

Appreciating Christmas

Christmas is about Jesus Christ revealing the Father's Heart (Intentions)

Big Picture – History of Mankind

(Ge 1:26) ²⁶Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness;"

Perfect Eternal Community

(Ge 1:31) ³¹Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good.

(Ge 2:18) ¹⁸And the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper comparable to him."

Designed for Community

made for Fellowship with God

(Ge 3:8) ⁸And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day,

Garden: Dwelling Place of God and Man (shared space)

(Ge 1:28) ²⁸Then God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it;"

Two Jobs: extend the Garden (place of fellowship) and the Community

The Fall: Corruption enters Creation (not just mankind)

(Ro 8:19-22) ¹⁹For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; ²¹because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²²For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now. (Mat 24)

Curse: resistant earth - Job got more Difficult (Gen 3:16-19)

Separation (Sin): Lost Dwelling Place (Gen 3:23-24) (Tree of Life)

Mercy: Retained God's Love, Care, Desire for Fellowship (Gen 3:21)

God's Heart Unchanged (Plan Gen 3:15) - opportunity for Distance

Pattern: Justice/Mercy (Cain & Abel Gen 4) - Parenting (did we learn?)

Contrast: Noah and Fallen Mankind

(Ge 6:5-8) ⁵Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. ⁶And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. ⁷So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." ⁸But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD. **(Why sorry? lost Fellowship/Community - design)**

(Ge 7:1) ¹Then the LORD said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.

Righteousness is Prerequisite for Fellowship with a Holy God (problem of sin)

Flood – God's only option to deal with Human Entropy (Methuselah, Gen 15:16)

Fallen Man had lost sight of God: His Works, His Ways, His desire for Fellowship

Tower of Babel: Confusion (Hebrew), Gate of Heaven (Babylonian)

Independence from God (Gen 11:1-9) - Pride

Abraham: Chose a man to Father a Special People (Gen 12:1-3)

God always chooses individuals - Relational Response (Gen 15:6)

God made a Covenant with Abraham to Bless all Nations (Gen 15, 17)

God prepared His people through slavery - Humility

Moses: Chose a Schoolmaster to Train a Special People (Gal 3:24)

Exodus: God's Mighty Works

Law: God's Holy Ways

Tabernacle: God's Dwelling Place with man - Fellowship (Ex 33:15)

Captivity: Fallen man always ends up in Captivity (Human Entropy)

none of these men/solutions were perfect (Deut 28)

Final Lesson (Captivity) prepares His people to receive His Perfect Solution

Galatians 3:16-25 says...

God Promised Abraham the perfect solution – Christ (Seed)

the Law (430 years later) doesn't replace the earlier Covenant Promise

the Purpose of the Law was to make us aware of our sin nature

so we would appreciate our need of Christ (Justification by Faith)

(Ga 3:26) ²⁶For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Christmas Verses:

(Lk 2:8-14) ⁸Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And behold, an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were greatly afraid. ¹⁰Then the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. ¹¹“For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²“And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger.” ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: ¹⁴“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward men!”

Christmas is the Fulfillment of God's Unchanged Intentions (Father's Heart)

(Mt 1:23) ²³“Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.” (Isaiah 7:14)

Christmas is the Restoration of Fellowship

He made a way for us to become His dwelling place!!! - Garden (1 Cor 3:16)

(Lk 1:31-33) ³¹“And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name JESUS. ³²“He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. ³³“And He will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of His kingdom there will be no end.”

Christmas Announces the Great Re-Commission...our original two jobs

Go: Subdue the Earth, Extend the Garden

Make Disciples: be Fruitful, Multiply, Extend the Community

Don't let Human Entropy (Sin Nature) put Distance between you and God With You

Stay in Fellowship with the One Who made you a New Creation through Faith