

A Thrill of Hope

Week One
Luke 2:-14

General:

- When you hear the word hope, what comes to mind? What are some things that you hope for?
- Pastor Chip talked about God's "meticulous providence." Where do you see God's meticulous providence in the Christmas story? Where have you seen it in your own life?
- Gal. 4:4-5 says Jesus came "in the fullness of time." What does it mean to you that God sent Jesus at the exact right moment (for the world, and for you personally)?
- Pastor Chip emphasized: "Caesar isn't the one in control, God is the one who's really in control." Where do you feel tempted to believe that someone or something else is in control of your life? How does this sermon challenge that?
- How do you wrestle with the tension between God's meticulous providence and human free will (think Caesar, Mary, Joseph, the shepherds)?
- In verse 9, God sends an angel at the perfect moment. Can you think of a time when you realized afterward that God had providentially placed someone or something in your life? What did that experience teach you?
- Look at verses 13-14. How does the birth of Jesus bring "glory to God"? What does it mean that His birth brings "peace" and "goodwill" toward people?
- Pastor Chip concluding saying that God's meticulous providence hasn't ended with the Christmas story, but He's still working right now. Where do you sense God's ongoing work in your life right now, even if you can't fully see it yet?

Take Home 1: Nothing could have stopped the birth of Christ happening at exactly the right time and right place, so why do we wonder if God can do for us what he says?

- If God orchestrated the perfection of Christ's birth, why do you think we struggle to trust Him with the details of our own lives?
- Pastor Chip stated: "We have the greatest hope awaiting us... guaranteed by the One who can't fail." How does that truth confront your doubts or fears today?
- Hope is woven throughout Scripture. When you can't see how your situation could possibly work out, how does remembering the hopeless situations in Scripture strengthen your hope?
- Pastor Chip briefly read Phil 1:6 from the Message version. Which phrase stands out to you, and how does it reshape your confidence that God is at work in you?

Take Home 2: True Biblical hope is only reserved for God's people (Lk. 2:14)

- If God's promises are for His people, how should that shape the way we see outreach, evangelism, and loving our neighbors?
- Re-read Rom. 8:28. How does this promise deepen your understanding of Biblical hope, knowing this promise is for those who are called and believe in him?
- Mt. 1:21 says Jesus came to save "His people" from their sins. What does it mean to you personally that Jesus came for you; not as an abstract Savior, but as One who calls you His own?

Take Home 3: The path to our peace is found in glorifying the Lord (Lk. 2:14)

- What would it look like this week to glorify Jesus in simple, everyday ways?
- In what moments of your life have you seen God's glory most clearly? (In creation? Provision? Healing? Conviction? Peace? Something else?)
- Re-read Prv. 3:5-6. What does it look like to "acknowledge Him" in your specific season?