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God With Us

Matthew 1.23

Series: Songs of the Incarnation

December 26, 2021

The Village Church at Shell Point

I. **The Meaning of the Incarnation**

- A. What happens when the family shows up?
 - 1. Happens this time of the year a lot
 - a. Holidays attract all kinds of people
 - b. Parents visit children
 - c. Children visit parents
 - d. Children visit in-laws
 - e. Grandchildren come along
 - 2. A lot of times there are extended family
 - a. Uncles
 - b. Aunts
 - c. Cousins
 - d. They show up
 - 3. And when they do, it's never business as usual
- B. Whoever it is who shows up – changes things
 - 1. Adjustments are made
 - a. Accommodations are required
 - b. Households are turned upside down when the family comes
- C. There's the uncle who when he comes you know you can't talk about politics
 - 1. There's the mother-in-law who has an opinion about everything you do
 - a. And most of the time, something's wrong with what you do
 - b. So you know you have to brace yourself, practice what you're going to say when comments eventually come
 - 2. There's the grandchild with so much energy you have to move the knick-knacks off the bottom shelves of everything
 - 3. There's the cousin who gave you that awful picture for Christmas last year
 - a. So you know you have to find a place on the wall to put it, even if you just leave it up for the weekend
- D. We had a slew of family come to be with us for Thanksgiving
 - 1. All of them as a matter of fact
 - a. Son Matt and Crystal with Maggie Jo from TN
 - b. Daughter Kate and Brad with Andrew and Ethan from PA
 - 2. Although they didn't stay with us, it still meant a bunch of things to consider
 - a. What kinds of things each family would do together

- b. What kinds of things it would be best to divide the families and conquer
 - c. With the grandkids at the age with an abundance of energy, how much time could they be with us, and with Jane, before we were all worn out
 - 3. For instance, I wanted to give Andrew, who's 7 ½, a little time with his Papa Hawk away from his little brother Ethan, who's 3
 - a. So one afternoon, I spent an hour in our pool playing volleyball with a beach ball – that's right – an entire hour; he never seemed to tire of it
 - b. And then I had promised to take him to Pop Stroke, the miniature golf course that Tiger Woods had started
 - c. So we went out there
 - d. Played one of the two courses
 - e. Then had ice cream
 - f. Then played Foosball
 - g. Then played ping pong
 - h. Then played corn hole
 - i. And just about the time I thought we would head back to our house for dinner, he wanted to play the other miniature course – which, of course we did
 - j. We spent about 3 hours at Pop Stroke
 - k. Jean was worried about us
 - 4. I think a grandfather's medal of honor is in order for that
 - a. Haven't gotten it yet
 - b. Must be lost in the mail
- E. Bottom line – when family shows up, there are effects, consequences
 - 1. The routines are disrupted
 - a. Life can't be the same
 - b. Things must be different, at least for a period of time
- F. So what happens when God shows up?
 - 1. That's the essence of the Christmas story
 - a. God shows up
 - 2. And when God shows up, it means something
 - a. Something is different
 - b. Some things are changed
 - c. Both for God and for us
- G. The Scripture itself tells us what it means
 - 1. Tells us what things change when God shows up
- H. Starts with the prophecy of Isaiah
 - 1. **Isaiah 7:14** (NASB95) — 14 “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.”
 - 2. Know that it's a prophecy because of how Matthew treats the verse

