

December Youth Bible Study Synopsis

Topic: "The Birth of Jesus" (Luke 1)
Place: CSI HV Parsonage (New City, NY)
Date: Thursday, December 29, 2005
Time: 7:00 PM

The December Youth Bible study was held on Thursday, December 29, 2005 at the CSI Congregation of Hudson Valley Parsonage. The topic chosen for the Bible study a study on Luke Chapter 1. The Bible study started at 7:45pm. 15 youth members from both Hudson Valley and Rockland CSI Youth Fellowships were present at the Bible study. Also present was Rt. Rev. Dr. A. George Ninan to lead the study.

Eight songs were sung including some of the popular Christmas Carols before proceeding to the study. Bishop George Ninan began the study by letting those present know that we should keep up these monthly Bible studies with or without a leader. He mentioned that the method used for this month's Bible study can be used without a leader. Justin Cherian explained the "Four P's" method.

- 1) Point of the Passage- Write down the point of the passage. What does the passage say? Write down whatever strikes you as most important.
- 2) Problems found in the Passage- Identify any problems you see in the passage (a) something you don't understand personally or felt confusing and (b) any possible problems, for others or in communicating to others.
- 3) Parallel Passage- Write down any parallel passages that come to mind or anything you fell is related to the story. What other passage came to mind as you read this one?"
- 4) Personal Applications- What thought appealed to you and what you intend to do about it. What did you learn and is that going to make any difference in your life? How does the passage speak to me?

Bishop stated that we should have concentrated on a small section of the Luke chapter 1. Bishop began by stating that Luke was a physician and was not deeply rooted in the Jewish affairs at that time. The Gospel of Matthew was written more in a Judaic context. The Gospel of Luke was written somewhere between 80-85 A.D. Paul's letters were written between 60-65 A.D. Luke had written the Gospel after the destruction of the temple and he was a person of the Gentiles.

There are four characteristics that we see in Luke's Gospel.

- 1) Luke was concerned about women as we find stories of women in the Lukan Gospel.
- 2) Luke was not that concerned about the end of times
- 3) Luke advocated patience
- 4) Luke was a very optimistic person.

The Gospel of Luke is the only gospel that mentions the birth of John. In the Gospel of Matthew, there is no annunciation of Mary, rather mentions that the angel went to Joseph to proclaim the good news. Bishop introduced the passage by stating that we find that John the Baptist is mentioned and that the annunciation to Mary is found as well as the birth of Jesus in a manger (vs. 2-7). The announcement of Shepards can also be found in the passage unlike the Gospel of Matthew which mentioned wise men. Also Simeon and Annas are found in the Gospel of Luke.

When discussing the first P (Point of the Passage), we find 80 verses in total for the first chapter and see that John the Baptist is born. There are some parallels as both cousins' are told that they will bore a savior and this enforces the role of women in Lukan gospel. We also find two songs in the first chapter of Luke. The first song, Mary's song, comes from 2 Samuel 2. It is Hannah's prayer that Mary is quoting. In both the songs, Mary

and Elizabeth are glorying God. Bishop mentioned that this is the beginning of the church. Elizabeth and Zechariah were ashamed because they were so old and conceiving a child was shameful. Mary on the other hand was too young. In this sense, they both had something in common. They tried to meet together and Mary stayed with Elizabeth for three months. Bishop mentioned that the relationship found here should be the way our churches need to be. To have that fellowship for all of us to come together and console each other and glorify each other. The church ought to be a place where we come together and support each other like Mary & Elizabeth did for three months. This passage teaches us some practical lessons.

A youth member raised the question of “Who was actually there to tell the story?” “Could it have been Mary?” Bishop explained that it could have been from oral traditions. There could have been people who have seen and told generations what had happened. These oral traditions lead to writing and hence the stories we have today. Thirty years later, we have the infancy narratives. Another point mentioned was Luke’s detail as a physician. He mentions about the virgin birth and old age in his gospel. In verse 34, Mary is found asking a question. Our faith enables us to raise questions ultimately. This particular verse points out that she wanted clarification with the Word.”

Moving onto the last P (Personal Applications), Bishop asked if these monthly Bible studies taught anyone anything and/or did it make any differences in your lives. Bishop mentioned that his favorite verse in the passage can be found in verse 30. “...Do not be afraid”. Fear is a complex phenomenon. We find the fear of Herod led to a high number of children died. Another personal application mentioned was that prayer is an important factor. The verse “For with God nothing will be impossible” was pointed out by a youth member. Another youth member mentioned that God can use anyone like Mary and Elizabeth. God can use humble servants for his great ministry. Another youth member mentioned that the use of Shepard’s was interesting since Luke is one who mentions those who are the most marginalized. Another youth member mentioned that the convention of the names was rather important. God knew a name for all and the name means the identity. The Bible says that if you don’t do your part, it will be done. Mary didn’t know that her son would later die on the Cross for all. Afterwards, some time was spent in prayer. The following were the prayer request:

Justin: Pray for Bishop & Kochamma & their children.

Reena: Pray for Thomas Eapen uncle from the Rockland church who suffered a stroke.

Reena: Pray for Mercy aunty and Prasad uncle from the St. Paul’s & Resurrection church.

Justin: Pray for both Hudson Valley & Rockland CSI churches as well as all CSI churches.

Sheena: Pray for her friend’s father who was diagnosed with cancer.

Four youth members prayed with Bishop leading the concluding prayer and the Bible study ended at 9:30 pm. Afterwards, dinner was provided by Sheeba Koshy (Rockland CSI).

Soli Deo Gloria,

Justin Cherian
CSI HV Youth Secretary