

October 2 Adult Spiritual Growth Class Synopsis

Let There Be Light: A Study of FPC Stained-Glass Windows – Adoration of Shepherds Medallion – Prophecy Fulfilled

The stained-glass window medallion of the Adoration of the Shepherds beautifully portrays the story of Jesus' birth, detailed in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 2:1-20). Luke was a close friend of the Apostle Paul, who referred to him as "the beloved physician" and was the only Gentile to write any part of the New Testament (Gospel of Luke and the Book of Acts). Both are addressed to the same person, Theophilus, also a Gentile, so that he would know with certainty about the person and work of Jesus Christ. Luke gives a historical view of the life and ministry of Jesus Christ. He emphasized that the gospel of the Kingdom of God is for all humanity through Christ.

While Luke tells the story of Jesus' birth in the frame of human history with God's sovereign mercy and love pouring forth in the Bethlehem manger 2000 years ago, the prophets of old, Micah and Isaiah, foretold the Messiah's coming 700 years prior for God's people, Israel. In Micah 5;2,4-5 and Isaiah 7:14, God's Word speaks history into being centuries before it is acted out, proclaiming the insignificant little Judea town of Bethlehem as the chosen place from whence the promised Messiah would come. From the "days of immeasurable time", His beginnings were from of old and His existence was rooted outside time, space, and matter for He is the One Who spoke everything into being. He is Emmanuel, "God with us".

There are twenty two Messianic prophecies in the book of Isaiah and each point to our Lord Jesus Christ as the glorious fulfillment. Isaiah 9:6-7 tells of the coming rule of Jesus on earth, gathering into one announcement, the predictions of His birth, deity, earthly government, just kingdom, and the eternity of Christ. Isaiah proclaims for whom and by whom: "For to us" ... the zeal of the Lord of Hosts will do this." In Isaiah 1:18, the prophet writes, "Come now, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool." The exhortation is made to the nation of Israel and in essence to all sinners. The deep, fixed stain of sin, which no human power could remove, shall be taken away. The sin shall be pardoned, and the soul be made pure, only by God's saving grace in and through His Son, our Lord.

In Isaiah 43:18-19,25, a two-fold prophecy is given in God's Word, 'Do not call to mind the former things, or ponder things of the past, Behold. I will do something new.' Speaking of all the former things God has done for His people, including the deliverance from Egyptian slavery to the Promised Land, the future freedom from Babylon captivity is foretold, but there is reference to even greater events to come in Christ Jesus. God is 'making ways in the wilderness and streams in the desert, giving drink to my people, my chosen ... I am he who blots out your transgressions for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more.'

In God's perfect plan, He gives us a 'new heart and new spirit' (Ezekiel 36:26). He is a God of new things, making all things new. As Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 5:17, 'if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation - the old has passed away; behold the new has come.' The fullness of God in and through His Son is conveyed in Philippians 2:5-11. In these verses, Paul speaks of God's essential character as one of self-emptying love poured out of heaven into our life in Christ Jesus. Being "in the form of God," he did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped or exploited, as something to be held onto at all costs and used to his own advantage. Rather, he willingly "emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness. And being found in human form, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point to death — even death on a cross."

In exalting Jesus, God gives Jesus his own name — “Lord” — and confers on him Lordship over all creation. One day every knee will bend before him, “in heaven and on earth and under the earth,” and every tongue join in confessing together that Jesus Christ is Lord. The one who humbled himself and took the form of a slave shows us who God is and how God acts. God’s high exaltation of Jesus confirms the divine nature of his mission and ensures that one day he will be acknowledged by all for who he truly is. Jesus, the one who saves, is God’s anointed one (the Messiah or Christ), and Lord of all.

A song to reflect and pray on:

[\(922\) Big Daddy Weave - All Things New \(Official Lyric Video\) - YouTube](#)

Looking ahead – Sunday October 9

First Window on Left Facing Chancel (Lower Medallion) – Martin Luther