

Thursday, December 26

Read Matthew 1:18-25. Pastor Jack shared two truths from our scriptures this past Sunday. First: You don't have to understand the plan to trust that God has a purpose. Second: your disappointment with God might actually be a divine appointment from God. Some people, when plans don't happen for them, will say, "It just wasn't meant to be." That thought may be the result of understanding these two truths. The two truths we considered during the message are based on our faith.

We don't have to understand everything about how God works in and through our lives to have faith and trust in our God. It is a matter of understanding the character and nature of God over knowing specifics about God's plan for our lives. Can you think of a time when God turned a disappointment into a divine appointment? Can you relate to a time when your plans went wrong but it all worked out for the best? Can you recognize how God has shaped your life and brought new possibilities to you? Meditate on these questions and the two truths we considered during the message and write your thoughts here.

Friday, December 27

Read Luke 2:1-14. When the shepherds heard the proclamation of Good News from the angel of the Lord backed up by the host and angels, they immediately wanted to go to Bethlehem. They wanted to see for themselves the tremendous plans of God unfolding in the region in which they lived! The conclusion of the message was to make clear the purpose of God's plan; that purpose was and continues to be the redemption of humanity. Although we proclaim, "Jesus is the Reason for the Season!" the truth is we are the reason for the season! God's plan of redemption, begun in a stable twenty centuries ago in the tiny town of Bethlehem, is for all humanity to be redeemed and made whole. Pray a prayer of praise and thanksgiving for this incredible gift from God. Glory to God in the Highest! Amen!

Message Notes – December 22, 2024

*Missing Peace: Disappointment or Divine Appointment?**

- I. We've been focusing on finding _____ during this Season of Advent.
 - A. When you're _____, it is difficult to experience _____.
 - B. Let's take a look at what happened that first _____ - Luke 2:10-14.
 - a. God sent us just what the world _____ – what we _____ today.
 - b. We needed _____, we needed _____, we needed _____ and wholeness, so God sent a _____.
 - C. What we read in the birth narratives in Matthew and Luke is plans that have gone _____ and joyful _____ dashed upon the rocks of reality.
- II. Let's think about what really happened with _____ and _____.
 - A. The story of Mary and Joseph is a story about a young couple that navigates what feels like _____, deceit, and relational _____.
 - B. God _____ their plans with the most complicated, untimely, inconvenient, seemingly unfair and possibly _____ assignment.
 - C. Mary and Joseph were _____ and disillusioned and they might have joined their voice together in crying out, " _____ _____."
- III. Two _____ that emerge from these birth narratives from Matthew and Luke.
 - A. First – You don't have to understand the _____

*Matthew 1:18-25 and Luke 2:1-14

to trust that God has a _____.

1. Proverbs 19:21 tells us, “The _____
_____ may devise many plans, but it is the
purpose of the _____ that will be established.”
2. In the middle of Joseph and Mary’s
disappointment God interjected God’s purpose
in _____ the _____ through the Child
that will be born to them.

B. The second truth that I want to share is your
_____ with God might actually be a
_____ appointment from God.

- IV. The angel began God’s message to the shepherds by
saying, “Do not be _____; for see--I am bringing
you good news of great joy for _____ the people.”
- A. This all happened because of _____; because of you,
and you and you.
 - B. _____ are God’s purpose; all of this is so that we
will know peace – God’s _____ and Shalom.
 - C. We often say that Jesus is the Reason for the
Season; but the fact is _____ are the Reason for the
Season.
 - D. God’s love found its greatest purpose in the
_____ of _____ humanity, for _____ of us!

Daily Devotional Guide

The following is a daily devotional and study guide meant
to enhance your understanding of the message
and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, December 23

What are your plans for the holidays? It’s a bit late to ask that
question and there are some elements of your holiday planning
that must already be in place, but there are probably some areas of
your planning that don’t have to be planned at all. Hopefully, you
already know where you’re gathering whether it’s Grandma’s
house or Aunt Betsey’s. The menu should probably be complete.
However, if you’re family likes to watch a movie or play board

games when you are together, you don’t have to know which
movie or game you’re going to watch or play. The important
thing is to enjoy being together enjoying each other’s company.
So, what are your plans for the holidays? Write your thoughts
here paying attention to the details that need to be solidified.

Tuesday, December 24

Yesterday we considered our plans for the holidays. Plans are
important and some plans are very important, even mandatory.
How do you feel when your plans don’t work out? It depends on
the importance of the plans; there is a difference between not
getting the job you applied for and not finding the exact brand of
eggnog for your holiday toasts. How do you react when your
plans don’t happen as you desire? Do you take a moment to pout
about your plans gone awry or do you immediately begin to make
new plans? Do you get obsessed over why your plans didn’t work or
do you begin to work out alternatives? Meditate on these
questions and your usual reactions to plans gone awry, and then
write your reflections here.

Wednesday, December 25

Merry Christmas! May your plans for today go well for you
today, whether you gather with family and friends or have a quiet
day to yourself. It has been a long observed tradition in our
family (The Mannschrecks) to read one of the birth narratives before
we open our gifts to one another. It is a great reminder of the true
meaning of Christmas and the greatest gift that our loving Creator
has given us. If you find it meaningful you may want to read one
of the birth narratives today (Matthew 1:18-25 or Luke 2:1-14).
Have a Merry and Blessed Christmas Day!