

Luke 2:19

“Ponder That”

Christmas Eve 4:30 and 6:30 PM

December 24, 2018

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Pastor Hartwig

Grace, mercy, and peace from God, our Heavenly Father, and Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen! Dear brothers and sisters in Christ –

Luke 2:19 “Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart.”

Like Mary, there are many things for you to treasure and ponder tonight as well.

And it is fitting and right so to do.

For I bet you, like me, have been thinking about so many things.

I guess you have made your list and checked it twice.

You have gotten the cookies baked and the decorations in place.

You have bought the presents and wrapped them too.

You have sent your Christmas cards,

Sang the Christmas carols,

Viewed the Christmas light displays.

Maybe you haven’t even gotten very far....

You might have woken up this morning running through the list.

Putting the roast in the oven,

Preparing the oyster soup,

Put the milk and cookies for Santa out.

But have you treasured up all these things – the Christ things –

Have you treasured them up and pondered them in your heart?

[*Ponder*] So I will preach it to you too tonight.
 It's time to have ears to hear.
 What are you given to treasure and ponder? It is this.

1. God, who holds the universe in His hand
 is cradled in the arms of His virgin mother.
2. God, whose divine essence no man can touch
 is wrapped in swaddling clothes.
3. God, who gives food to the hungry and seed to the sower
 is fed on milk from His mother Mary's breast.
4. The fullness of God deigns to dwell in the infant Baby Jesus.
5. The eternal Word of God becomes human flesh and blood.
6. The Creator becomes the creature in order
 TO SAVE YOU FROM YOUR SINS and give you heaven.

You too must follow the lead of Mary's example
 of treasuring and keeping the Christmas miracle in your hearts.

If this wonderful birth,
the sermon of the angel,
the hymn of the heavenly host,
the joy of the shepherds
 does not find its way into your hearts,
 it is all for nothing.

Unless the Christ Child is born in you and you in Him through faith,
 not just today but every day,
 you will be lost forever, doomed, damned in your sin.

[*Work of Jesus*]

I'm here to tell you that Jesus came to save you from sin, death and from hell.

His birth foreshadows His death.

Christmas and Easter come together as one.

With the manger crib comes the cross.

1. He was born during the reign of Caesar Augustus
so that He would be crucified under Pontius Pilate.
2. He was born a tender Lamb,
so that He would be God's Lamb,
the Sacrifice that takes away the sin of the world.
3. He was born in earthly poverty
so that all who trust in Him would be rich in heavenly treasure.
4. He was born of Mary
so that we might be reborn as children of God.
5. He lay as an infant in the cave of Bethlehem
so that He might lay in a tomb to save you from the grave.
6. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes in His birth
so that He might be wrapped in burial cloths in His death FOR YOU.
7. He was worshiped by shepherds and adored by wise men
so that heaven and earth would praise Him
and all nations would bow down and worship Him.
8. He came in humility to die
so that He would reveal Himself in glory on the Last Day
to raise you from your grave.

[*Conclusion*]

If you have lived this year, this month, this week, this day
as though this Child had never been born,
as though God had not taken on our flesh and blood,
as though God were not with us ...

If you have lived as if you mattered most
and this Child of Bethlehem mattered least,
then I beg you to make this night a night of repentance and renewal
before the Day comes
when there are no more days of repentance.

After all, *“TO YOU is born in the city of David,
a SAVIOR, who is Christ the Lord.”*

Treasure and ponder that promise.

Think of that, ponder that... Amen!

REJOICE always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances;
for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. AMEN! (1 Thess. 5:16–18)
