Advent 2 B

MDP of God

In a small town in the Midwest in the early 1950’s—there was a young girl by the name of Carrie

She was a good kid—her family was well off---Carrie had a lot of nice clothes and some of the finer things in life

In the same town—from the other side of the tracks—was a young guy by the name of Bill---Bill too was a good kid--- but his family was pretty poor

All the kids in the town went to the same school---and their senior year they met in class---they started talking after school--- Bill started walking Carrie home at the end of the day---the more time they spent together the moer they came to care about each other

As they approached the end of their senior year Carrie and Bill wanted to get married---Carrie’s family was not happy---while Bill seemed like a good kid, how was he going to support their daughter?

 TO make a long story short---Bill and Carrie married

Bill was never a big financial success---he worked in a factory---but he did manage to provide a modest home for Carrie and the four kids that God blessed them with

Carrie didn’t have any jewelry---she didn’t have the fine clothes she had earlier in life---they almost never ate at a restaurant---let alone and expensive one

But they loved each other—they loved their kids –they lived with love and a lot of joy

And while Carrie and Bill didn’t have a lot of earthly prestige---a lot of other couples were quietly jealous of them---they seemed so happy

57 years later, as Bill lay dying in his bed---Carrie was sitting beside him holding his hand.

Bill said, “I don’t know what you ever saw in me, I’m sorry I couldn’t give you the finer things in life, but thank you for loving me so much.

Carrie just smiled and said, “You were easy to love”

For the next couple of hours they just held each other’s hand in silence—until the Lord took Bill home

My friends, I share that story with you because our theme for Advent is Maranatha---Come Lord Jesus

And just as John the Baptist helped prepare the way of the Lord for His 1st coming—*you and I are called to prepare the way of the Lord for His 2nd coming*

When you look at John the Baptist---he didn’t have the finest clothes---**camel hair**

 He didn’t eat the finest food—locusts and wild honey

But what he did have was zeal for the Lord---*he loved God* ---and that love of God drew people to him---and in turn helped prepare them for the coming of Jesus

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How do we prepare the way for the Lord? By loving Him

SO many people my friends over the years---rather than loving Jesus –have treated Him as fire insurance---they’ve had the attitude of “I have to put faith in Him so I don’t go to hell---fire insurance

But a lot of times they didn’t love Him—in fact some resented His laws and His commandments---because they falsely thought they were missing out on good times

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Many of the people who treated Jesus as fire insurance have now abandoned the faith

Or many of them—their children and grandchildren abandoned the faith because they saw the faith not as a gift---but a burden---not as the path to joy, but as a hardship they don’t want to deal with

In the early Church---many of the people drawn to Jesus were the poorest of the poor---women, who had little standing in ancient culture—slaves who had no rights

SO they didn’t have fine clothes and great banquets---*but they radiated joy*---they knew Jesus, **the all-powerful God—loved them**

That He died for their salvation—that He had eternal glory waiting for them

SO no matter what their hardships—no matter what their struggles---*they radiated the joy of the Lord*

That’s how we’ll turn our culture around—by loving Jesus—by trusting in His Wisdom and His ways---*by joyfully living our faith*

 Maranatha—Come Lord Jesus

My friends –you and I are loved by the all-powerful Lord and King---let’s manifest the knowledge of His great love for us by living our faith with great joy---**that’s how we’ll lead people to Jesus**---that’s how we’ll prepare the way for the Lord---Amen? Amen