

DOING WITHOUT

Part 1: Doing Without the Disappointment

Pastor Grant Fishbook

December 3 & 4, 2011

As we enter into the waiting period of advent, we are strategically considering what Jesus did without so that He could save humanity from sin:

In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, *he made himself nothing* by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! – *Philippians 2:5-8* (emphasis mine)

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that *though he was rich*, yet for your sake *he became poor*, so that you through his poverty might become rich. – *2 Corinthians 8:9* (emphasis mine)

Jesus laid aside His royal privilege to accomplish His mission of purchasing the gift of salvation for you and me.

Doing Without the Disappointment of Christmas

The root of all disappointment is unmet expectations.

2 Kings 7:3-5

Now there were four men with leprosy at the entrance of the city gate. They said to each other, "Why stay here until we die? If we say, 'We'll go into the city'—the famine is there, and we will die. And if we stay here, we will die. So let's go over to the camp of the Arameans and surrender. If they spare us, we live; if they kill us, then we die."

At dusk they got up and went to the camp of the Arameans.

The reality of the men's lives led them to logical place of disappointment.

2 Kings 7:5-8

When they reached the edge of the camp, no one was there, for the Lord had caused the Arameans to hear the sound of chariots and horses and a great army, so that they said to one another, "Look, the king of Israel has hired the Hittite and Egyptian kings to attack us!" So they got up and fled in the dusk and abandoned their tents and their horses and donkeys. They left the camp as it was and ran for their lives.

The men who had leprosy reached the edge of the camp, entered one of the tents and ate and drank. Then they took silver, gold and clothes, and went off and hid them. They returned and entered another tent and took some things from it and hid them also.

God intervenes (even without being asked) and provides abundantly for their need.

A fitting response to God's intervention is not hoarding or hiding.

(Continues on back)

2 Kings 7:9-11

Then they said to each other, "What we're doing is not right. This is a day of good news and we are keeping it to ourselves. If we wait until daylight, punishment will overtake us. Let's go at once and report this to the royal palace."

So they went and called out to the city gatekeepers and told them, "We went into the Aramean camp and no one was there—not a sound of anyone—only tethered horses and donkeys, and the tents left just as they were." The gatekeepers shouted the news, and it was reported within the palace.

God's intervention was so compelling that their response was to share.

Another story of disappointment

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. – *Luke 2:8*

Another story of intervention

An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. – *Luke 2:9-11*

Another story of sharing

When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. – *Luke 2:17-20*

The answer to Christmas disappointment is to share the hope of God's miraculous intervention.

Next Steps

Baptism: Share the hope of your salvation through a public declaration of faith. A required baptism class is offered after services this weekend. Baptism happens in all services next weekend. Details in today's program.

Invite: Choose a number of people to share the story of Jesus with and invite them to Christmas Eve. Invitations are available in the Commons today. Take one for each person you plan to invite, and give it to them in person.

Small Group Questions



- 1) What is one Christmas tradition you look forward to every year?
- 2) List everything you can think of that Jesus did without so that he could come in human form.
- 3) If you were one of the guys with leprosy, would you have shared? Why or why not?
- 4) Is there any part of Christmas that you are strategically "doing without" this year that you believe will create a positive outcome down the road?
- 5) Lowering your expectations is not the only answer to disappointment. In what areas of your life are you increasing your expectations when it comes to God's work?
- 6) How can we pray for you today?