Christus Victor: **Christ our Ransom, Mediator and King**
December 8, 2019 Fort Langley Evangelical Free Church

Christmas is the opening move in God's invasion of a fallen world subject to sin, death and the Devil.

Why the invasion of Christmas was needed: "The situation on the ground"

God created this world good (Genesis 1:1-25), and created human beings "in His image" (Genesis 1:26-28).
God's image bearers rebelled against Him, and subject to sin, death, and the Devil.
God made a plan: He chose Abraham and his descendants to explain his character, love and intentions and create the blueprint for what redemption requires. Then he sent his Son:

> "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. **6** And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" **7** So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. **Gal. 4:4-7**

Why did God send his son to be born and then die on the cross? How will he liberate planet Earth?

Today's message will look at Christmas from some of the aspects of God's amazing "secret invasion" of our world in the incarnation of His Son.

1. To Ransom us from Sin's Penalty and Satan's Grasp

> "For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many." Mark 10:45

There's a sense then in which our rebellion has made us hostages to Satan. Because we are lost in sin, we are vulnerable to his deceptions and corrupting schemes. We are both rebels in need of payment for our sins and captives in need of liberation.

- We call people to repent and turn to Christ, but also see them with eyes of compassion as hostages brutalized by sin.

The Holy Spirit transforms us in Christ's salvation, but it takes time also to heal from our captivity to sin. So, preach the Gospel, but also walk with others in the suffering that sin has caused.

Secondly, God's invasion strategy was deep and surprising because he sent his son as a vulnerable servant.

- The Jews expected a messianic warrior to break them free of Rome.
- Unlike D-Day's dramatic launch, the retaking of rebel Earth began with the cry of a birth in a barn.
- Satan reacted--Herod tried to kill Jesus, demonic activity spiked during his later ministry, and he's partially behind the plots to eliminate Jesus…but he didn't see it coming--God's plan was for Christ to die for our sins and redeem lost humanity.

> "So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, **2** complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. **3** Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. **4** Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. **5** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, **6** who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, **7** but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. **Phil. 2:1-8**

God's salvation is subversive: We are called to humbly serve others because of our servant savior.
*We also serve others as did Jesus: in our homes, community and places of work. (12 days of Christmas campaign)

Liturgical Response: Be Ye Glad verse 1

2. To reconcile us to God for relationship

> "For there is one God; there is also one mediator between God & humankind, Christ Jesus, himself human, **6** who gave himself a ransom for all…" I Timothy 2:5

Mediator comes from the Greek word μεσίτης--one who brings two parties together.

In Christmas God puts his Son in the middle of things, to bring fallen humanity back to our Heavenly Father.

> "Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. **10** For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. **11** More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. *Romans 5:* **9-11**

Christ not only paid our penalty under the Law, and met the "ransom" freeing us, but came so we can be reconciled to our Father God and connect with each other as his children.

> "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are. The reason why the world does not know us is that it did not know him. I John 3:1

Are you still living in the isolated dungeon of sin? Are you still acting like your freedom has not been purchased?

- Like someone who has been pardoned but decides to keep living in his jail cell--but outside there are faces of friends waiting for you.

Christmas is the promise of relationship restored with God. The prodigal son (Luke 15) didn't just have his debts covered--he returned home.

Liturgical Response: Verse 2 Be Ye Glad

3. To establish God's rule as our Victorious King

> "The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil." I John 3:8b

Christ came to destroy the deceptive work of Satan, to end our bondage to sin, bring truth, grace and light.
Part of Satan's ongoing strategy against believers is to deceive us into believing lies about God's character & intentions; to suggest that the Holy Spirit and power of God is insufficient for my needs, to promote shame and self-hate to keep us from embracing God's amazing love, or to deceive us into not obeying scripture, as if that's an option.

- We face spiritual opposition in this world--calling for faith in Jesus, prayer, & bravery in our life.

Conclusion:

After D-Day the Nazis issued propaganda trying to undermine the resolve of the Allied soldiers and pretending they were winning. But the defeat was already sure--it was just a matter of time.
In the Incarnation, the King has landed, in the form of a baby, with a plan so amazing Satan never saw it coming:

> "Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, **10** so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, **11** and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. **Phil. 2: 9-10**

God has given us the privilege and the authority to continue his work on the battlefield in the "mop up" operation, to show his love and truth and shine his Light, preaching the Gospel and waiting for his return.

Closing Liturgical Response: Verse 3 Be Ye Glad

Be Ye Glad Michael Kelly Blanchard *©1980 Gotz Music/Paragon Music Corp.*

In these days of confused situations And in these nights of a restless remorse When the heart and the soul of a nation Lay wounded and cold as a corpse From the grave of the innocent Adam Comes a song bringing joy to the sad All you cries have been heard and the ransom Has been paid up in full, be ye glad ***Oh be ye glad, oh, be ye glad*** ***Every debt that you ever had*** ***Has been paid up in full by the grace of the Lord*** ***Be ye glad, be ye glad, be ye glad***	From the dungeon a rumor is stirring We have heard it again and again But this time the cell keys are turning And outside there are faces of friends And though your body lay weary from wasting And your eyes show the sorrow they've had The love that your heart is now tasting Has opened the gates, be ye glad	So be like lights on the rim of the water, Giving hope in a storm sea of night, Be a refuge amidst the slaughter For these fugitives in their flight. For you are timeless and part of a puzzle, And you are winsome and young as a lad And there is no disease or no struggle, That can pull you from God, ---be ye glad