

Christmas December 11, 2022

“THE REALITIES OF THE CHRISTMAS STORY”

Matthew 1:21 And she (*Mary*) will have a son, & you are to name Him Jesus, (*The Lord saves*) for He will **save** His people from their sins.” 22 All of this occurred to fulfill the Lord’s message through His prophet: 23 “Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She’ll give birth to a son, & they will call Him Immanuel which means ‘God is w/us’”

1. Christmas is all about God’s desire to “save us & be with us”

*God doesn’t remove all the challenges, & discomforts, & negatives of this world, But He is “Immanuel – **God with us**” & He’s always making a way for you to have His Spirit, now, on earth as it is in heaven.*

Matthew 1:20 ...an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. “Joseph, son of David,” the angel said, “do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the **Holy Spirit**.”

2. Christmas displays the amazing ability of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

Luke 1:26 In the sixth month of Elizabeth’s pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee 27 to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. 28 Gabriel appeared to her & said, “Greetings, (*Rejoice*) favored woman! The Lord is w/ you! 29 Confused & disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. 30 “Don’t be afraid, Mary,” the angel told her, “for you’ve found favor w/ God! 31 You will conceive & give birth to a son, & you’ll name Him Jesus. 32 He will be very great & will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give Him the throne of His ancestor David. 33 And He will reign over Israel forever; His Kingdom will never end!” 34 Mary asked the angel, “But how can this happen? I am a virgin.” 35 The angel replied, “The **Holy Spirit** will come upon you, & the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, & He will be called the Son of God.

The Christmas story highlights the move of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

****Even when Jesus was baptized the Holy Spirit showed up****

A reality of the Christmas story is that by receiving Jesus as Lord, our spirit is made “alive” by the Holy Spirit.

John 14:16 I will ask the Father, & He will give you another Advocate (Comforter or Encourager or Counselor or the Spirit of Truth), who will never leave you. 17 He is the Holy Spirit, who leads into all truth. The world cannot receive Him because it isn't looking for Him & doesn't recognize Him. But you know Him because He lives w/ you now & later will be in you...

*The Holy Spirit is our Helper, Teacher, Intercessor, & Strengtheners...
The Holy Spirit releases the power of God in our lives.*

26 But when the Father sends the Advocate as my representative - that is, the Holy Spirit - He will teach you everything & will remind you of everything I have told you.

*The Holy Spirit was sent to remind us about Jesus & all that He's taught
He empowers us to live in light of the gospel.*

The Holy Spirit is in us to fellowship & help us in every aspect of life.

Luke 24:49 “Now I'll send the Holy Spirit, just as my Father promised. But stay here in the city until the Holy Spirit comes & fills you w/ power from heaven.”

*Christmas is the Holy Spirit releasing the power of Jesus in our lives
When we walk w/ the Holy Spirit, we have His power in our lives.*

Acts 1:4b ...“Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the **gift** He promised, as I told you before. 5 John baptized w/ water, but in just a few days you will be baptized (united) w/ the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 1:8 You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere...”

When we walk w/ the Holy Spirit, we have His power to assist us in life

Acts 10:38 You know that God anointed Jesus of Nazareth w/ the Holy Spirit & w/ power. Then Jesus went around doing good & healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was w/ Him.

Christmas reminds us we have the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives

Romans 8:9 You're not controlled by your sinful nature. You're controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you. *(Remember that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ living in them do not belong to Him at all.)* 10 Christ lives within you, so even though your body will die because of sin, the Spirit gives you life because you've been made right w/ God. 11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. Just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, He will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you!

Romans 8:14 AMP All who are *allowing themselves to* be led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you've not received a spirit of slavery leading again to fear, but you've received the Spirit of adoption as sons [the Spirit producing sonship] by which we joyfully cry, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit Himself testifies & confirms together w/ our spirit [assuring us] that we believers, are children of God.

The Holy Spirit flows in our lives when we submit to Him.

Christmas reminds us the Holy Spirit is everything we need in life.

Romans 15:13 I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely w/ joy & peace because you trust in Him. Then you will overflow w/ confident hope through the *(life-giving)* power of the Holy Spirit.

The real "Spirit of Christmas", the Holy Spirit is a living Spirit, a sovereign Spirit. He is a world-invading, wonder-working, devil-stomping, sin-slaying, death-destroying Spirit. Power is His identity & the glory of Jesus His aim. Though invisible as the wind, He is mighty as a hurricane. He will not stop until Christ is formed in us, So take courage, Church. Christmas means more than Jesus' coming into the world. Christmas means the Holy Spirit is coming into you.

And, we care about people not knowing Jesus & not receiving Jesus. Let's care for & pray for the lost & unsaved. Pray for the unchurched.

**Our Christmas Eve services are special events to reach your family, friends, co-workers, neighbors...through the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Everyone, please ask God to lead you to the unchurched & let's pray...