

2019 Advent Study (Week 1)

ESV(John 1:10-14) He (Jesus) was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. ¹¹ He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God. ¹⁴ And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

The challenge during Advent is to make the common fresh

- To again learn to stand in awe and wonder of the incarnation
- To learn how to avoid the sentimentalism of the world
 - o Why does the world love Christmas?

The incarnation demands attention – in whatever worldview

- You can accept or reject it, but you cannot ignore it
- It is the heart of heart of Jesus Christ, not the appendix
- It cannot rightly be removed without destroying the whole

Christmas is what it is because Christ is who he said he is

- Men have always challenged the incarnation
- They come and go, and their silly books and ideas go with them
- And yet here we still are with our New Testaments open
- Doubters claim that the writers "misremembered"
 - o What important event in life is ever forgotten?

ESV(John 19:23-30) When the soldiers had crucified Jesus, they took his garments and divided them into four parts, one part for each soldier; also his tunic. But the tunic was seamless, woven in one piece from top to bottom, ²⁴ so they said to one another, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see whose it shall be." This was to fulfill the Scripture which says, "They divided my garments among them, and for my clothing they cast lots." So the soldiers did these things, ²⁵ but standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother and his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Clopas, and Mary Magdalene. ²⁶ When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple whom he loved standing nearby, he said to his mother, "Woman, behold, your son!" ²⁷ Then he said to the disciple, "Behold, your mother!" And from that hour the disciple took her to his own home. ²⁸ After this, Jesus, knowing that all was now finished, said (to fulfill the Scripture), "I thirst." ²⁹ A jar full of sour wine stood there, so they put a sponge full of the sour wine on a hyssop branch and held it to his mouth. ³⁰ When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished," and he bowed his head and gave up his spirit.

- Note the attention to detail (here and elsewhere)

Jesus was "meek (gentle) and lowly in heart" (Mat 11:29)

- Remarkable only because he was, in truth, God incarnate

ESV(Colossians 1:19) For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell

There is a critical difference between God indwelling humanity and Jesus the incarnate deity (true God in bodily form)

- To rightly understand the Christian faith you must know the difference, and which is true and right
- Which is it? (See John 1:14)
- Jesus did not simply contain a spark of divinity
- He was God in human form (Colossians 1:19)

If Jesus wasn't God, he wasn't good

ESV(Luke 18:18-19) And a ruler asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" ¹⁹ And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.

- Jesus here addresses the heart of today's problem
- He does not deny that he is good, he denies the unbeliever's right to call him good while rejecting the incarnation
 - o When he holds to God indwelling humanity rather than Jesus the incarnate deity
 - o He condemns sentimentalism
 - o He condemns the notion of Jesus as "a good man"

ESV(John 20:26-29) Eight days later, his disciples were inside again, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were locked, Jesus came and stood among them and said, "Peace be with you." ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here, and see my hands; and put out your hand, and place it in my side. Do not disbelieve, but believe." ²⁸ Thomas answered him, "My Lord and my God!" ²⁹ Jesus said to him, "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

- Jesus acknowledged Thomas' answer as correct
- Thomas acknowledged Jesus the incarnate deity not God indwelling humanity (Jesus, the man, with a spark of divinity)

If Jesus was not the incarnate deity, then Hemingway was right: "*Life is a dirty trick – a short journey from nothingness to nothingness.*"

Understand and believe the truth of the incarnation

- Christmas will never lose its true meaning
- Life will never be without meaning or purpose
- You will never lack the true wonder of the season
- You will never hear the message of the angels with apathy

The Collect for Peace

Pastor: *The Lord will bless His people.*

Congregation: ***The Lord will bless His people with peace.***

Pastor: Lord God, from whom all holy desires, all good counsels, and all just works do proceed, give unto Your servants that peace which the world cannot give, that our hearts may be prepared to obey Your commandments, and also that we, being defended by You from the fear of our enemies, may pass our time in peace and quietness. This we ask through the merits of Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Savior, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

Congregation: ***Amen.***

The Prayers of the Day

The Lord's Prayer

The Benediction *(Spoken by the Pastor)*

*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
And the love of God the Father
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.*

Congregation: *(Sung)* ***Amen.***

The Closing Hymn *(Posted on the Hymn Board)*

Silent Prayer



ADVENT

2019

**St Paul Lutheran Church
Bismarck, ND**

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Midweek Advent Services – 2019

The Opening Prayer by the Pastor

The Opening Hymn *(Posted on the Hymn Board)*

Liturgy – A Service of the Word *(Supplement page 22)*

The Scripture Reading for the Day

(December 4) ^{ESV} [John 7:37-47](#) On the last day of the feast, the great day, Jesus stood up and cried out, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. ³⁸ Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, 'Out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" ³⁹ Now this he said about the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were to receive, for as yet the Spirit had not been given, because Jesus was not yet glorified. ⁴⁰ ¶ When they heard these words, some of the people said, "This really is the Prophet." ⁴¹ Others said, "This is the Christ." But some said, "Is the Christ to come from Galilee?" ⁴² Has not the Scripture said that the Christ comes from the offspring of David, and comes from Bethlehem, the village where David was?" ⁴³ So there was a division among the people over him. ⁴⁴ Some of them wanted to arrest him, but no one laid hands on him. ⁴⁵ ¶ The officers then came to the chief priests and Pharisees, who said to them, "Why did you not bring him?" ⁴⁶ The officers answered, "No one ever spoke like this man!" ⁴⁷ The Pharisees answered them, "Have you also been deceived?"

(December 11) ^{ESV} [\(Matthew 1:18-25\)](#) Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. ²⁰ But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins." ²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: ²³ "Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel" (which means, God with us). ²⁴ When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded

him: he took his wife, ²⁵ but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

(December 18) ^{ESV} [John 3:14-21](#) And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵ that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶ ¶ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. ¹⁸ Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God. ¹⁹ And this is the judgment: the light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the light because their works were evil. ²⁰ For everyone who does wicked things hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his works should be exposed. ²¹ But whoever does what is true comes to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that his works have been carried out in God."

The Confession of Faith – (The Christmas Creed)

***I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Who sent His Son to be my Savior;***

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, my Lord, the long-promised Messiah, Who came as foretold, being conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, announced by the angels, worshipped by the shepherds, adored by the Wise Men, Who lived to suffer, die, and rise again, To free me from all sin, from death, and from the power of the devil;

And I believe in the Holy Spirit, Who has brought me to faith in my Savior, And by whose continuous work in my heart, I rejoice in my salvation, Walk in Christ, Show forth His praises, And will one day live and reign with Him eternally. Amen.

The Pre-Sermon Hymn *(Posted on the Hymn Board)*

The Weekly Bible Study – "The Mystery of Christmas"

Dec. 4: The Incarnation

Dec. 11: The Annunciation

Dec. 18: The History

The Post Sermon Hymn *(Posted on the Hymn Board)*