

2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after Christmas  
"The Miracle of Christmas"  
John 1:1-18

On Christmas Eve traditionally we read the Christmas Gospel from Luke but this morning we are going to take a look at the Christmas story, through the eyes of John.

According to the Gospel of John, "In the beginning was the Word."  
Notice, when John tells us the beginning of the story of Jesus, he doesn't begin with an angel, or a bright star. He simply says, "In the beginning was the Word."

Think about it this way, if we didn't have Matthew and Luke, if John had written the only Gospel, then all we would know of Jesus' birth: is that before his name was Jesus, his name was "the Word" and that he was with God from the very beginning of creation, bringing things into being, shining light into the darkness.

For John, it was important to tell us that Jesus was one with God that he was God's Word or message to the world and that message was life...life that was the light for all people.

But not everyone got the message.

As magnificent as it was, some people were so used to the darkness that they were blinded by the light. In the Old Testament, even when God himself was leading the people to the Promised Land, the people turned away from God, because they preferred darkness to the light.

Instead they worshipped idols of their own creation. Later came judges, kings and prophets, but the people continued to turn their backs on God.

So God spoke in a new way.  
Just over 2,000 years ago,  
God spoke decisively in human history:  
"The Word became flesh and lived among us...full of grace and truth."

Not long ago, one of my confirmation students reminded me how amazing this truth is, how amazing and how mind boggling it is, to think of God becoming human.

After class, she stopped me with what I thought was going to be a routine question. Something like, "are we signed up to bring the meal next week?" Or "How many sermon notes have I turned in?"

But instead she looked at me with a puzzled expression and said,  
"Pastor, was Jesus God, or was he human?"

Think about that question, "Was Jesus God, or was he human?"  
Our human logic tells us that the answer has to be either one, or the other.  
In an attempt to make sense of Jesus' incarnation,  
we naturally come up with an "either/ or" question.

But the miracle of Christmas goes beyond our human imagination.  
The answer to the question, "Was Jesus God, or was he human?"  
is not "either/ or" but "both/ and."

The miracle of Christmas  
is that God decided to deliver His message in person, by becoming one of us.  
The miracle of Christmas is the miracle of the Word made flesh.

The movie, "The Miracle Worker,"  
tells story of Helen Keller and her teacher Anne Sullivan.  
Helen Keller, blind, deaf, and mute  
lived in a world of darkness and isolation.  
It was like she became a prisoner, to her own self.

Her family struggled to work with her, but her temperament and behavior became so difficult  
that they could not continue on their own.  
so, they employed Anne Sullivan to be Helen's teacher.

Anne Sullivan was a spirited and determined young woman who resolutely went about the task  
of trying to enter Helen's world.

She sought to draw her out of the deep loneliness  
a loneliness created by the fact that Helen had no real communication with anyone.

Sullivan worked diligently with Helen,  
battling her when her temper sent her into tantrums,  
and gently coaxing her at other times.

She strove to teach sign language to Helen,  
signing the letters of the alphabet into the palm of Helen's hand.  
But it seemed to be of no use.

Connections were not being made, until one day,  
in a moment of frustration and inspiration,  
Anne dragged an unwilling Helen out to the pump, and began to pump water furiously,  
holding Helen's hand under the stream.



What I hear Paul saying in this passage  
is a word that I want you to take home this morning.

Whenever you see some tragedy in life, whenever you see something that tempts you to doubt  
God's presence, remember this:

God has forever shown his love for us in the person of Jesus Christ.  
There are many things in life that remain a mystery to us, but the God we know  
has decisively been revealed to us in Jesus and his love.

In Christ, God has adopted us as his beloved children.  
And each day we are reminded of his love and purpose in our lives.

God in Christ, continues each day to write his purpose in the palm of your hand.

"I love you. I died for you. And in me you have life and forgiveness."

Let us live for the praise of his glory.            Amen