

James T. Jeremiah
Celebrating Christ at Christmas
December 10, 1971

Transcript

James T. Jeremiah:

Since I don't have a voice like that I'm going to need the mic. I really appreciated that. I'm glad in a way that she wasn't able to sing yesterday. I wasn't in the second chapel. Glad she can sing this morning. I have an announcement given to Dr. Johnson. I'll make it, have it announced that the swordbearers will be going out Friday night this week, not Saturday as one of the posters said. So, those of you who are involved in the ministry of the swordbearers, please hear this announcement. Now I know that this particular time of the quarter, faculty members, and students are about as tired as they can ever be. Now of course.

James T. Jeremiah:

Nice thing about having chapel in here that it's a little difficult to sleep, and that makes it nice for me. I'll be watching you though, to see whether you're slumbering while I'm trying to talk to you. But I like to take a moment before I come to the message, and I'll try to be as brief today as possible. That might be difficult. I'd like to say a word to all of you, about what I believe to be a fine quarter of study and service here on this campus. I've been around here for a long time, and I appreciate more than I can tell you the victories that I know have happened in the lives of many of you, as you sought the will of God, and God has spoken to your heart by his Holy Spirit.

James T. Jeremiah:

I was almost tempted to ask this morning, how many of you have had some very special spiritual victories, but I'm not going to do this, but I am going to say that if you have, God especially blessed you, and you've had some wonderful opportunities of service for the Lord, and being involved in Christian service, or some particular thing that's happened to you. I would suggest that at every opportunity during the vacation period, you do your best to find every available door to enter to be a witness for the Lord.

James T. Jeremiah:

Now we could stand here, I could stand here this morning, and tell you that, what we like to have you do is go back home, and tell everybody about how good Cedarville is. And some of you probably wouldn't like to do that anyway. But frankly, if you go back home, and tell the people how much the Lord's done for you, that's the best thing you can do for Cedarville. And if you have some opportunities while you're home, to be a witness for the Lord, and speak a word for the school, of course, this is fine. I'm sure of it. If you do have a concern about this, and would want some help, that the Director of Development, and his staff would be more than happy to have you come, and talk to them as to what you might be able to do. After all, this is not my school, nor the Dean's school, nor the faculty's school, it's our school.

James T. Jeremiah:

And we do all have a place in doing what we can, to make known the opportunities the Lord has given us here. Now, I've been trying to think of a message to bring to you today, that relates to Christmas. And there are a lot of things one could say about this particular day, particular season. I'm sure that many of you become terribly disturbed over the things that happen with regard to the celebration of this day. We have a lot of paganism connected with it, as we all recognize, but I'm glad that we have such a time.

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James T. Jeremiah:

I don't particularly take the position that, we ought to go to the scriptures, and find out all we can against the Christmas tree, and why we shouldn't have candles, or why we shouldn't burn, light bulbs out front of the house, and all the rest. The only reason I don't have any in front of my house, I haven't been home long enough to put them up. And yet, on the other hand, I think we can get ourselves so wrapped up in the commercialism of the time, that we forget the one we are thinking about, or should be thinking about. And my desire this morning, is to talk to you about the Lord Jesus. I'd like to bring a message about him. And I address your thinking to at least for a starting point, to the 45th Psalm.

James T. Jeremiah:

And the eighth verse. I'm not going to go into the interpretation of the Psalm. Some have indicated that the Psalm was written historically, for Solomon's or about Solomon's marriage to one of the Egyptians. But I believe it's a messianic Psalm deals with the Messiah, and it's prophetic. In verse eight, it says this, "all thy garments smell of myrrh, and aloes, and Cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad." This verse, that I've just read is the basis, for Dr. Chapman's line on, that goes like this, out of the ivory palaces, into the world of woe, only his great eternal love made my savior go. And in the Psalm he deals with the garments of deity, the garments of the savior, and he tells us, the spirit of God records for us, that they smell of myrrh, and aloes, and Cassia. These are the elements that were used to make anointing oil. And in the 61st chapter of the book of Isaiah, verses one to three, we see that our Lord Jesus Christ was anointed. Anointed to speak, and anointed to judge. Anointed to be the Messiah.

