

God Has Come

Series – Advent: *The Light Has Come*

Dec. 24, 2021

Col. 1:15-22; 2:9, 12

Good evening everyone, and Merry Christmas!

We've been in a series called *Advent: The Light Has Come*. Over the last several weeks, we've seen that in Jesus, *hope* has come, *peace* has come, *joy* has come, *love* has come, and now, on Christmas Eve, we're going to talking about how in Jesus, *God* has come into this world.

The Bible teaches that God is a God of infinite greatness and unfathomable power. And yet when he comes to earth at Christmas, God doesn't show up in the "wow", in the grand spectacle, in some overwhelming display.

Rather, he shows up in the in the insignificant, in the small, in the weak. He has all the power in the universe, but when God comes into this world at Christmas, he shows up in a way no one expects. He shows up *as one of us*— as a human being— and as a baby at that.

You've heard this story often if you've gone to church for any length of time— perhaps to the point that the wonder of it all is lost on you. Maybe you've become overly familiar with the mind-blowingly radical truth that is Christmas. So this evening, I invite you to imagine you're hearing it for the first time.

While not a traditional Christmas passage, these words from the Bible in Colossians can help us to ponder the wonder of Christmas afresh:

For in Christ, all the fullness of God lives in a human body. ¹

Not some, but *all* the fullness of God lives in a human body, in the person of Jesus Christ.

Colossians also tells us that:

Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation, for through him God created everything... Everything was created through him and for him. He existed before anything else, and he holds all creation together. ²

¹ Colossians 2:9

² Colossians 1:15-17

Everything has been created through Jesus Christ, and he holds the whole of creation together, says the text.

Science tells us that there are more galaxies in the universe than we could ever begin to count—trillions upon trillions. There are, it would seem, more galaxies in the universe than there are grains of sand on the seashore. I once read that if the distance between the earth and the sun— ninety three million miles— was no more than the thickness of a sheet of paper, then the distance from the Earth to the nearest star would be a stack of papers *seventy feet high*. The diameter of the Milky Way, our own galaxy, would be a stack of papers over *three hundred miles high*.

The message of Christmas is that the very same God who spoke such an incomprehensibly vast universe into existence, and who continues to hold every molecule of that universe together moment by moment — this God, out of love for a race of lost and dying people, came into this world as a tiny, little baby.

Let that sit with you for a moment... The God of the universe... came into this world a human infant... for us, for me, for you.

Some images might help renew the wonder of Christmas in us.

The very same God who created this...



became like this...



... a young Middle Eastern man who might have looked similar to this fellow. He became one of *us*—Immanuel, God with *us*—the fullness of divinity dwelling in a human body.

The very same God who created our galaxy—which is hundreds and thousands of light years across, and contains billions of stars...



became an adolescent child not unlike this...



And the very same God who spoke into being an unfathomably vast universe and continues to sustain it with its countless magnificent burnings suns became like this— a little baby...



And before God became a little baby, he became this... a human zygote—a newly fertilized egg—no bigger than the head of a pin.



The fullness of the infinitely great God who holds this universe on his pinky finger, so to speak, became microscopically small, and in doing so, says scripture, he reveals his glory—the breathtaking wonder of who he is— *not* in the sensational, the grandiose, or the majestic, but in the tiny, the finite, the vulnerable. As Pastor Greg Boyd says:

“He’s not just God infinitely over us. He’s God intimately close to us.”

He’s Immanuel—*God with us*—because he became one of us and came to us— first as a zygote in the womb of an insignificant, unwed, teenage Jewish girl. And then as a growing embryo inside that womb. Then as a helpless newborn infant. Then as a toddler, an adolescent, and a young carpenter. The same God who holds trillions of galaxies in his hand comes down to our level and becomes one of us.

But most gloriously of all, the God who created this...



... became microscopically small so that he could be born, grow up, and give his life for us on Calvary. So the very God who made the universe... becomes this for us... on the cross.



In this way, God's not only with us in our humanity, but he's with us even in our fallenness and sin, because although he was without sin, he took our sin upon himself on that cross, so that we could know forgiveness and redemption.

