

The Angels' Song.

Luke 2:14.

Sunday morning, December 21, 2008.

I. Glory to God in the highest.

A. Something of the glory of God is seen in creation.

1. Here we see His infinite power with which He puts the constellations of the stars in their places, and tells them not to depart from their assigned courses. We see the power with which He assigns to the oceans their boundaries, and with which He lifts up the continents above the waters. Power with which He commands the seasons, and gives rain and sunshine in their appointed times.
2. In creation we see the infinite knowledge of the Lord; a knowledge that undergirds the entire creation. All things from the largest to the smallest testify that we are fearfully and wonderfully made, and that there is an Architect with infinite knowledge at the bottom of it all.
3. In providence, and especially in Noah's flood we see something of the justice

of

God. He who made all things at His wise discretion is also He who can and will destroy at His discretion. There are boundaries set in God's creation, not only for the waves of the sea and for the seasons, but also for sinful man and

his

actions. "Thus far, and no further" is the divine word, and then there is a day

of

reckoning.

B. The fullness of the glory of the divine perfections is seen only in the work of redemption.

1. In the plan of redemption the infinite power of the Lord is put in the context of a good, and gracious, and glorious plan. A plan for good and not for evil. In creation God is not just showing off His great power, but that power serves a good and glorious plan.
2. In the plan of redemption the infinite knowledge of the Lord is put in the

context

if infinite wisdom, which is the best possible use of that knowledge.

Here God in infinite wisdom makes Himself weak in Christ, in the incarnation, and then in the death of the cross. And with that He proves once and for all that His weakness is stronger than all of the powers of fallen man and hell

combined.

Here God in infinite wisdom makes Himself look foolish in the helplessness of the incarnation and the desperation of the cross, only to prove that His foolishness is wiser than the wisdom of man and hell combined.

3. In the plan of redemption the justice and the righteousness of God are placed in the context of His goodness and graciousness, and His loving kindness and mercy. Through the judgment of the cross love and grace found a way to reach and change the hearts of fallen man.

4. Here also we have the holiness of God revealed. To be holy means to be set apart. Things that are unholy are common or even vile. God is set apart as the Standard; the Author, and the Architect of all things. God is the standard of truth; of justice; of love; of goodness; of beauty, and of all other perfections that may be had. People and their works may be said to possess these qualities insofar they conform to God's standard and design. In the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ we have the fullness of the perfections of the Godhead set before us in living form, and tested in the adverse environment of a fallen sinful world.

II. On earth peace.

- A. It is a peace God has made.

God, in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ made peace with sinful man by dealing with man's sin once and for all in the cross of Christ. "He who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 Cor 5:21.

It is a peace that God has made by fulfilling the just demands of His own law with the death of Christ on the cross.

- B. It is a peace that Christ has purchased for us by willingly undergoing the judgment of the cross for us.

- C. It is a peace that passes all understanding.

1. Because we can not fathom the depth of its foundation which is the love of God. What love is this that moved the Godhead to undertake in behalf of our lost condition?
2. Because it does not rest on outward circumstances (which is understandable to us) but on the inward witness of the Holy Spirit who says to us: "Trust Me; come with Me; all will be well; I have all things well in hand; all things are ready, the Master is calling for you and I am bringing you to Him."

III. Goodwill toward men.

- A. The coming of the Lord Jesus Christ into the world is forever proof of the goodwill of God toward men. His power is seen in creation; His justice in the flood, but His goodwill is seen in the revelation of Himself in the person of Christ.
- B. Goodwill means that God is for us. It means that God has good and gracious intentions for us as He says to His ancient people Israel through His servant Jeremiah: "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope." Jeremiah 29:11.
- C. The goodwill of God also means that blame for the distance between ourselves and the Lord lies on our doorstep. God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. Now it is time for you also to lay down your animosity toward God; your distrust toward God, and to embrace Him, and own Him, as your Father; time to be reconciled on your part with the Lord and with His gracious designs for your life.
- D. The goodwill of God means that you are invited to come home to Him; no matter

what you have done; no matter where you have been. To this end Christ was born into the human race that He might bring you to His Father's house; that all your sins might be freely forgiven you; that you might be protected and provided for by the Great and Good Shepherd of The sheep along the way; and that at last you might live in the house of the Lord forever.