James T. Jeremiah:

And I'd like to take briefly this morning the references in the Bible that pertain to the garments, that our blessed Lord wore while he was performing the ministry and while he will yet perform the ministry of the one who is the anointed one. Garments speak of conduct in the Bible. That's a pretty good thing to remember - garments speak of conduct. They speak of a display of character. You can find references to this in such scriptures as the hundred and ninth Psalm, and first Peter five, other portions of scripture. Now the Bible says that his garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and Cassia, indicating that he is the anointed one, the one anointed by the Lord for certain ministries. So briefly, let's talk about the garments he wore. First of all, I like to talk to you for a moment about the swaddling clothes of the baby. In Luke two seven. It says she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger.

James T. Jeremiah:

This shows the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ, revealed to the angel, hidden from a man like Herod. It speaks to us of his humiliation, his poverty. I'm glad he came like this. Now when God created Adam, I believe he created Adam a full grown man. Now there are a lot of folks that think he evolved from something less than that, but I believe God created him a full grown man. When he sent his son into the world to take your sin and mine, he did not come like that. He came as an infant, was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger, identifying himself with you and with me in this sense, I'm glad he did. And I'm amazed at his grace in all of this. Someone has told about the Prince of Wales. One of the princes of Wales some years ago, after world war one visited a hospital, where many of the English soldiers had been placed after being shot up and mutilated by the enemy.

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There were some 30 or more of these men in this hospital who were very seriously injured. And the Prince of Wales, came to see them. The nurses took him to see 29 of them. He said, "where are the rest?" Well, she said, "they're pretty badly battered, and scarred, and bruised. And I'm sure, your majesty would not want to see them." He insisted, he found six more, and saw that they were even worse. And finally he said, "where's the seventh?" After much protest he was taken into a dark room, and there he saw what might have been a man, terribly bruised, and wounded, and battered, limbs taken from his body. And he walked in there with great feeling. Story goes, that the Prince of Wales saw this man, this hero for the British Army, and he bowed down, and kissed him on the cheek.

James T. Jeremiah:

That's a great thing for a man of royalty to do, to a man so miserably battered, and whose body was so obnoxious to the human eye, but young people I thank God that my savior came all the way from the glory, and took upon himself the swaddling clothes, come to the poverty stricken state of my affairs. Not only kiss me on the cheek, he did more than that. He died for me on the cross. When you think about the manger scene, look beyond the swaddling clothes, and the little baby, and the angels, and the shepherds, and take a look at the reason why he came, the swaddling clothes with the baby. Let's talk about the humble garb of the servant. The humble garb of the servant, John 13: 4 and 12 tells us, "that he laid aside his garments, and he took a towel, and girded himself. And after he had washed the feet of the disciples, he took his garments again."

James T. Jeremiah:

Now here is a beautiful illustration of the journey. The Lord Jesus took from the glory, laying aside his garments, taking the form of a servant, and being humbled to the place where he washed the disciples feet. Now, there are some good people who take this as one of the ordinances of the church, and I'm not here this morning at least to argue the point. I think I could if I had to, but let me say to you that the message here is far more than just an ordinance in the church that indicates the journey the Lord Jesus took. You see him as the gracious servant, because prior to this he had heard, he had known of course that had been announced, that there was a traitor among them. The devil being or coming into the heart of Judas to betray him. You see him as the loving servant, he loved these disciples unto the death to wash their feet, a loving servant.

