At this Christmas season, my thoughts have been on the Savior’s birth in the stable at Bethlehem. There, He was born of Mary, “a precious and chosen vessel.” For many months Mary had carried the little baby and felt life within her. Now here He was—a breathing, moving, living baby boy. In the moment the Savior was born, there came into that stable new life.

What a marvelous moment! Here was the Creator of the universe, who had established the means through which life comes into the world, coming into the world in just that way. His birth is a powerful testimony of the sanctity of life. And every birth before Him and since bears witness of the miracle of life and of its central role in God’s eternal plan.

The baby Jesus “grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.” The new life that began in the humble stable became the perfect life of the Lord Jesus Christ. He faced every temptation, every challenge, every illness, every hardship, but in attitude and behavior—in every way—He was perfect. He knew the realities of life in His time, and He knew the realities of mortal life in all times. His message was not preoccupied with the realities of daily life, but with the possibility of new life.

All through His ministry the Savior taught the word of God. His message was a message of new life—new life now in the Spirit and new life in the eternities through obedience to the laws and ordinances of the gospel. To be sure, our daily lives would be more joyous, more abundant, and more full of peace if they became new—born of water and of fire through the Lord Jesus Christ.

He not only taught new life, but He made it possible. He was the Lamb without blemish, the man without sin, the perfect One to offer His perfect life as a “ransom for many.” In the Garden of Gethsemane and on the cross at Calvary, Jesus of Nazareth suffered beyond anything we can imagine, carrying the full, eternal weight of our sins, our mistakes, our infirmities, our illnesses, and our weaknesses. He paid the full price and opened the door to new life in the Spirit here and eternal life with our Heavenly Father.

And then, in another moment, the life was gone. The Savior died. But this, too, was part of the plan, part of bringing new life to the world. He had to die to break the bands of death. In His death, therefore, was the promise of everlasting life. That promise was realized in another glorious moment of new life. On the morning of the third day the angels proclaimed the glorious news: He is risen!

And so, the message of Christmas for me this year is: New Life! New life in the stable; new life in the word of God; new life in the Holy Spirit; new life in His glorious resurrection; and the hope of eternal life with our Heavenly Father through the mercy, grace, and power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

I give you my witness that the good news of Christmas is true. Jesus Christ, born of Mary in a humble stable, is the Savior and Redeemer of the world. I pray that all of us may feel His love and His power and new life in Him during this glorious Christmas season.