

First Friends
Prepare Him Room: "Incarnation"
12-21-08

Incarnation: "Becoming The Gift" (John 1:1-18) Foundational to Christian doctrine
Great Hymn of the ancient church – worn as necklace, read @ baptism, sick
God becomes the Gift so that we can become the gift.
Christmas story filled with unlikely heroes: Mary, Joseph, shepherds, etc.

Last week: "Overcoming Opposition" – tough week!
Christ came because of the opposition, faced it, and overcame it!
* Carla's Christmas card: READ

INCARNATION: literally "in flesh"...God with skin, bones, organs, etc.
1:14 Word became flesh – to rescue and redeem!
Divinity clothed himself with humanity. (did not diminish his deity)
Col. 2:9 For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,
So we could know: (sensory perception)

- a. What Hope feels like
- b. What Peace looks like
- c. What Joy sounds like
- d. What Humility smells like
- e. What sacrificial love tastes like
 - a. FACE TO FACE with the GLORY OF GOD!

Jewish Opposition - The Jews believed (still do) he would come bringing gifts.
Jesus came AS the Gift! So they did not recognize him.
Blasphemous as well as incomprehensible. No one can see God (Moses)
1) Build the Third Temple (Ezekiel 37:26-28).
2) Gather all Jews back to the Land of Israel (Isaiah 43:5-6).
3) Usher in an era of world peace, end all hatred, oppression, suffering, disease.
4) Spread universal knowledge of the God of Israel, then unite humanity as one.
The messiah will be a regular human being, born naturally to husband and wife.
He is not to be a god, nor a man born of supernatural or virgin birth. The very
idea that God would take on human form is repulsive to Jews because it
contradicts our concept of God as being above and beyond the limitations of the
human body and situation. G-d ALONE is to be worshipped, and not a being who
is His creation, be he angel, saint, or even the messiah himself.

Greek Opposition: Flesh bad / Spirit good
Jesus honored flesh by clothing himself with its substance (he created it)!

Modern Opposition: rationally and scientifically impossible

Post-modern Opposition: the claims of Jesus to be the Way / Truth are too limiting.

Unattractive and unwanted Gift: poor, Galilean, carpenter (blue collar), outrageous claims, “I and Father are one”, breaking religious tradition (healing on Sabbath), submitting to Roman govt. and Dying shamefully on cross! No wonder the world did not comprehend this “light.” But He came anyway!!

Good news of Christmas! Jesus became The Gift!

****Five Essential Truths to Christianity: John 1:1-18***

1. Jesus is Divine & Pre-existent: God from the beginning – vs. 1-2
2. Jesus is the Creator of all life – vs. 3-4
3. The hearts of humanity are in dead in sin & opposed to God – vs. 5, 10-11
4. Jesus came to bring spiritual rebirth through faith – vs. 12-13
5. Jesus took on humanity to reveal God’s glorious grace & truth – vs. 14

Become the gift – be incarnational

Word became flesh and dwelt among us so that through the Holy Spirit the Word can be displayed through our flesh.

Become God with skin on to a broken and hopeless world.

Col. 2:10 and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.

Phil. 2:5-11

Not a religion but a Person, Not rules but relationship

Personally but even more so corporately – “spiritual family” working together!

Carnations: 6

SONG: *Anna Meyer*

Prayer: *Stan*

Closing Song: *Worship Team*