James T. Jeremiah:

You see him as a voluntary servant who laid aside his own garments, and took the towel, and girded himself with it that he might serve his disciples. Sometimes I think we as Christians get the idea that we do God some kind of a favor if somehow we respond to him in Christian service. Oh God is greatly honored by us. If we should somehow be called into the ministry or go into the mission field, or do something in the realm of Christian teaching, or if we just do something to serve the Lord, God surely must be honored with that. Dear Christian friend, let's think about the privilege that we have as believers in being identified with a Christ who was willing to take the lowest place, in order that he might redeem us. He came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom, for many.

James T. Jeremiah:

Let me look with you for a few moments about the healing cloak of the physician. Mark 6:56. The Word of God says, "that they laid the sick in the streets, that they might touch it, if it were, but the border of

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his garment, and they were healed." Mark 6:56. I suppose there are young people here, and probably faculty members, and staff members too, who have loved ones and friends who are ill, may be very seriously ill. I don't believe that we should discount at all the ability and the power of Jesus Christ to heal the sick. Now I know there's a lot of extremism in this. There are a lot of people who feel that God can be demanded to do it, but when these people were in the place of illness, and he passed by, they touched the hem of his garment, and they were healed.

James T. Jeremiah:

I'm glad he's a physician. I'm glad he's a physician to the soul, and the physician for the body, the healing robe of the physician. Let me think with you a moment about the seamless robe, or the seamless coat of the savior. In Luke 19, it tells us his coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. Is not that interesting. In the garden. God clothed a wicked pair for their sin. Because of their sin. At Calvary, wicked men disrobed the son of God and this disrobement by wicked men is part of the work which was done in order that the wicked pair in the garden might have clothing, and that you and I might be clothed.

James T. Jeremiah:

It was without seam this coat, indicating something of his unbroken perfection. The savior we talk about at Christmas time, and all through the year is one who is absolutely perfect. Not only one who did not sin, but one who could not sin, think of that. Not only he did not sin, but he could not sin, absolutely perfect, without a flaw, seamless. It speaks of his absolute submission of his will. It was from the top throughout, indicating that this perfection is true of every part, and every ministry of our blessed Lord. It speaks of the priceless estimation of his work. The soldiers understood the value of this. They wouldn't divide it, so that each of them could have a part. They wouldn't rend it. The seamless coat of the savior. Let me talk a little bit now about the linen cloth of the dead. Matthew 27, 59 to 60.

James T. Jeremiah:

The Bible tells us that Joseph wrapped the body of Jesus in a clean linen cloth and he laid it in his own new tomb. What does that suggest? Well, you'll read the record, and you'll find that it suggests, this seems to me, the fact of his actual death. There are people who say that Jesus never really died. He only swooned. And when he was placed within a cold tomb, the cool air revived him. When he walked out, it's much easier to believe what the Word of God says than the explanation that some people give of it. But when we are told that they wrapped him in a clean linen cloth, that indicates to me the actuality of his death, that he really died as the Bible describes it. He took our place in his death. He bore our sins in his own body on the tree.

James T. Jeremiah:

He bowed his head, and gave up the ghost, and died. But let me tell you something else the linen cloth, the linen coat, the grave clothes tell us, for after three days, the angels rolled away the stone, not to let him out, but to let us in. And when they did this, they came and saw the linen clothes lying as he left them. The actual, physical bodily, resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Yes, Christmas time. We think about him being wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger. But remember he wore some other garments, the garments of the dead. Revelation 1:13, we see him wearing the long ephod of the priest. There it says the son of man was clothed with a garment down to the foot.

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James T. Jeremiah:

In this particular place we see him in the midst of the churches, and we see him holding the messengers of the churches in his hands, suggesting to us that the priest is one who guards his people and guides them. And people it's great to know we have a priest, a living priest, a man in the glory. When Jesus Christ was incarnate, he became something he had never been before. The son of man, when he died on the cross, and was buried in a tomb, and raised again from the dead, and went to heaven. He went to heaven, in a way that he had never been there before. The Son of Man, he's the man in the glory. Sometimes we reserve Psalm 23, for the death of a friend, or relative. Psalm 23 is not a funeral Psalm, it is a Psalm that deals with the blessed reality of a living, interceding priest.

