

**Remnant Life Church**  
December 23, 2016  
*Fourth Sunday of Advent (Friday)*  
**The Manger to the Cross**

- The 72 steps from Glory to Glory
  - Jesus begins in Glory and comes to Bethlehem
  - He finishes His ministry from the Mt. Olives and returns to Glory
- The first step of Jesus' journey begins in what we have read and talked about over the past several weeks
  - Gabriel appears to Zachariah to tell him that his son John was going to be born (Luke 1:11-13)
  - Gabriel then appears to Mary to say that she was going to give birth to Jesus (Luke 1:28-31)
- Zacharias and Mary's responses were very similar – "How can this be?"
- Yet Gabriel rebuked and punished Zachariah but not Mary – why?
  - *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. (1:13)*
  - They had been praying for a child but he did not believe when the answer came
  - Mary had not asked to be the mother of Jesus
  - The very miracle that Zachariah and Elizabeth prayed for he doubted that God could actually do it
- How many times have we not seen answers to our prayers not because God did not answer but because our faith was verbal only and not what we honestly believed
  - God is looking for a people in these last days who will simply believe
  - Not with their words but with their hearts
- After the crucifixion and resurrection
  - For 40 days Jesus appeared to various people and groups and then ascended from the Mt. Olives
  - His disciples were with Him and witnessed His ascension back to heaven (Luke 29:50-51)
- The birth of Jesus and His death, burial, and resurrection are the opening and closing of a love story
  - The author of the story is Almighty God, our Heavenly Father
  - The subject of the story is you

- We come to the communion table tonight to remember several very important aspects of our lives as Christians...
  - ...the Passover meal that was ordained and ordered by God for the Jewish people to enact once a year to commemorate the Israelites freedom from bondage in Egypt
    - By God's love for all we are grafted into the line of the chosen people  
(Romans 11)
  - It is called Passover because the death angel passed over the houses that were marked with the shed blood of a lamb  
(Exodus 11)
  - At the last supper, Jesus told His disciples what would happen to Him as they celebrated the Passover meal together
    - The physical meal was about freedom from the Egyptians
    - The spiritual freedom about to be given was from the bondage of sin and the penalty of death
  - At Golgotha (the place of the skull) the final spotless lamb shed His blood for you

*(Matthew 26:26-28) While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take and eat; this is my body." Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*