

BLESSED SLIDE 30

9:00-9:30 am

- **SLIDE 1** Flickering Advent Candles
- **SLIDE 2** Welcome back
 - We have an exciting and challenging day ahead.
- **SLIDE 3** Prayer Sanctuary
- **SLIDE 4** Our opening talk this morning is **BLESSED**
- **SLIDE 5** *“What is the greatest blessing in our life?”*
 - You might be inclined to answer: Spouse, children, parents, food, shelter and health, life itself
 - Today I want to place the focus on something else:
- **SLIDE 6 OUR BIGGEST BLESSING:**
 - Mercy
 - Forgiveness
 - Salvation
 - Eternal Life
- **SLIDE 7 MERCY**
 - **BULLET** Gratuitous
 - **BULLET** Unwarranted
 - **BULLET** Undeserved

- **SLIDE 8** I recently wrote a 4th day letter called:
 - Don't Keep Looking Back
 - Positive mental imaging

Now let's examine some Bibles passages:

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TELL US?

- **SLIDE 9 Prophecies**
 - *“Therefore, the Lord himself will give you this sign: the virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall name him Emmanuel.”* **Isaiah 7:14**
- **SLIDE 10 Prophecies**
 - *“In days to come, the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established as the highest mountain and raised above the hills. All nations shall stream toward it;”* **Isaiah 2:2**

- **SLIDE 11 Prophecies**

- *“On that day, a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from his roots a bud shall blossom... Not by appearance shall he judge, nor by hearsay shall he decide, but he shall judge the poor with justice, and decide aright for the land's afflicted.”* **Isaiah 11:1-10**

- **SLIDE 12 Prophecies**

- *“The desert and the parched land will exult; the steppe will rejoice and bloom. They will bloom with abundant flowers.”* **Isaiah 35:1-2**

- **SLIDE 13 Prophecies**

- *“Here is your God, he comes with vindication; with divine recompense **he comes to save you.** Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, the ears of the deaf be cleared; then will the lame leap like a stag, then the tongue of the mute will sing.”* **Isaiah 35:4-6**

- **SLIDE 14 Prophecies**

- *“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone. You have brought them abundant joy and great rejoicing.... They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.”* **Isaiah 9:1-6**

- **SLIDE 15 Prophecies Fulfilled**

- *“Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David **a savior** has been born for you who is Christ and Lord.”*
Luke 2:10-11

- **SLIDE 16 Prophecies Fulfilled**

- *“Beloved: The grace of God has appeared, **saving all** and training us to reject godless ways and worldly desires and to live temperately, justly, and devoutly in this age, as we await the blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of our great God and savior Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to deliver us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for himself a people as his own, eager to do what is good.” Titus 2:11-14*

- **SLIDE 17 Prophecies Fulfilled**

- *“Beloved: When the kindness and generous love of God our savior appeared, not because of any righteous deeds we had done **but because of his mercy, He saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit**, whom he richly poured out on us through Jesus Christ our savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life. ”
Titus 3:4-7*

- **SLIDE 18 Prophecies Fulfilled**
 - *From this man's descendants God, according to his promise, has brought to Israel **a savior**, Jesus. John heralded his coming by proclaiming a Baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel; **Acts 13:23-24***
- **SLIDE 19 Prophecies Fulfilled**
 - *"Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me." **Matthew 11:4-6***
- **SLIDE 20 God's Unwarranted Love**
 - *"But God proves his love for us in that while we were still sinners Christ died for us" **Rom5:8***
- **SLIDE 21 He seeks the lost**
 - *For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost." **Luke 19:10***

- **SLIDE 22 He rejoices over the saved**
 - *“What is your opinion? If a man has a hundred sheep and one of them goes astray, will he not leave the ninety-nine in the hills and go in search of the stray? And if he finds it, amen, I say to you, he rejoices more over it than over the ninety-nine that did not stray.”* **Matt 18:12-13**
- **SLIDE 23 Jesus give us strength to overcome our weaknesses**
 - *'And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.”*
2 Corinthians -
- **SLIDE 24 He wants us to have eternal life**
 - *“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life”*
John 3:16

- **SLIDE 25 The Bread of Life**
 - *"Do not labor for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of man will give you" Jn 6:27.*
- **NO SLIDE** Christ longs to shine the light of His love and mercy in our hearts and illuminate those sins that prevent us from drawing closer to Him. That is why He came to us in the cold dark cave so long ago.
- **NO SLIDE** Christ's mercy, is greater than our greatest sin, and our darkest moments
- **SLIDE 26** It's been said: ***"Only he who has been touched and caressed by the tenderness of his mercy really knows the Lord."***

- **SLIDE 27** Bruce Marshall's novel: To Every Man A Penny

Gaston a young priest needs to hear the confession of a young German soldier whom the French have captured and have sentenced to death. The soldier admits his passion for woman and the numerous amorous adventures he has had. He tells the priest that he is not sorry for all of this. The priest explains that he must repent in order to obtain forgiveness and absolution. *"How can I repent? It was something I enjoyed and if I had the chance I would do it again."*

Father Gaston wanted to absolve this man who was about to die. "Let me ask you this" he said, ***"Are you sorry you are not sorry?"***

The soldier thought for a moment and said "yes, I guess I am sorry that I am not sorry." He knew he should be sorry but for some reason he just wasn't.

The young priest said, *"That's all the opening God's mercy needs."* And with that he absolved the man's sins.

As Pope Francis tells us in his most recent book:

"GOD IS CRAZY IN LOVE WITH US."

- Mercy is the Story of Christmas. **Christ is the Savior and mankind needed to be saved.** Advent is the time we should remind ourselves just how much we need the mercy of God.
- **SLIDE 28** Imagine He takes His hand, and places it over your head and one drop of the blood that was shed on Calvary now covers your whole being as He says, 'I forgive you.' He died on the cross to forgive you. He wants to forgive you. He longs to forgive you. Just let Him.” **WOW!**
- **SLIDE 29** Like the Father in the story of the prodigal son. God waits patiently and lovingly for us to become aware of our sins and to turn away from them, so that He can run to embrace us and pour out His mercy upon us.
- **SLIDE 30-38 Song:** When God Ran
 - Phillips Craig and Dean
 - Listen and sing along and contemplate the depth of God’s love and mercy! You have the lyrics.

- Can I get a giant Amen? We are Blessed

9:30

Continue right into BROKEN TALK