



Advent – Infinite Glory Becoming Intimate Glory

Community Group Study Guide Philippians 2:1-11 – Week of December 18th, 2022

As we approach our celebration of God coming to earth, it is an opportunity for us to reflect on the significance of all that event entailed. We are familiar with many of the details... The scandal of the virgin pregnancy, the lowly place where the child would be born, and the humbling of The Word becoming flesh. However, one aspect of the Christmas story that we often do not consider is what it cost Christ simple to come. To truly appreciate what became, we must understand what was. To appreciate what it meant for Christ to enter into the scandal of His birth, we must understand the majesty and praise that was His in heaven. To fully grasp the depth of His laying in a manger, we must view His glory in heaven. To understand how great a sacrifice it was to take on human flesh, we must meditate on how glorious Christ was in heaven. It was no small event for Him to take on the likeness of men.

Often this contrast, the consideration of what Jesus gave up in order to come to earth, is absent from our thoughts when we ponder over the meaning of Christmas. Without this consideration, we miss out on a full appreciation of what our celebration is for. We can easily skip the sacrifice. We can overlook how the glorious, powerful, and awesome God gave up all of that to become a fragile baby.

As we desire to celebrate, as we desire to understand the significance of Christmas, we must forget to focus on who God is. While as limited human beings we will never grasp the depth of God, we can turn to His word to see how God depicts Himself. Isaiah 6:1-8 is one of the clearest descriptions of the setting of God in heaven. Meditating on the richness, the glory, the majesty, perfection, and holiness of God should stir us to worship Him. Furthermore, meditating like this should deepen the impact of the Christmas story. Christ rightfully and justly had infinite glory and majesty in heaven, and yet He gave it up to be born in the likeness of man. We cannot fully fathom the sacrifice that was made by Christ's simple act of become human. Yet He did so in order that His infinite glory might become intimate glory. This understanding should increase our joy when remember His birth.

DISCUSSION GOALS

Head

That God is holy, holy holy... meaning that He is holy beyond human description. He is worthy of all glory, majesty, and praise. Our minds should meditate on the holiness of God.

Heart

When we consider the holiness of God, our hearts should be humble to praise. Furthermore, we should our affection for Christ stirred up, as we realize how great the sacrifice it was for Him to leave behind His deserved glory.

Hands

As we celebrate the Christmas story, we should remember holiness and goodness of God. We should praise Him for His willingness to come in the likeness of man.

Read Philippians 2:1-11 & Isaiah 6:1-7

1. Who is God? How would you describe Him outside of what He does?
2. What is your initial response or impression when you consider the holiness of God? How do these passages address your initial response?
3. How does considering the holiness of God and the position of ourselves change the way we view the Christmas story?
4. Reading the passage in Isaiah... What does this passage teach us about God? What does it teach us about ourselves?
5. How do we see the elements of the Gospel in Isaiah 6?
6. In a time where King Uzziah had died, God chose to remind His people through Isaiah that He was still their King, and He was still on His throne. Thinking through your own life, when/how has God revealed to you His steadfast authority in a similar way? What scripture did the Spirit use to remind you of God's constant power?
7. In Philippians, Paul is using Jesus as an example for us to imitate. How does Jesus' act inform/motivate how we should act with one another?
8. When we see how Jesus' infinite glory has become our intimate glory, how has this idea encouraged and grown your faith?