man has done nothing wrong.” ⁴² And he said, “Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom.” ⁴³ And he said to him, “Truly, I say to you, today you will be with me in paradise.” ⁶

What sort of kingdom can such a man promise? What green and pleasant gardens and grounds?

It is a kingdom, my friends, that a King gives to those who are actually looking for something else. We want to love those who love us. And we are **READY** to **CURSE** those who **CURSE** our view of things! And there is a list of people with whom we do **NOT** want to share that kingdom.

Merry Christmas! This is **ONE** Savior—the **ONLY** One—Who will **NEVER** pay attention to whether or not **WE** vote for **HIM**. All He is interested in is that His Father has voted for **US**!

For whom?

⁶ [*The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*](#). (2016). (Lk 23:39–43). Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles.

Sinners; shepherds; condemned criminals; Romans,
Republicans and...dare I say it? Even we LUTHERANS
may lift up our heads in confidence...DESPITE ourselves,
our weakness, our sins. And have a Merry Christmas in the
Name of Jesus. Amen.