

Christmas Eve

Titus 2: 11-15 & Luke 2: 1-14

Welcome to this night of celebration.

This is the night when the silent Word of God is sleeping in Bethlehem. God exercises his power by sending his Son into the world to be born in a manger. As Psalm 2 says, “I will rehearse the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.”

Christmas is only the beginning of the story that will come to a conclusion or fulfillment on Good Friday and Easter. It is a real story. It is a story that is recounted, as we read in the gospel, in a verbatim way, almost word-for-word, and that is what makes it powerful. That’s what we are celebrating tonight. Christmas reminds us that God conquered sin, suffering, and death by facing temptation, enduring real pain, and allowing himself to be killed.

God redeemed human life by actually living one. There is a part of us that doesn’t like this method. There is a part of us that wants God to do it the easy way; to get rid of all pain and suffering by magic. Let God speak from his throne in heaven and decree that there be no more sin, pain, suffering, and death. That’s what man thinks, that’s what he wants. But that’s not how God operates. He became one of us, lived like us, except in our sinful way.

By becoming one of us, God is teaching us that our real enemies cannot be conquered by us sitting on the sidelines. They can only be conquered by actually facing them and conquering them. This is the secret to understanding God’s work in our lives. God doesn’t magically take things away. Rather, he gives us the grace and power to conquer them through faith as we live in time and space.

God joined us in our time and space, and the result of that is that we are all victorious over our enemies. I understand you may still raise objections by saying that Herod will rise up in violent opposition. The Holy family will flee to Egypt. The Holy Innocents will die. There will be temptation, conflict, agony, and passion. I get it! But let me tell you something, Herod, Rome

and all who oppose the Son of God will lose. God will win. The decree of God, “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee,” will trump the decree of Caesar.

In fact, the decree of Caesar that all the world should be taxed is already being used by God for the fulfillment of prophecy. For the prophet Micah had said that the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (5:2). The decree of Caesar is the means by which God makes it happen. God can use anything to fulfill his purpose.

Christmas is to teach us that there is another way of life, which is not the sinful way of the world. The Word of God became flesh and dwelt among us to teach us that, even though we live in a corrupt and deranged world, we can still live a godly and righteous life.

Christmas invites us you and me to put renewed faith in the Son of God; to begin to live “in Christ” and to participate in the victory of God that begins at Christmas. Come! Feast and feast with the church through the year as we live in Christ and look forward to Easter. Come and experience the power of the Incarnation, which is, “Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col 1:27).

O come let us adore Him

O come let us adore Him

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Christ, the Lord