

“Christmas Around the World: Mexico”

Luke 7:11-17

12/11/22 Epicenter/BAC

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All Scripture quoted from ESV unless otherwise noted

In Mexico, Christmas is officially celebrated from December 12 until January 6; a month-long celebration with family feasts, elaborate nativity scenes, daily parades, and of course, plenty of pinatas. The main Christmas meal is usually served on Christmas Eve and may consist of pozole, roast turkey or pork, tamales, salted cod, and several salads, including Ensalada Nochebuena (“Christmas Eve Salad.”) Every night from 12/16-12/24, children and some adults parade to houses lit by luminaries, celebrating the part of the Christmas story in which Joseph and Mary were looking for somewhere to stay. After being turned away from several places, finally they are welcomed in and they have a party with prayers of thanks, food, games, fireworks, and of course, pinatas. The final posada is on Christmas Eve, and is followed by the main Christmas meal.

*Parades are an integral part of the celebration of Christmas in Mexico, which may remind us of another ‘parade’ of sorts. This other ‘parade’ is actually a funeral procession, which we read about in **Luke 7:11-17**. This funeral procession encounters another large group coming the other direction. This group was comprised of Jesus and many of His followers. When the two groups met, the true nature and power of Jesus comes through, and we see three things clearly.*

First of all, Jesus notices the overlooked. Nain is not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. Jesus intentionally went to an easily overlooked town, to an easily overlooked individual, stepping into her pain and doing *something unexpected*. A widow’s only son has died, depriving her of any sense of hope for her future. As the funeral procession went out of Nain, Jesus’ group was coming up the narrow road toward them. This is a divine encounter, though she knew nothing about it until it was happening. Though in terms of the societal hierarchy of the day this woman was nothing, to Jesus, she was valuable; she was significant; she was loved.

Secondly, Jesus comforts the hurting. While no one seems to have asked Jesus for a miracle, He nonetheless saw her and cared for her, offering her words of comfort and actions of hope. Luke informs us that Jesus’ actions were the result of His compassion. *Still, sometimes God’s instructions seem illogical or surprising*. Jesus told the woman, **“Do not weep.”** Then He placed His hand on the bier on which her son’s body lay, which would cause a lot of tension and discomfort for those who were there. Yet even this proved to be merely a prelude to the awkwardness of what was about to happen, when Jesus spoke to the dead body, commanding the young man to arise.

To everyone’s amazement, the young man sat right up and started talking! Jesus presented him to his mother, demonstrating one example of how Jesus gives hope to the desperate. There is no situation beyond Jesus’ power to bring healing, comfort, and hope. But Jesus gives hope

beyond the few years of our time on this earth. The Apostle Paul said (1 Corinthians 15:19) that, "If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied."

Jesus came to this earth, born of a virgin, lived among us, died in our place, and rose again from the dead under His own authority. He has power and authority over both physical and spiritual death. When Jesus raised this young man from the dead, people correctly observed, "*God has visited His people.*" *Jesus is Emmanuel; He is God with us, and this is both the story and the hope of Christmas.*

This Christmas, light the way for Jesus to come into your heart and receive the love, comfort, and hope that only He can provide. Jesus is knocking. Is there room in your heart for Him this Christmas? God has visited His people; O come, let us adore Him!

Pozoles - <https://familiakitchen.com/the-6-pozoles-of-christmas/>

Takeaways from this message.

Luminaries originated in Mexico.

Parades are an integral part of the celebration of Christmas in Mexico.

Jesus notices the Overlooked.

- He stepped into her pain and He did something Unexpected.

Jesus comforts the Hurting.

- Sometimes God's instructions seem Illogical or Surprising.

Jesus speaks with Authority.

Jesus gives hope to the Desperate.

- "God has visited His people" – that's the Story of Christmas.

DIG IN!

Here are some farm-fresh questions that will help you to personalize and apply this morning's message.

- 1. *What was most surprising, unexpected, or helpful from today's passage/message? Why?***
- 2. *When have you felt 'overlooked' by the world? What does it mean to you to know that Jesus notices you?***

3. **When have you felt God calling you to do something surprising or unexpected? What happened? How did it work out? Be specific!**
4. **Plan to attend the Christmas Eve service, to be held 12/24 at 6:30pm at Brookville Alliance Church!**
5. **What unchurched individual is the Lord laying on your heart to invite to church this Christmas season? Write out what you will say to them here:**
6. **When will you invite that person?**
7. **Describe a time in which God has been particularly compassionate to you. What did you learn?**
8. **Which boy?**
9. **Why do you suppose God wanted this story to be recorded?**
10. ***What have you learned through your personal time of Bible reading this week?***