

Christmas 2017

December 24, 2017 – Rev. Rick Lyon

Isaiah 9:2 - The people who walked in *darkness* have seen a great light. Those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of *death*, upon them a light has dawned.

Isaiah 9:6 - For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is *given*.

1. Jesus is Wonderful.

Luke 1:28-29 - The angel appeared to Mary and said, "Greetings, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you." Mary was greatly troubled at his words and *wondered* what kind of greeting this might be.

Luke 2:17-18 - After seeing Him, the shepherds told everyone what had happened and what the angel had said to them about this Child. And all who heard it *wondered* at what the shepherds told them.

2. Jesus is Counselor.

Hebrews 4:15 - This High Priest of ours (Jesus) *understands* our weaknesses, for *He faced all of the same testings we do*, yet He didn't sin.

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British essayist, Dorothy Sayers wrote --- *The incarnation means that... God Himself has gone through the whole of human experience--from the trivial irritations of family life and the cramping restrictions of hard work and lack of money to the worst horrors of pain and humiliation, defeat, despair, and death... He was born in poverty and... suffered infinite pain--all for us--and thought it well worth His while.*

John Stott said --- *"I could never believe in God, if it weren't for the cross. The God I believe in is the One Nietzsche ridiculed as 'God on the cross.' In the real world of pain, how could one worship a God who was immune to it? I've entered many Buddhist temples in different Asian countries and stood respectfully before the statue of the Buddha, his legs crossed, arms folded, eyes closed, the ghost of a smile playing round his mouth, a remote look on his face, detached from the agonies of the world. But each time after a while I've had to turn away. And in my imagination I've turned instead to that lonely, twisted, tortured figure on the cross, nails through His hands and feet, back lacerated, limbs wrenched, brow bleeding from thorn-pricks, mouth dry and intolerably thirsty, plunged in Godforsaken darkness. That's the God for me! He laid aside His immunity to pain. He entered our world of flesh and blood, tears and death. He suffered for us. Our sufferings become more manageable in the light of His. There's still a question mark against human suffering, but over it we boldly stamp another mark, the cross that symbolizes divine suffering."*

3. Jesus is Mighty God.

Romans 8:28-29 - All things work together for good to those who love God and are called according to His purpose... to be conformed to the image of His Son.

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4. Jesus is the Everlasting Father

Romans 6:23 - The wages of sin is death, but *the gift of God is eternal life* through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ephesians 2:8-9 - For by grace you've been saved through faith and that not of yourselves, *it's the gift of God*, not of works lest any man should boast.

5. Jesus is the Prince of Peace

Warren Wiersbe --- "*Shalom has nothing to do with the situation on the outside; it has everything to do with the condition on the inside.*"

Colossians 3:15-16 - Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts...Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly...
