

Christmas December 4, 2022
“THE REALITIES OF THE CHRISTMAS STORY”

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

Deuteronomy 31:8 Do not be afraid or discouraged, for the Lord will personally go ahead of you. He will be **with** you; He will neither fail you nor abandon you.

Joshua 1:9 This is my command - be strong & courageous! Do not be afraid or discouraged. For the Lord your God is **with** you wherever you go.

Matthew 1:18 This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. 19 Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man & did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly. 20 As he considered this, 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 w/in her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. 21 And she will have a son, & you are to name Him Jesus, (*Jesus means “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**’” 24 When Joseph woke up, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded & took Mary as his wife. 25 But he did not have sexual relations w/ her until her son was born. And Joseph named Him Jesus

*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 good will, now, on earth as it is in heaven.*

Mary had 9 nine months of teenage pregnancy, her fiancé almost left her, 80 mile donkey ride, taxes to pay, no room in the inn, her first child was born in a barn...

In spite of all these things she fulfilled God’s will, & she was part of the greatest miracle of all history & is still blessed & highly favored.

John 1:14 So the Word became human & made His home among us. He was full of unfailing love & faithfulness.

The Word became flesh & dwelt among us.

The Word didn't become a religious system.

The Word didn't become a theological checklist.

The Word didn't become a political movement.

The Word didn't become an ecstatic, emotional experience.

The Word became flesh. A loving embodied existence.

Revelation 21:3 AMP then I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "See! The tabernacle (*home*) of God is among men & He will live among them & they will be His people & God Himself will be w/ them as their God"

John 3:16 For this is how God loved the world: He gave (*or For God loved the world so much that He gave*) His one & only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him will not perish but have eternal life. 17 God sent His Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through Him.

John 14:16 "I will ask the Father, & He will give you another Advocate, (*or Comforter, Encourager, Counselor*) 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 with you now & later will be in you. (*and is in you*) 18 No, I will not abandon you as orphans - I will come to you."

Matthew 28:20 "Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

God values us more than we can imagine or comprehend. We have everlasting value, we have eternal value, forever value. God displayed His love to us by sending His Son Jesus for us...to save us & to be with us.

Romans 8:38 I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God's love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears

for today nor our worries about tomorrow - not even the powers of hell can separate us from God's love. 39 No power in the sky above or in the earth below - indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Corinthians 1:9 God will do this, for He is faithful to do what He says, & He has invited you into partnership (fellowship) w/ His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Colossians 1:26 This message was kept secret for centuries & generations past, but now it's been revealed to God's people. 27 For God wanted them to know that the riches & glory of Christ are for you Gentiles, too. And this is the secret: Christ lives in you. This gives you assurance of sharing His glory. *(NKJV-Christ in you, the hope of glory)* 28a So we tell others about Christ, warning everyone & teaching everyone w/ all the wisdom God has given us...

*If you're facing a pressing need today, or seeing lack in a certain area, **take heart**. Don't be discouraged. Your heavenly Father knows all about it & He's more than willing to meet that need because He loves you. **Come just as you are to you Jesus, who loves you unconditionally.***

Revelation 3:20 "Look! I stand at the door & knock. If you hear my voice & open the door, I will come in & we will share a meal together as friends"

*We believe this is true. We believe this is real. God sent His Son. Jesus has changed my life, & Jesus has changed your life. I know many of us are struggling...& I want you to walk in His favor! 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 hold an invite card & let's pray...