- a. Right after the angel told Joseph that he would name the baby Mary was carrying Jesus, Matthew provides the interpretation
- 3. **Matthew 1:22–23** (NASB95) —
 - a. 22 Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet:
 - b. 23 “BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,” which translated means, “GOD WITH US.”
- 4. Matthew’s way of telling us that the true significance of this extraordinary birth was the God would be with us
 - a. That’s the most important meaning of the Christmas story
- I. Our Advent series has been focusing on the Songs of the Incarnation as recorded in the gospel of Luke
 - 1. There are four of them – known by their Latin translation of the initial word or phrase
 - a. **Mary’s Song – the Magnificat**: “My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior.”
 - b. **Zacharias’ Song** (father of John the Baptist) – **the Benedictus**: “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people...”
 - c. **The Angels’ Song – Gloria in Excelsis Deo**: “Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.”
 - d. **Simeon’s Song – Nunc Dimittis** (Latin – Now You are Dismissing): “Now Lord, You are releasing Your bond-servant to depart in peace, According to Your word...”
 - 2. Zacharias’ song clues us in to what Matthew was referring to
 - a. “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us...”
 - b. **“He has visited us!”**
 - c. There it is – God has come to visit!
 - 3. Something’s got to change when God visits
 - a. You think things change when the in-laws or the cousins show up
 - b. When God shows up – a lot changes
 - 4. And Zacharias thinks he knows what it is
 - a. “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, For He has visited us **and accomplished redemption for His people...**”
 - 5. Accomplished redemption for His people!
 - a. That’s a pretty radical consequence for a visit!
 - 6. How did the incarnation – God’s visit with us – accomplish redemption for His people?
- II. **The Presence of God in Redemptive History**
 - A. Before we get into that let’s recognize that the presence of God – God being with His people – is an important aspect of redemptive history
 - 1. It is of crucial significance at various points in biblical history
 - B. **Joseph**

1. His whole life revolved around God being with him
 2. With all of life's ups and downs
 - a. Joseph's being sold into slavery
 - b. Joseph's being falsely accused by Potiphar's wife
 - c. Joseph's being imprisoned
 - d. Joseph's being hung out to dry by Pharaoh's cup-bearer
 3. Through it all, Joseph prospered because over and over again the text tells us
 - a. "The Lord was with Joseph"
- C. **Moses**
1. God told him to take the people of Israel to the Promised Land
 2. **Exodus 33:15-16** (NASB95) —
 - a. 15 Then he said to Him, "If Your presence does not go with us, do not lead us up from here.
 - b. 16 "For how then can it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your people, may be distinguished from all the other people who are upon the face of the earth?"
 3. Moses wanted no part of leading that rebellious bunch unless God went with him
- D. Once the people of Israel had escaped from Egypt and found themselves in the wilderness
1. They constructed a **Tabernacle**
 - a. A place where the presence of God would be manifested
 - b. As God led them from place to place on their 40 year journey to the Promised Land
 2. This people would go nowhere without the presence of God
- E. And that's the significance of the incarnation of Jesus
1. As a matter of fact, John echoes the tabernacle episode as He introduces the coming of Jesus Christ as the Word in John 1
 2. **John 1:14** (NASB95) — 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.
 - a. Dwelt = tabernacled among us
 3. The coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh is God dwelling with us
- F. And when that happens, life can never be the same
1. Adjustments are needed
 - a. Changes are made
 2. So when Zacharias says, "He has visited us and accomplished redemption for His people" we would do well to see what has changed as a result of God's visitation
- G. We'll see that there are several things that happen as God comes to accomplish our redemption
1. Some things happen as God comes to be with us
 - a. Accommodations that God has made

2. And some things happen to us and in us and for us
 - a. As God accomplishes our redemption
 3. Things that God does so we can be with God
- H. So...
1. God with us
 2. We with God

III. God with us...

- A. In our nature
1. The eternally existing 2nd person of the Trinity, the Son of God, took on our humanity
 - a. Became with us – in our nature
 2. How many of your family guests have transformed themselves into your nature?
 3. **Philippians 2:6–7** (NASB95) —
 - a. 6 ... although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,
 - b. 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.
 - c. What an astonishing transformation!
 4. **John 1:1** (NASB95) —
 - a. 1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.
 - b. **John 1:14** (NASB95) — 14 And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.
 5. Jesus, God the Son, came to be with us in our nature to provide for our redemption
 - a. Took a 2nd man, 2nd Adam, to reverse the curse of sin caused by the 1st Adam
 6. **Hebrews 2:17** (NASB95) —
 - a. 17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.
 - b. He couldn't even do the "p" word – propitiation – unless he came as God with us
 - c. Propitiation – the wrath removing sacrifice
 7. **Galatians 4:4–5** (NASB95) —
 - a. 4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,
 - b. 5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.
 - c. God with us in our nature – born of a woman, born under law – so we might be adopted into His family
 8. The birth of Jesus – God with us – in our nature

