

Luke 2:1-20

December 24th, 2019

“Interrupted Plans”

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church

Christmas Eve

Vicar Miguel Gonzalez-Feliciano

Grace, Mercy and Peace are yours from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, Amen.

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

[Planning for Christmas]

Christmas Eve. Only 24 hours separate Christmas day from Christmas Eve, and currently, the difference between Christmas day and Eve is only getting smaller. Maybe you're like me and you have a countdown that you like to change every day. Some people get advent calendars to mark each day with a small gift or treat. It matters when exactly Christmas day is. Families plan so much around the time of Christmas.

It seems like a million questions surround the day.

What time are you out of school? For how long? When is he flying in? Are you making your special ham for the dinner? What do you mean we aren't opening gifts until Grandpa wakes up? Wait, we're doing homemade gifts? Does 1-day delivery work if I order it on Christmas Eve?

Plans upon plans upon plans are made, deciding everything from what worship services you are going to attend to what part of the country you want to be in. Even if you have no real plans set, that's also according to plan! These plans can give us a source of comfort as you and I go throughout Advent and Christmas.

It may be a chaotic mess of stress and sugar, but so long as it all goes according to plan, it's okay.

[Interruptions]

However, if you're like me and you focus too much on some of the plans that you have set, inevitably, something goes wrong. The package didn't ship, you ordered the wrong size, or someone's flight got cancelled. Arguments with family members or friends sour the festive mood. Suddenly, everything is off track and you don't know how to get back on schedule, or if that's even possible.

Plans get interrupted.

But Christmas was a time for interruptions. The Wise men hadn't been planning on taking a massive trip to Israel, had they? Surely, the lowly shepherds were in the same boat too. They had a routine, a schedule that they were planning on watching after their sheep and continuing to live their lives. Little did the shepherds and the Wise men know, they would all be derailed by the same baby.

How could any of them have expected that they would find themselves in a stable next to Mary and Joseph?

[Joseph's Plans]

Joseph knew a thing or two about interruptions. On Christmas day he and Mary were travelling to his hometown to fulfill his government responsibilities. Because some guy named Caesar felt like it, everybody had to travel to their hometown to be registered.

So, Joseph took his newlywed wife who seemed like she could give birth at any moment and they made the journey from Galilee to Nazareth. I'm sure it wasn't comfortable, there were probably frequent stops, back aches, tired legs. When they finally get to Nazareth, there aren't any rooms available for them to sleep in. Joseph had to scrape just to get the chance to sleep in a stable that night.

Joseph hadn't planned on sleeping next to a bunch of barn animals with his pregnant wife.

In fact, none of this was according to plan for Joseph was it? He had planned on getting married and settling down, continuing his trade as a carpenter and passing the trade down to his children as it must have happened to him.

Mary wasn't supposed to be pregnant.

Joseph decided to divorce her. He was even going to do it quietly so that she wouldn't be put to shame.

Then an angel of the Lord appeared.

Talk about your interruptions. Not only is Mary pregnant, but the child inside her was given by the Holy Spirit. He is going to be the promised Messiah. All of Joseph's plans are put to the wayside for the sake of this child that was to be born.

[Divine Interruptions]

You and I have plans that get interrupted, Joseph had plans that were interrupted, but there is One whose plans never get interrupted. You see, what may have seemed like ours or Joseph's plans being interrupted is a sign that everything is going according to plan.

Obviously not mankind's plan, but God's.

Remember, God promised a savior. Once Adam and Eve had sinned and rebelled against the good and gracious will of God, mankind was doomed. Humans had jumped ship when it came to God's plan and they tried to make their own plan for how the world would work now. But God held the course.

Time and time again, God kept to His plan. He promised the people of God again and again that a Savior would come, and he would bring about a world that would be perfect and timeless.

Time has passed, and we have moved from Christmas Eve to Christmas day where we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. But every second of every day, you and I are moving closer and closer to the fulfillment of God's plan. Christ was born, He lived, died, and rose again. What you and I are waiting for is for Christ to come again in all His glory and judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end.

Maybe you'll be out working, or on a trip. Maybe I'll be there talking with you. You and I will have no idea when Christ will come again, it'll be the final great interruption of the world. The small plans you and I have will waste away like dust and Christ will claim us as His own. It may be that Christ will be interrupting some great worldly event. Like bells in the middle of a sermon. But it shouldn't be any reason for you or me to be startled.

After all, it's going according to plan.

Merry Christmas.

Amen.

As followers of Christ, "Keep loving one another earnestly
And show hospitality to one another without grumbling." AMEN! (1Pt 4:8-9)
