



Life Together

From the Pastor's Desk....

Immanuel: Our God is With Us

John Wesley sure knew how to die well! His final words: "The best of all is God with us."

From beginning to end, the Gospel of Matthew captivates our hearts with this glorious theme. Jesus is Immanuel, God with us.

God is with us to save His people from their sins

"She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.' All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel' (which means, God with us)" (Matt. 1:21-23).

This means that if I trust in Jesus, I can be changed — indeed, I shall be changed and I must be changed. Fatalism is a denial of the gospel. John Piper writes, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save us from fatalism. He came to stop people from saying, 'That's just the way I am.'"

Dear friends, God is with us to save us from critical spirits, from irritability, from harshness and ingratitude, from laziness and overeating, from lust, from greed, from dullness toward the Word and prayer, from gambling, from alcoholism, from timidity in witnessing, from self-pity, from lovelessness toward others. Jesus Christ came into the world on a definite mission: he shall save his people from their sins! And he is with us now to advance his sanctifying mission in each of our lives.

God is with us to preserve the purity of his church

In Matthew 18, after teaching his disciples how we should lovingly deal with one another's sins in the church, Jesus reminds us: "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them" (Matt. 18:20).

Immanuel is present in every church conflict. He is with us when we sin against one another, and he is with us when we seek to lovingly confront and restore one another. He takes the purity of his church as his own personal responsibility. "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he

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**To bring glory to God
through Spirit-transformed lives
by the beauty and power of the gospel of Jesus Christ**

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Reminders.....

OK Club (50+) Christmas Banquet is this Saturday at Noon. Please RSVP to Heidi Jacoby at 630.208.1715

Young Adult Group will be meeting at the Stern home, 4N971 Crane Rd. at December 18 at 6:00 p.m. Our missionary, Keith McFarland will be sharing about his ministry in Uganda.

December 19 is the last week for our Statement of Faith Sunday School Class. Pastor Dave DeHaan will be "wrapping up" the class teaching the priority and profitability of this statement of faith in the life of this church. Classes are at 8:45 & 10:30.

Christmas Eve Service 4:00 p.m.

December 26 we will have one Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

January 2 we will have one Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.



Pastor's Desk continued.....

might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish" (Eph. 5:25b-27).

God is with us to protect and provide for his needy people

As the God-Man, Jesus so closely identifies himself with us that when we are oppressed, he is oppressed too: "In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old" (Isa. 63:9).

This means that he is Immanuel, God with us, when we are hungry, thirsty, lonely, destitute, sick, and imprisoned. In the final Judgment, King Jesus will say to his people: "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me" (Matt. 25:40).

Do you recognize the presence of the Lord Jesus himself in our brothers and sisters who are suffering around the world?

God is with us to empower us to make disciples of all the nations

"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:18-20).

Jesus is committed to the mission of his church. He will never leave his disciple-making people. When you set up a breakfast meeting to read the Bible with a neighbor, God is with you. When you go to the jail to preach the gospel for the ninety-ninth time this year, God is with you. When you open the Word at the dinner table and read the Scriptures to your children, God is with you. When you open your mouth to share Jesus' love with a stranger at Starbucks, God is with you. When we send Cindy McFarland back to Togo, or the Allens to Honduras, God is with us — and God is with them as they go.

This is our confidence, this is our strength: "Just as I was with Moses, so I will be with you. I will not leave you or forsake you. Be strong and courageous..." (Josh. 1:5b-6a).

That soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose I will not, I will not desert to his foes; that soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake, I'll never, no never, no never forsake.

O tidings of comfort and joy!

Pastor David Sunday



"God with us." It is hell's terror. Satan trembles at the sound of it; the black-winged dragon of the pit quails before it. Let him come to you suddenly, and do you but whisper that word, "God with us," back he falls, confounded and confused. "God with us" is the laborer's strength; how could he preach the gospel, how could he bend his knees in prayer, how could the missionary go into foreign lands, how could the martyr stand at the stake, how could the confessor own his Master, how could men labor, if that one word were taken away? "God with us" is the sufferer's comfort, the balm of his woe, the alleviation of his misery, the sleep which God gives to his beloved, their rest after exertion and toil. "God with us" is eternity's sonnet, heaven's hallelujah, the shout of the glorified, the song of the redeemed, the chorus of angels, the everlasting oratorio of the great orchestra of the sky.

-Charles H. Spurgeon

Thank You!

We want to express our gratitude for all the planning, hard work and love for the Lord that was out poured into our Saviour Concert this last weekend. It was a joy to hear so wonderfully what our God, in his mercy, has done for us.

We are blessed here at NCBC to have so many God gifted people who sing to glorify his name. Praise God!

A special thanks to Pastor Dan Huff who gave so much for the production of this concert out of love for the Saviour.

God In Us: The Christmas Story Continues, Galatians 4:1-7, 19

Prayerfully read through this portion for this Sunday's message.

I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything, 2 but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. 3 In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. 4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. 19 my little children, for whom I am again in the anguish of childbirth until Christ is formed in you!