

“God’s Gift Of Jesus”

John 1: 1 – 14; Colossians 1:15 - 29; Romans 8: 1 – 4 & 28 – 39; **Matthew 1:18 -25 (Sermon)**

During Advent we have been looking at the gifts God has given to us.

We have looked at God’s gift of hope, God’s gift of peace, God’s gift of joy, God’s gift of love, and God’s gift of light.

Today we will be looking at God’s gift of Jesus.

If we are not careful when we read the Christmas story we will focus on the baby Jesus in a manger, the shepherds, and / or the Magi.

And if we do we will miss the whole point of Christmas.

The whole point of Christmas is that God Himself came in the flesh to be with us.

The word Immanuel means ***“God with us”*** (Matthew 1:23)

God Almighty The Creator and Ruler of the Universe loved us so much, cared about us so much, and He wanted to be with us so much that our Holy God left His throne in heaven and came to earth to dwell among His sinful people.

The Bible clearly tells us that we are all sinners and we all fall short of the glory of God.

Since we have a sinful nature we are unable to save ourselves.

All of our good works are marred by our sinful nature, so we can never earn our salvation.

Since one human soul is far more valuable than the entire wealth of the whole universe no amount of silver and gold can buy your salvation.

Sin is a very serious thing and your sin had to be dealt with by the death of a perfect sacrifice!

Jesus came to die in your place.

You see Jesus purchased your salvation with His blood.

Jesus came to earth to bring salvation to you and to me.

We must never forget that the death and resurrection of Jesus is a vital part of the true meaning of Christmas!

Listen to the way Peter put it in 1st Peter 1:18-19 ***“You must know that you were redeemed from the useless way of living inherited by tradition from your forefathers, not with***

corruptible things such as silver and gold, But you were purchased with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a sacrificial lamb without blemish or spot.”

Jesus purchased your eternal salvation by dying on the cross for your sins!

God did not just send us an instruction manual on how to live a life pleasing to God; God Himself came down from heaven and gave His life to redeem us from our sins.

Eternal salvation is the very best Christmas gift anyone could ever hope to receive.

Likewise telling your friends and co-workers how they can spend eternity in heaven is the best Christmas present you could ever give to them.

2nd Corinthians 5:19 reminds us that God has given us this wonderful message of reconciliation.

Introducing someone to The Lord Jesus Christ and for them to receive the Gift of Eternal Life would be the best Christmas ever for them.

The good news of Christmas is that God did what we cannot do for ourselves.

We can never pay the price for our sins.

No matter how many self-improvement courses we take we cannot overcome the sinful nature in ourselves.

No matter how many good deeds we do we can never overcome the bad deeds we do.

Isaiah 64:6 tells us that all of our good deeds are as filthy rags in God’s sight.

If our good deeds are like filthy rags what about our bad deeds?

No one is ever good enough and no one can ever save themselves from their sins.

But the Good News of Christmas is Jesus came to save us from our sins.

God is with us!

The sad thing is that many people go through life unaware of the presence of God. God created man in His own image.

Since God is a spirit we are spiritual beings and we are incomplete without a spiritual dimension in our lives.

Not having the presence of God in our life is like we have a spiritual itch that cannot be satisfied.

The Book of Acts, tells us that God created us so that we would seek The Lord and perhaps reach out for Him and find Him, though The Lord is not far away from each one of us (Acts 17:27).

In the first chapter of John we read, ***“In Him was life and the life was the light of men. And the light shined in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.”*** (John 1:4 - 5).

Those people without an awareness of God’s presence in their lives will always be searching for meaning and purpose in their lives.

So what does it mean for us to have God with us?

God is omnipresent which means that God is everywhere, all the time, at the same time.

Since God is a spirit God is invisible unless He chooses to reveal Himself in a visible form.

The significance of ***“God with us”*** is fully explained in Colossians 1:15 where we read, ***“Jesus is the visible image of the invisible God.”***

- Jesus came to save us from all of our past sins, all of our present sins, and all of our future sins.
- Jesus came to save us from our sinful nature.
- Jesus came to save sinners from eternal punishment and spiritual death!
- Jesus came to die in our place so that we would not spend eternity in hell
- Jesus came to show us the way He expects His children to live while we are on this earth.
- Jesus came to be with us to bless us, not to curse us.
- Jesus came to be with us to lift up, not to drag us down.
- Jesus came to be with us to dry the tears of the sorrowful.
- Jesus came to be with us to bind up the wounds of the hurting.
- Jesus came to be with us to give rest to the weary.
- Jesus came so that we can experience the abundant life that Jesus promised to all of His followers while we are on this earth. (John 10:10)

But for us to realize God’s great gift of Jesus we have to invite Jesus into our lives!

