

Sunrise Foursquare Church –Christmas 2016

Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin." The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. For nothing is impossible with God. Luke 1:34-37

Even if you don't understand the historical-religious situation or background of this passage, the beginning question of Mary and the ending answer of the angel, encapsulate the essence of a great message to us. "How can this happen?" was her question, and after the details of how, was the answer in a blanket truth about God Himself, "For nothing is impossible with God." Mary wondered how could a virgin be with child, an obviously sincere, truthful, and very personal confession before a divine messenger.

Where there is a will, there is a way, and certainly so, if God is involved. The coming of God's beloved Son, God's will!! It was not just His will, but His remedy for a fallen, and estranged human race, that was already in the planning stage at the time of creation and in the works with Abraham.

In the fullness of time, the Advent or "coming of the Messiah" occurred, all in God's time and way. "Foolishness!" some may say, that is of Jesus Christ coming to this world to die on the cross for the sins of people, but it is interesting how this foolishness works to mend the brokenness of our relationship with God and with our fellow person. It has worked for multitudes throughout the ages, yes, among them myself included.

In daily course of life, each of us comes face to face with seemingly insurmountable situations and from time to time, with the question, "How can this be possible?" How is it possible that two people can ever be together again, after all that has been so hurtfully said and done? With God, all things are possible. What Mary thought was unconceivable from a human standpoint, was possible with God who brought miraculous life in her womb and joyous faith in her heart. When two people come to the Savior, humbly, broken, and needy before Him, amazingly, they come closer to each other. If they can pray together, then they will stay together. What begins with a husband and wife, dad and mom, and grandparents, filters down to affect and bless the whole family.

Christmas is the season for us to consider the possibilities of our hopes and dreams. Always keep your chin up by looking upward to Jesus Christ who said, "With man it is impossible, but with God, all things are possible" (Luke 18:27). ~Pastor Paul Iwata

Christmas Caroling at various places – **Saturday, December 19**

Christmas Service and Potluck – Sunday, December 25, 10:30 a.m. – 5853 Laurel Canyon Blvd., Valley Village 91607. Special Dance of Praise by Mark and Anri Green during the service. Come and join us!

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Springwater Calendars!

2017 Springwater Calendars are available for a donation of \$10 each plus postage (\$3/calendar). They contain Pastor Spring's colorful artwork with selected scriptures in English and Japanese. Use the order form below to get your calendar(s).

Name _____ Address: _____

City _____ Zip Code _____ Phone _____

Pastors: Paul Iwata (English), Spring Iwata (Japanese), James Iwata (English Assistant)

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「心の貧しい人たちは、幸いである、天国は彼らのものである。悲しんでいる人たちは、幸いである、彼らは慰められるであろう。義のために迫害されてきた人たちは、幸いである、天国は彼らのものである。私の為に人々があなたがたをののしり、また迫害し、あなたがたに対し偽って様々の悪口を言う時には、あなたがたは、幸いである。喜び喜べ、天においてあなた方の受ける報いは大きい。」マタイ5：3、4、10、11

上の箇所は、キリストが宣教を開始されて間もなく、山の上に登られ語られたので『山上の睡訓』と呼ばれている。

かって、サンデースクールの子供達に、“どんなにお金がなくても、どんなにお腹が空いても、どんなに意地悪されてもイエス様が一番、イエス様が一番、だってイエス様は神様だもの、だってイエス様は神様だもの”。と歌って踊らせていた時が会った。世界の歴史を見るとクリスマスちゃんであるが故に、迫害され、獄に入れられ、恥をさらされ、引きずり回され、殺されて行った話が幾らでもある。キリストは我々の罪の身代わりに死んで下さった。考えればこれ以上の愛が何処にあるのだろうか。

クリスマスとは、天地万物を創造された父なる神様は、ご自分の分身であられるキリスト（救い主）を地上に送られ、罪ゆえに滅び行く人々をお救いに成られ、キリストを信じる者に永遠の命であられるキリストをプレゼントして下さったのである。悲しんだり、迫害され、心がずたずたになり、生きる望みをなくしている方々へのグッドニュースがクリスマスなのだ。

では、良きクリスマスと新年をお迎え下さい。皆様方の御健康、祝福を日々お祈りしております。

主にありて

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お知らせ

- * クリスマスキャロリング 12月19日(土)
- * 毎週日曜日礼拝10時半よりキャンドルライトサービス
- * 25日クリスマス礼拝、特別ダンス 午後よりランチ

* 来年度のカレンダーの御注文を承っております。1冊\$10ドネーション。切手代\$3

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