

# We need a little Christmas

Notes: Friday, December 4th

Preached:

## Introduction

- In thinking over this message - I was reminded of the old song "We need a little Christmas", with the chorus that begins "*We need a little Christmas, right this very minute...*"
- I'm not one for secular songs at Christmas time (another sermon for another day), but I propose that we do need a fresh reminder of Christmas... right now.
- Tuesday morning I got up and after dropping Grace off at work, I got a few minutes to spend downtown taking pictures of the snow covered decorations.
- While this looks like Christmas - it's not the Christmas we need. Not what I'm going to talk about today
- Christmas is the celebration of the birth of Jesus, and I want to look at that today, reminding us of the meaning of Christmas.
- I've chatted with so many hurting, broken disillusioned people the past few weeks.
- 2020 has been a very difficult year, and many people are struggling and hurting.
- This morning, I want to remind us of the reason for Christmas.
- In a little over two weeks we will celebrate Christmas - and though our celebrations may be different this year, I don't want us to lose sight of the bigger picture: God sent His Son for us!

# Message

## Text

- I want examine two verses from our reading this week and focus on the truth therein
- **1 John 4:9** *God showed how much he loved us by sending his one and only Son into the world so that we might have eternal life through him. 10 This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.*
- Such a powerful passage - let's look at this in a little detail
- Lets *Unwrap Christmas*

## God's love

- This passage begins *God showed how much he loved us*
- The first thing you must understand about Christmas - it is the demonstration of God's love for us. Christmas is recalling the truth that God loves us
- We know **John 3:16-17** *"For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and 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.*
- God rescued us from the consequences of our sin by giving His Son to save us!
- See the angel's message: **Luke 2:10b-11** *"Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. 11 The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!*
- The infinite unlimited God - has chosen to love us.

- Not because we deserve it - in fact we don't. No one does. In spite of the fact that we've rebelled against Him, God loves
- Again the opening words of our text *God showed*. His love is not mere words - it is action. Christmas is the demonstration of God's love
- See v10 *This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.*
- We didn't choose God, or earn God or deserve God. Instead - he loved us, and sent his Son...

## God's gift

- This leads me to the next thing: the demonstration of Gods love is in the gift he sent
- We just read - His Son was given as a sacrifice to take away our sins!
- We are powerless to come to God - we have violated the relationship - using our free will to rebel against God
- When we were unable to come to Him - God came to us
- Let me read to you the prologue to John's Gospel: **John 1:1-5**

*1 In the beginning the Word already existed.*

*The Word was with God,*

*and the Word was God.*

*2 He existed in the beginning with God.*

*3 God created everything through him,*

*and nothing was created except through him.*

*4 The Word gave life to everything that was created,*

*and his life brought light to everyone.*

*5 The light shines in the darkness,*

*and the darkness can never extinguish it.*

- And **John 1:14** *So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.*
- God's gift was His Son. God became flesh and walked among us - tempted in every way as we are, but was without sin. Then he died as a sacrifice. He knew no sin, but became sin for me
- He rose from the dead - having paid the price for sin, and lives forever to give life to all who believe
- That's God's gift!
- Wednesday morning I was driving to the reservoir for pictures before coming in here to the office. As I drove, watching the sun rise, this old Gaither song popped into my head: **Because He Lives** It's lyric hit me so powerfully

### **Verse**

*God sent His son, they called Him Jesus*

*He came to love, heal and forgive*

*He lived and died to buy my pardon*

*An empty grave is there to prove my savior lives*

### **Chorus**

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow*

*Because He lives, all fear is gone*

*Because I know He holds the future*

*And life is worth the living, just because He lives*

- Christmas is the demonstration of God's love - as expressed in the giving of the gift of His Son

- Because of that - no matter what I'm going through I have the assurance that God loves me and will care for me!

## God's motive

- Enemy has tried to make us doubt God's motive for us
- We've already established from our text that God is showing his love for us
- What then is He up to? We see the answer in v9 *That we might have eternal life through him*
- God's motive is that we would live forever with him
- That was why he created us: for fellowship with Him
- Our sin prevented that
- So He gave us the gift of Jesus
- See again **v10** *This is real love—not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins.*
- What is God up to? Making a way for us to be with him for ever
- If he has so provided for our future - won't he also take care of our present?
- See **Romans 8:31-32** *What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? 32 Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won't he also give us everything else?*
- God's goal for your life is to bring you to himself to be with Him forever
- This church is named after John 10:10 (ESV) - *The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly*

## Our response

Let me just wrap up this "unwrapping" of Christmas to talk about our response to this

## **Believe and receive**

- Like any gift - it must be received
- God will not force you to do what's best for you, neither will he force you to receive His salvation
- We must accept this Good News and act on it - by believing in it!

## **Worship**

- What do you give someone who has everything? Love
- He desires our praise and worship

## **Love one another**

- This world needs love
- Message of 1st John
- It is our privilege to love! See **1 John 4:11-12** *Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. 12 No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us.*

## **Closing**

- I opened with *we need a little Christmas* and this is what I meant. We need Jesus this year
- A reminder that God loves and cares for us
- I am specifically burdened this morning for those who are discouraged, fearful, depressed, not sure they can go on
- Let me remind you again of the chorus to that song:

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow*

*Because He lives, all fear is gone*

*Because I know He holds the future*

*And life is worth the living, just because He lives*

- Pray for the discouraged and depressed
- **2nd Prayer:** fill us with your love - so that we can give that love to others this Christmas