Celebrating Christmas should never become just an enactment of a historical event.

The good news of Christmas is for the here and now while we are here on earth!

So the question becomes; ***“how do we make God’s presence real in our lives today?”***

The prophet Jeremiah sums it up this way.

“When you call upon me and pray to me I will listen to you. When you seek me and search for me with your whole heart I will be found by you.” (Jeremiah 29:12-14)

The only way to find something is to look for it.

Since God is with us and God is all around us God continuously tries to get our attention through nature, through circumstances, through other people, through His Word, and through that still small voice in each of us.

God is trying to show Himself to us in the day-to-day routine of our lives.

God is trying to talk to each of us.

God is trying to make a difference in our lives. But God does not force Himself on anyone. The only way we can realize God’s presence is to invite Him into our lives. God is never far away from us. God is with us. If God is not real in your life and if Jesus is not your constant companion, I urge you to invite Jesus into your life before you leave here today. God has given us a marvelous Christmas gift of His Son Jesus Christ.

Our God chose to come to earth to be with us have to invite Him into our life!

Not only is God with us God abides in us!

In John 14 Jesus promised not to leave us as orphans.

After His resurrection Jesus said that He would send His Holy Spirit to live in everyone who believed in Him.

The Holy Spirit came on that first Pentecost and The Holy Spirit lives in every believer today.

The Holy Spirit is in us to guide us, to comfort us, to teach us, to protect us, to convict us, and to empower us for Christian service.

The Holy Spirit seals us until the day of redemption.

Colossians 1:27 tells us our hope of glory is Christ in you.

Romans 8:9b -11 warns us that if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ.

If you are in Christ God is always present in you!

Since The Holy Spirit lives in us our God is always with us .

God has given us a marvelous Christmas gift of His Son Jesus Christ.

Our God chose to dwell within all who believe in His Son Jesus!

Not only is our God with us and our God abides in us, our God is for us!

The 8th Chapter of Romans contains two wonderful promises for every Christian.

Romans 8:28 assures us that ***"God causes all things work together for good to those who love The Lord, to those who are the called according to His purpose."***

And Romans 8:31 assures us that ***"If God is for us, who can be against us"?***

And so, Immanuel is God's promise to always be for you in the tough times and in the trials of life.

Immanuel is God's promise that you are safe in His dwelling place.

If you are in Christ Almighty God is always for you.

God has given us a marvelous Christmas gift of the assurance that our He is always for us!

It is interesting to note that The Gospel According To Matthew begins with Immanuel, God with us, and The Gospel According To Matthew ends with Jesus words, ***"Lo, I am with you always, even until the end of the age."*** (Matthew 28:20b)

You see Immanuel not only refers to the incarnation.

Immanuel refers to every day in the life of every Christian.

On good days God is with us. On bad days when we are facing surgery or when we are struggling financially God is with us and God is in us.

When our friends turn against us, when we are falsely accused, and / or when a loved one dies God is with us, God is in us, and God is for us!

Christmas is not the time for us to be tired and feel defeated.

Christmas is the time for us to rejoice because Jesus has defeated sin and death and our God is with us, our God is in us, and our God is for us.

When we are at the end of our rope, when we are lonely, when we feel forgotten and forsaken we need to remember our God is with us, is in us, and is for us.

If your family life is falling apart, if someone whom you love has a terminal disease, if you have lost your job we need to remember our God is with us, our God is in us, and our God is for us.

You see the good news of Christmas should re-energize us and remind us to move forward in confidence again because our God is with us, is in us, and is for us.

Christmas brings us hope, peace, joy, love, and light because our God is with us, God is in us, and God is for us.

The question is this; will God's gift of Jesus make a difference in your life this Christmas?

God's gift of Jesus will make a tremendous difference in your life **if** you will make room for Jesus in your life each day.

God's gift of Jesus will make a tremendous difference in your life **if** you will sincerely pray for Jesus to be born anew in your life this Christmas.

AMEN