And so, through Jesus Christ, God is also *with us* in our shame, *with us* in our guilt and condemnation, *with us* in the horror and suffering that sin brings about. Picking up where we left off in Colossians, the Bible says:

For God in all his fullness was pleased to live in Christ, and through him God reconciled everything to himself. He made peace with everything in heaven and on earth by means of Christ's blood on the cross. This includes you who were once far away from God. You were his enemies, separated from him by your evil thoughts and actions. Yet now he has reconciled you to himself through the death of Christ in his physical body. As a result, he has brought you into his own presence, and you are holy and blameless as you stand before him without a single fault.³

Think about it: the God who creates all things, and who holds all things in existence—the infinitely great God—becomes microscopically small for the ultimate purpose of giving his life for us, so that guilty sinners like us can be reconciled—put right with God—once and for all.

To put it another way, you can't understand the meaning of Christmas until you understand how inseparable it is from Good Friday and Easter. Jesus' cradle has no meaning apart from his cross, and his empty tomb.

³ Colossians 1:19-22

God not only stooped an infinite distance to become one of us, he stooped even further to become our sin, absorbing it into himself on the cross, and triumphing over it in his resurrection.

What does all this mean? It means that God could not have gone further on our behalf. He has done everything he possibly can in order to restore his relationship with us, and to save us from sin, and the whole creation along with us.

And if God went that far to save us, then two things must be true. Listen carefully.

First, we were so lost in our sin, so unable to save ourselves, that:

Nothing less than the birth and death of the Son of God could save us.

Nothing less than the incarnation, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus could make us right with God.

Second, it means that as great as our sin problem is:

God's love for us is infinitely greater than all our sin.

Because although he didn't have to go to such mind-boggling lengths to save us, he did so, willingly. And he did it for us all. He did it for me. He did it for you.

How do you respond to this? You give yourself to him; you entrust your life to the one whose love for you is vaster than the universe, knowing that whatever it costs you to be in relationship with God, it's nothing compared to what it cost him to be in relationship with you.

Would you bow with me for prayer? And as you all remained bowed, just before we pray, I wonder if there's anyone here who has not yet made a clear choice to give their lives to Jesus and would like to do so tonight, on Christmas Eve.

This evening, we've seen that in Jesus, God gave his everything for you. If you'd like to respond by giving yourself to him tonight, as all heads are bowed and eyes are closed, just slip up your hand for a moment so I can see it. "Jesus, I give myself to you." If that's you, just slip up your hand for a quick moment if you're here in person. If you're online, you can click the button in the chat area that says, "Jesus, I give myself to you."

Jesus, you gave your all for me from your cradle to your cross, and the only gift I can give you in return is my life, and that's what I'm choosing to do tonight. I choose to enter into a relationship with God through Jesus Christ.

Any other hands or clicks?

Okay, if you just put your hand up or clicked the button in the chat, I'd like to lead you in a short prayer to give your life to Jesus. As I pray, just make this prayer your own:

Lord Jesus, I believe you are the Son of God, and that you left the glories of heaven, and were born here on earth, as one of us, to give your life for us, to rescue us from sin and death, and restore us to God. I acknowledge, that I'm a sinner in need of a Saviour, and I now give my life to you. I receive your forgiveness, and ask you to take your rightful place in my life, as my Saviour and Lord. Reign in me, transform me to become like you, and help me to grow, in my relationship with you each day. Thank you for the infinite lengths you've gone, to save me. Thank you, Jesus! Amen.

A final word. One of the most fundamental ways to confirm that you've given yourself to Jesus is through baptism. If we go back once more to Colossians, it says:

For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead. ⁴

Baptism is a physical, tangible means that God gives to us to help ourselves and others know that we now have a brand new life in Jesus. If you have not yet been baptized as a follower of Jesus, then why not start the New Year off right by being baptized?

Our next baptism service will take place on Sunday, February 6th. If you're interested in being baptized, just go to www.cornerstonechurch.ca/Baptism to learn more and sign up, and one of our pastors will follow up with you from there.

At this time, let's get ready to light our candles, and sing our Christmas praises to the God who has come to us in Jesus.

⁴ Colossians 2:12