

Family TableTalk

Conversation 94

Proclaiming and Pondering

read

Luke 2:8-21

think

When good things happen to us, we respond. One of the best things that ever happened to me was to have the girl I would eventually marry look at me and say the words “I love you!” for the very first time. My heart was leaping with almost uncontrollable joy as I knew that I loved her too. But I didn’t quietly walk away from that conversation and just get on with my life. No, at first it was hard to even say “goodbye” to her, even though I would see her again the next day. The reality behind her words was overwhelming. And when I did finally leave her that evening, two things happened. First, I excitedly shared news of our love for each other with some close friends, including some close buddies who jokingly wondered why any girl would choose to love me! I wanted desperately for them to share in my joy. Second, I had a difficult time falling asleep as I couldn’t stop thinking and smiling about what had just happened. While the circumstances and details differ, all of us have experienced these “good things happening” moments in our lives.

Recently, as I was reading the account of the birth of Jesus Christ, I realized that the people who were there at the time were experiencing the ultimate “good things happening” moment. First, there were the shepherds who were simply going about their normal nighttime routine when bright lights and booming voices rattled them out of their monotony. How did they respond once “the angel and the multitude of the heavenly host” went dark and quiet? Did they simply resume their normal nighttime routine? No! They couldn’t contain themselves. The passage in Luke 2 tells us that they went to Bethlehem to find Jesus. They told Mary and Joseph what they had seen and heard. And, they kept talking about it. Their response, we are told, was one of proclaiming praise.

Second, the passage tells us about the response of Mary. No doubt, we can assume that Mary was praising God for the news she heard. But what Luke tells us about Mary is that she “treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart” (v. 19). What struck me about this is that rather than focusing on what Mary might have said to others, Luke focuses on what Mary was saying to herself. She couldn’t stop thinking about what she had just heard. She took the message from God the shepherds had relayed to her and she kept it close, conserving it in her mind, making sure that it stayed safe and secure as she would any priceless treasure. She reflected and meditated on it in an effort to have it retained in the very center of who she was as a human being. She “pondered” it all because she wanted this “good news” truth to guide her beliefs and behaviors.

God’s Word is a treasure. The truth we encounter is a gift from God that we should proclaim *and* ponder. Someone once told me, “Don’t ever stop preaching the Gospel, not only to others, but to yourself!” That’s good advice for every single “good things happening” life-altering truth that we encounter in God’s Word!

apply

- What’s the best thing that’s ever happened to you? And after it happened, how did you respond? Did you tell others? Did it keep you joyfully awake at night?
- What was the last “good things happening” life-altering truth that you encountered in the Bible?
- What are some old habits you have that keep you from having times of quiet in which to ponder and treasure up the truth of God’s Word? What steps can you take to break those habits? What are some new habits you can develop to build in quiet times to focus on pondering and treasuring God’s Word?

pray

Almighty God, we confess that we lead extremely busy and noisy lives. There are so many times when we neglect taking the time to ponder and treasure your Word. Expose to us any bad habits we must change, and give us a hunger to develop good habits so that we might build in time to ponder and treasure your Word. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

by **Walt Mueller**

Walt Mueller is the President of the Center for Parent/Youth Understanding. To access Walt’s blogs, podcasts, and other resources, visit cpyu.org.

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