

Introduction

1. So what did you get for Christmas?
2. Maybe you were hoping for a new computer, or WiiFit, or a gold chain with a diamond slider
3. With all the fun and wonderful things you may have hoped for – maybe all you got for Christmas was clothes!
 - a. ... and at that – maybe not the most exciting clothes: maybe just some socks, or underwear
 - b. Or maybe what someone else got you either didn't fit, or it certainly is not what you would have picked out!
4. But before we complain too much about getting clothes for Christmas – this is really what we got for Christmas... from GOD!
5. From the prophet Isaiah, we hear, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall exalt in my God, for HE HAS CLOTHED ME with the GARMENTS of salvation"
 - a. And we might think: "oh, goodie, clothes from God – at least we hope He shopped at American Eagle or Eddie Bauer
 - b. Clothes from God, I guess, are practical! – I guess we can hope we at least we like what God picked out, and hopefully He knew our size!

I. If God's going to get us clothes for Christmas – hopefully it is at least "fashionable" like a sweatshirt

- A. Ask a teenager, would they rather have a hooded sweatshirt that said "Sears Roebuck" on it, or "Ambercrombie and Finch?"
 - i. How about those a little older: would we rather have a sweatshirt that said, "Guns and Roses" or "I'm a proud Grandma"?
 - ii. I guess it's all in the age, and the style
- B. No matter what you say, the clothing retail business is a BIG BUSINESS
 - i. These clothing stores in the mall – especially during December – are busy and are selling a lot of clothes
 - ii. But not matter how many clothes we wear, no matter how stylish we dress, no matter if we wear only the clothes that are "in"
 - iii. We can never cover up what we really are! – sinful and unclean
 - iv. We can try to hide and cover our sins, but God knows who we are, clothed in sin and in the darkness of death
- C. It may be that when Jesus was born He was wrapped in swaddling cloths, but He has come to wrap us in Salvation

- i. In our Gospel Reading, Jesus is 40 days old
 1. Mary and Joseph take Jesus to Jerusalem to thank God for their new son with the offering of 2 turtle doves
 2. And while they are there, an old man, Simeon, comes to them, and takes the Infant Christ in His arms
 3. As this old man in the faith waited for His Savior, now He holds the Savior of the universe in his feeble, human arms
 4. ...And He says, “for my eyes have seen your salvation”
 5. This stems back to Isaiah’s words, “for He has clothed me with garments of salvation, he has covered me with the robe of righteousness”
 6. This Jesus comes to take this world’s curse of sin, which has also damned us, into His own flesh, dying on the cross, and rising from the dead
 7. This sacrifice and resurrection of God is our salvation, and in Holy Baptism – you and I are now clothed with Christ, the clothing of SALVATION!
 8. The clothing of salvation is the only “fashion” acceptable for heaven – and the Newborn Jesus provides us with the “fashion of salvation” – which will NEVER go out of style

II. If God is going to get us clothes, hopefully it will at least “cover” the entire body – like a cami!

- A. Women’s clothing seems to be cut a little lower than it used to be
 - i. It has become “kind of” a joke in my family, that if my daughter tries on a new dress or a new top – no matter high it goes, it will say, “it could use a cami”
 - ii. A cami is an undergarment that comes a little higher toward the neck than most dresses or tops cover
 - iii. A father notices these things on his daughter, and desires her to be “covered up”
- B. Remember Adam and Eve when they fell into sin – what was the first thing they did?
 - i. They put leaves together and covered up their flesh
 - ii. They felt exposed with sin, they felt they needed to cover up their shame, they wanted to “hide” their sins
 - iii. Often times we too try to cover up our sins...
 1. We cover them up sometimes by blaming someone else for what we have done wrong
 2. We cover up our sins by rationalizing that what we do sinful is not as sinful as someone’s else’s words or actions
 3. And yet, still others are proud of their gross rebellion against God, and flaunt their sins and see no need to

hide their breaking of God's Commandments – they are proud of their naked sins!

- C. In the coming of Jesus – He comes to fully cover our sins, not only to “hide” them, but to literally blot them out!
 - i. Perhaps the Virgin Mary covered her son with her own dress and garments, but her Son, Jesus, comes to dress us with REDEMPTION
 - 1. Let's say your mother bought you a loud plaid double-knit leisure suit for Christmas
 - 2. On December 26, you might take it back to the store so they can “buy it back”
 - 3. That's what REDEMPTION means – God “buys us back” from sin, death, and the devil
 - 4. But God does not buy us back through the transaction of a computer, but with the pouring out of His BLOOD
 - 5. The payment for our sins is the holy precious blood and innocent suffering and death of Jesus Christ
 - 6. These are the words of Anna, the prophetess at the Temple with Simeon, as she comes up to this Infant Messiah and gives thanks to God and says this is the one for whom Israel was waiting – the Redemption of Jerusalem!
 - 7. In Holy Baptism – this Infant Messiah clothes us with Himself, with the garment of REDEMPTION! ...
 - 8. the garment that COVERS all our sin and dresses us for heaven!

III. If God is going to get us clothes, hopefully they are at least COMFORTABLE!

- A. Where do you go to buy the most comfortable jeans: Old Navy? The Levi store? Kohls?
 - i. After being dressed up in a suit or fancy dress, there's nothing like going home, taking off the tie and dress pants, and putting on a “comfortable” pair of jeans and an old sweatshirt
 - ii. But just as comfortable as we are sometimes in an old pair of jeans is as comfortable as we are in our old sins
 - iii. We become so comfortable skipping church, so comfortable watching TV shows that violate every commandment in a half-hour, so comfortable cheating the business, swearing at our kids, yelling at our parents, so comfortable being selfish, holding a grudge, or being lazy on at work and school
 - iv. But we should NOT be comfortable! – for sin is as uncomfortable as a the pickiest wool sweater, as a pair of jeans 4 sizes too small, as high heels that pinch our toes for all 8 hours of the work-day

- B. Isaiah prophesies the coming of Jesus and says, “For unto us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulders. He will be called Wonderful Counselor, Almighty God, Everlasting Father, PRINCE OF PEACE!
- i. Peace – real peace, true comfortable peace – this is the peace the Christ Child comes to give us
 - ii. This peace does not come because He stays an infant child – this peace comes from the peace He works on the cross!
 - iii. Peace comes by Jesus taking on our distress of sin, and the eternal anxiety of hell
 - iv. Simeon says to Mary, “and a sword will pierce your own soul” – he speaks of Mary watching her son die for the sins of the world
 - v. And yet, Simeon prays to God, “Lord, now let your servant depart in peace!”
 - vi. Simeon holds Eternal Peace in His arms as He holds the Baby God Jesus
 - vii. Today, this Jesus hold us in His arms - as He cradles us in His Body and Blood, as He soothes us in the bath of Baptism, and as He comforts us with the Peace that comes from His holy Word!
 - viii. More than the most comfortable blanket, more than the tranquility of swaddling cloths...
 - ix. Jesus Christ clothes us with the garments of Divine Peace – He clothes us in Himself, clothing we receive only in Him coming to earth to be our Savior!

Conclusion

1. Clothing for Christmas is not so bad afterall...
2. Even in the struggles of this world; with all of its stress and suffering...
3. Jesus is born to clothe us with clothing that is unmatched in all the world...
4. He clothes us with salvation, He clothes us with redemption, He clothes us with peace
5. Herbergers has no clothing like this... but God does!
6. God gave us clothes for Christmas! This is the best gift we could ever receive!
7. Glory to God in the highest! Amen.