James T. Jeremiah:

It's good to know that, the more I read about a steamboat, steamship, that was coming from Liverpool to New York, and the captain took his family along. And they had with them their eight year old daughter. While they were traveling over the sea, a storm came and the boat began to list, was about ready to sink. So everybody thought, and they were getting ready to abandon the boat. Finally, this little girl woke up, and she said, ask what was wrong? And she was told, and she asked one question, just one question, "is my daddy on deck?"

James T. Jeremiah:

And they said, "yes, he is." And when she heard that, she went back to sleep. I don't know about your daddy, what he can do to help you. But I know that if you're related to this blessed savior, you have a man in the glory who can, and let me tell you, he is on deck. He hasn't forsaken the ship, and though the rulers of the world, and the Kings, and the rest take counsel together against God, and against his anointed. The same second Psalm says, "I have put my king," that's it. He's still in control. And I like this picture of the long ephod of the priest, reminding me that he is amidst the churches, and he has the messengers in his hand.

James T. Jeremiah:

And he is in this hour controlling them. It's great to know that. Let me talk briefly about the stained vesture of the conqueror. Revelation 19:13, it says "he was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood, his name, The Word of God." One who came as the baby is coming in the battle. One who came in, poverty is coming in power. One who once came in grace is coming in the glory. One who came for the cross is coming to take the crown.

James T. Jeremiah:

Some of you people can remember Douglas MacArthur, words of Douglas MacArthur, had added meaning when the war with Japan was over. This is one of his statements. "The president of the United States, ordered me to break through the Japanese lines, and proceed from Corregidor to Australia." Now listen to this now. He's talking here about running away from Corregidor. "He has commanded me to proceed from Corregidor to Australia for the purpose, as I understand it, of organizing an American offensive against Japan, a primary purpose of this is the relief of the Philippines. I came through, and I shall return." That's only dead, Douglas MacArthur. But I tell you one day, the garments of our blessed Lord, will be stained with red, as the conqueror. And he's coming back to finish the work, completed.

James T. Jeremiah:

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One last word. I want to talk about the white robe of the judge. Daniel 7:9 read "the ancient of days, whose garment was as white as snow. His throne was like the fiery flame," the judge, from the baby all the way through life, to the judge, the garments smell of myrrh, aloes and Cassia Out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad, he has been anointed by God for all of these great works. My Lord has garments so wondrous fine, myrrh their texture fills. Its fragrance reached to this heart of mine, with joy my being thrills. His life had also its sorrow sore, for aloes had a part. And when I think of the cross he bore, my eyes with teardrops start. His garments, too, were in Cassia dipped, with healing in a touch; each time my feet in some sin have slipped, he took me from its clutch. In garments glorious He will come to open wide the door.

James T. Jeremiah:

And I shall enter my heavenly home, to dwell forevermore. Out of the ivory palaces, into a world of woe. Only his great eternal love made my savior go. Aren't you glad you have a savior like that? Amen. It wouldn't hurt you to say it, in a good old Baptist school. How about an amen. [crosstalk 00:25:18] Thank you. I'm glad you're with us. Have a good time on your Christmas vacation. Pass all your tests. Come back with great enthusiasm. Let's pray together as we close. Our father, we thank thee this morning for the Lord Jesus Christ. Out of the ivory palaces into the world of woe he came.

James T. Jeremiah:

We're grateful. We thank thee. We pray during these Christmas days, we might think of him. We might recognize that they came to worship him, let us do that. Bless our students and faculty through these days ahead in exam time, vacation time, and may each one of them have opportunity to be used of God as a faithful witness for the Lord Jesus, bearing fruit for the glory of God, in whose name we pray. Amen.