

Unto You is Born This Day

These words from Luke 2:11 remind us of the significance of Christmas:

"Fear not, for lo I am bringing you an evangel of great joy which will be for the entire people, for today was brought forth to you a Saviour, Who is Christ, the Lord, in the city of David."

The prophets had declared to Israel that the Christ would come, but after the final prophet had spoken there was 400 years of silence ... and the people waited. And now we hear the messenger proclaiming that the long awaited day had come. The Christ (Messiah) had come.

It seems that when the good news is proclaimed today by "Biblical Universalists," it is easy to get bogged down in a defense of how God could possibly save all of mankind. This becomes the focus of the message; presenting the Biblical proofs of God's intent to save all. But we who have come to understand the fullness of God's plans must remember that it is not our purpose to prove that God will one day save all ... Our purpose is to present the good news of salvation thru Jesus Christ.

"For Christ, then, are we ambassadors, as of God entreating through us. We are beseeching for Christ's sake, 'Be conciliated to God!' For the One not knowing sin, He makes to be a sin offering for our sakes that we may be becoming God's righteousness in Him." (2 Corinthians 5:20-21)

The good news in this Season is not just that Jesus Christ was born, but what He accomplished. It is only thru Christ that reconciliation with God is possible.

Admittedly, it is difficult to tell much of the good news without talking about God's plan to save ALL of mankind, and not just some. This is important, for without this element the work of Christ is limited. But this is just a **part** of the good news. The full evangel is that thru the wisdom of God, and thru the work of His Son, salvation has come ... and ultimately this salvation will become effective for all.

Certainly it is God's will that all mankind be saved (1 Timothy 2:4), and we know that God is operating **all** in accord with the counsel of His will (Ephesians 1:11). And we know that the living God is "the Saviour of all mankind, especially of believers" (1 Timothy 4:9-11), noting that the word is "especially" but not "exclusively" of believers!

And we know from 1 Corinthians 15:22-28 that as in Adam all are dying, in Christ shall all be vivified, yet each in his own class:

- The Firstfruit, Christ

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- Then those who are Christ's in His presence
 - Then "the consummation" when Christ gives up the kingdom to the Father
 - And all sovereignty, authority and power are nullified
 - And the last enemy (death) is abolished
 - And all is subjected to God
 - And God becomes All in all

On that day, at the end of the ages, we will see that truly God has operated **all** in accord with His will. The most rebellious of man has been "cured" and reconciled.

What great love, and wisdom, and power!

And accomplished thru His Son, Jesus Christ, Whose birth we celebrate in this Season.

So as a new year begins, let us remember it is not our sole purpose to convince "orthodox" Christianity that God will save all mankind in the end. Instead, it is ours to proclaim the full evangel of Jesus Christ ... that in the fullness of time He came, and died, and was raised from the dead, and will come again ... and most importantly that only thru Him is God's righteousness revealed and salvation accomplished; effective now upon those who believe, and eventually upon all of His creation.

May the Lord bless you in this wonderful Season. Merry Christmas to you, and to your family.

Yours in Christ,

- Bob & Jill Evely -

Kentucky Bible Conference in February

We will be hosting the second annual Bible Conference in the Lexington, Kentucky area on February 27-29, 2004. The announcement, with directions and lodging possibilities, is being sent to all on our distribution list. Write to bob@graceevangel.org with any questions you may have.

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