

Simple Christmas 1 – Simple Peace

Simple Christmas Bumper

Welcome to Redemption Church. My name is Chris Fluitt, and I am glad to share the Word of God with you today. Welcome to everyone in the room and everyone joining us online.

It is December, and everyone has turned their attention to the Christmas season.

I feel like this season has become far too complex and hectic.

Complex Christmas

- Pressure to make it magical like a Hollywood movie.

- Pressure to provide.
- Materialism & greed.
- Debt.
- Family issues.
- Divorce.
- The empty chair – the loss of a loved one.
- Depression.
- Isolation.
- The packed schedule.
- Stress.

The complicated Christmas season has many people asking “How am I going to make it? How am I going to find the time? How am I going to pay for this?”

How am I going to be in the room with people who hurt me in the past and simply act like everything is ok?”

Wouldn't it be great if this Christmas was less of this complex struggle.

Christmas Countdown Clock Pic

We have this little countdown decoration in our house. It has 2 blocks with numbers on the sides and the blocks sit on a stand that reads “days to Christmas.” For the kids this is countdown to a winter wonderland and the greatest of all treasure hunts... but to the parents this thing is a doomsday clock. Everyday we are that much closer to and you are not nearly ready.

We have a complex Christmas and a hectic home.

Hectic Home

Our homes are often like the opening of Home Alone. Everyone is going in different directions. We don't get along. We say things like "look what you did you little jerk." If we don't say it... I bet we have at least thought it.

Our homes are hectic. Our homes are not what we would like them to be in this season.

We know this is the opposite of what Christmas is supposed to be.

It is our prayer that this season would be different. We are praying for a simple Christmas this year.

Simple Christmas

We need to take a step from the complex and the hectic and step into the simple this season.

In this sermon series we are going to encourage you to keep it simple this season. This is #KeepItSimpleSeason

This December, I want you to deliberately make some decisions to in your life and home to choose the SIMPLE over the complex and hectic.

Focus on the simple reason for the season. The birth of Jesus is what Christmas should be about.

Focus on WHO rather than WHAT. Not WHAT you will receive or WHAT you will give, but WHO you are with.

And make time to remember that original Christmas story... because the original Christmas story was complex & hectic...

The Original Christmas Story was complex & hectic

Our series is called Simple Christmas, but we are taking the odd turn of teaching you that the original Christmas setting was anything but simple.

Take a moment and think about the story. What in this story may be complex and hectic?

Relationship Problems

A young girl named Mary and a man named Joseph were engaged to be married. This was to be a love story, but then something very complicated happened.

Mary became pregnant, and Joseph was not the father.

To Joseph it appeared that Mary had broken trust. How could he ever trust her again?

To Mary, she had done nothing wrong yet her husband to be did not believe her. She could never convince him. How disappointing it must have been for Joseph not believe Mary.

It was so bad between Mary & Joseph that Mary left town and Joseph had planned to end their relationship.

How's that for a Merry Christmas?

The original Christmas story had relationship problems.

DO YOU HAVE RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS?

- Have you broken someone's trust? Has someone broken your trust? Does this season stir all of these emotions up?
- If you experienced the pain of divorce, it can make this season very complex and awkward. Some children have 2 Christmases, and in case you are a kid and think that sounds twice as good, let me tell you that those kids often wish that they could have their family back together again.

- Perhaps you are single and this season makes you feel like an outsider. Perhaps you feel like there must be something wrong with you, because for whatever reason, another December has come and you are still single.
- Is there someone who you ought to be able to speak with, but there is a distance between you. Perhaps there is unforgiveness and bitterness.
- Is there an empty chair at your Christmas party and that hurts you?

The original Christmas story shows us that there is room for those with hectic and complex relationship issues.

Although there was a lot of baggage, Joseph and Mary spent that first Christmas together.

Although they were together... they were unable to provide.

Unable to provide

Joseph & Mary were in that little town of Bethlehem, but they had no place to stay.

Joseph & Mary could not provide a house for Jesus to be born in... not even a room in an inn, or a couch to crash on.

They were unable to provide a proper nursery for the birth, and instead were in a barn fit for animals.

Instead of a cradle with brand new bedding, Jesus was laid in an animal's feeding trough with hay.

You know that picture you have about how Christmas is supposed to be and you just aren't able to provide it? The original Christmas story is exactly that.

The original story is not ideal, but real.

Not Ideal, but Real

Joseph and Mary were not in the ideal situation, but they were experiencing something real.

This world will try to sell you on the "ideal." The ideal home, ideal gift, ideal family... but instead choose what is REAL.

Real love.

Real hope.

Real Peace.

The Original Christmas Story was complex & hectic

The original Christmas story was complex & hectic, but within all the uncertainty, the pain, and the chaos they found simple peace.

Simple Peace

Joseph and Mary found simple peace in the relationship.

There were questions, there was past hurt... but a simple peace was present.

I pray that in your home there will be a simple peace.

Joseph & Mary were still in a barn. Their situation was not ideal... but they were together, and God was with them and that was enough.

What is enough for you today? Are you chasing after the “ideal” or the “real?”

Musician

A major part of the original Christmas story is “fear.”

4 times in the story God tells them through an angel to not be afraid.

To Joseph...

Matthew 1:20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.

To Zechariah (John the Baptist’s father)

Luke 1:13 But the angel said to him: “Do not be afraid, Zechariah; your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you are to call him John.

To Mary...

Luke 1:30 But the angel said to her,
“Do not be afraid, Mary; you have
found favor with God.

To shepherds...

Luke 2:10-14 But the angel said to
them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you
good news that will cause great joy
for all the people. 11 Today in the
town of David a Savior has been
born to you; he is the Messiah, the
Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you:
You will find a baby wrapped in
cloths and lying in a manger.” 13
Suddenly a great company of the
heavenly host appeared with the
angel, praising God and saying,

14 “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

Are you afraid of something right now? There is room in this Simple Christmas story for those struggling with fear.

In the middle of fear, the prince of peace come to us.

Simple (Hapulous) – Single, Whole, Fulfilled

Have a single focus this season. Why not make that focus Jesus? Have a simple Christmas this year.

Have wholeness & fulfillment this season. Jesus makes us whole and complete.

Come receive simple peace today.