Daily Devotion #203

**Life Can Change For the Good**

**Luke 2:10 (NASB)** *“The angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people.’”*

I was recently listening to a podcast a friend of mine recommended. It was an interview with a man who had been in ministry many years. The subject was how people go through various phases or what he called conversions in life, not just as pastors but people in general. I would have changed the word from conversions to adjustments because he was talking about changes in awareness of how life unfolds. For example, teenagers have a certain perspective on life and what they want life to be. So do twenty year olds and thirty year olds, and so on. What was fascinating was when he spoke of how people get to their middle ages, yes that’s the 40s, and how they often lose the zeal and hope for a great and impactful life. His experience taught him that people have a great excitement about who they will be and what they hope to accomplish in life when they are young, but as the years unfold, they lose that zeal.

There is certainly truth in that. Most people never accomplish what they thought they would accomplish or become the people they planned to be, so they often they settle for a mundane and hopeless life. Kind of like the George Baileys of life. If you have seen the movie, “It’s A Wonderful Life”, you know George Bailey. He was the son of a business man who owned a small building and loan company. When George’s father died, George felt compelled to take over the business, but with great consternation because George wanted one thing, to travel the world, see the sights, and be a part of something big. But it never happened. Life turned out to a life he hated. Until he met Clarance. Clarance was an angel sent to show George what a great life he really had. It’s a wonderful story about redemption and hope and accepting life for the good it brings. But too often people live with no hope of anything. Life, for many, is just boring and full of problems.

The joy of Christmas reminds us of a time when God showed us that life didn’t have to be ho hum or less than we hope for it to be. That message is announced by the angel to the shepherds. Shepherds were people who didn’t have much hope in anything. They just tended their sheep and lived life as it came. Mostly unimportant to the world, except to get the sheep they needed for the regular offereings at the temple. But when the angel announced to the shepherds the good news, life changed for them and all of us.

The good news is, through Jesus Christ, you and I can be forgiven. We can be restored and renewed to a right relationship with our heavenly Creator. You and I can know for sure that we will have eternal life. (1 John 5:13) That’s why Jesus came. He came to turn our lives into something worth living - something that would give us an eternal joy - joy that would sustain us in the midst of a very trouble life and a very troubled and hopeless world.

I don’t know what you are going through. But the truth is, you don’t have to settle for a life of drudgery or hopelessness. You may not be able to change your circumstances, but you can surely change your focus. Your heart can go from despair to joy because you have a Lord who loves you and wants only what is best for you. Again, He doesn’t necessarily change our circumstances. Sometimes He will, but certainly He changes our hearts. He comes in and removes the clouds of doubt and anxiety that come from looking at what could have been in life and replaces all the negativity with hope and the promise that one day this world will be behind us and we will live with Him forever - never to be burdened with what could be but living in the truth that the future will be grand and wonderful.

If you are struggling with hope in the future for anything good, remember what God did. He came to the earth to make a change in the lives of all who will put their hope in Him. To fill us with joy. Wouldn’t that be the best Christmas ever? To have a changed heart? He is really good at what He does. Won’t you let Him help you?