- B. **In our sorrows**
1. Time of the year – enjoyment
 - a. But many suffer, afflicted
 - b. Difficult time of the year for many
 - c. By contrast – others seem to be in endless party mode; having great fun
 - d. For many reasons, others are depressed; contrast with others makes the depression more difficult
 2. Enjoyable time for family – especially when they come
 - a. Rare family that doesn't have some issues, broken relationships, that make the holidays challenging
 - b. Loss of loved ones creates painful times during the holidays
 - c. Loneliness increases
 - d. Many don't have supportive, loving families to enjoy
 - e. Times alone are exacerbated when everyone else seems to be always going to parties
 3. Jesus came initially, not as a triumphant king, but as a child in a poor family under dire circumstances
 - a. And his circumstances did not improve; in fact, got much worse
 4. Jesus was a man of sorrows
 - a. **Isaiah 53:3–4** (NASB95) — 3 He was despised and forsaken of men, A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; And like one from whom men hide their face He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 Surely our griefs He Himself bore, And our sorrows He carried; Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted.
 - b. **Hebrews 2:18** (NASB95) — 18 For since He Himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able to come to the aid of those who are tempted.
 - c. He was God with us in our sorrows – to help us through similar circumstances
 - d. **Hebrews 5:8** (NASB95) — 8 Although He was a Son, He learned obedience from the things which He suffered.
 - e. Jesus introduced His ministry by indicating that He came to minister to those suffering
 - f. **Luke 4:18** (NASB95) — 18 “THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED...
 5. Immanuel means God with us in our sorrows
- C. **In our punishment**
1. Not just Immanuel, God with us, but Jesus, because He would save His people from their sins

- a. Jesus – derived from Joshua = the Lord saves
- 2. How did He save?
 - a. Our sin, against an eternal and holy God, deserves an eternal punishment and separation from God
 - b. Only the eternal son of God, come in the flesh as a man, could pay the entire penalty for our sin
 - c. Jesus is God with us in our punishment
- 3. **Hebrews 2:17** (NASB95) —
 - a. 17 Therefore, He had to be made like His brethren in all things, so that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people.
 - b. There it is again – Jesus became the wrath removing sacrifice – our propitiation
- 4. **1 John 4:10** (NASB95) —
 - a. 10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.
- 5. **Romans 8:3** (NASB95) —
 - a. 3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh...
- 6. **Philippians 2:6–8** (NASB95) —
 - a. 6 ... although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped,
 - b. 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men.
 - c. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.
- 7. Jesus was God with us in our punishment
- D. Jesus came in the flesh, as a man, became God with us
 - 1. In our nature
 - a. So He could provide for our redemption
 - 2. In our sorrows
 - a. So He could comfort us in our afflictions
 - 3. In our punishment
 - a. So He could provide the sacrifice of atonement to pay for our sins
- E. But ultimately, He came to be with us so we could be with Him
 - 1. In His presence
 - 2. For all eternity
 - 3. This is the forgotten consequence of God’s visitation with us
 - a. God came to be with us
 - b. So we could be with God
 - 4. In what ways has Jesus become God with us enabling us to be with God?

IV. **We with God...**

- A. **In His resurrection**

1. **John 11:25–26** (NASB95) —
 - a. 25 Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me will live even if he dies,
 - b. 26 and everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die. Do you believe this?”
 2. **1 Corinthians 15:21–23** (NASB95) —
 - a. 21 For since by a man came death, by a man also came the resurrection of the dead.
 - b. 22 For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.
 - c. 23 But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits, after that those who are Christ’s at His coming...
 3. **1 Peter 1:3–5** (NASB95) —
 - a. 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,
 - b. 4 to obtain an inheritance which is imperishable and undefiled and will not fade away, reserved in heaven for you,
 - c. 5 who are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.
 4. The resurrection is the blessed hope for all believers
 - a. Because Jesus was God with us
 - b. His resurrection is the guarantee of the resurrection for all Christ-followers
 - c. A resurrection which heals every brokenness of our frail physical bodies
 - d. Don’t you long for a resurrected body?
 - e. Christ is God with us – enabling us to be with Him – In His resurrection
- B. **In His ascension**
1. **Acts 2:33** (NASB95) —
 - a. 33 “Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear.
 - b. Jesus, God with us, after His resurrection, spent some 40 days with His disciples
 - c. And then He ascended into heaven
 - d. What does that mean for us?
 - e. It means that our ascension is guaranteed and secured as well
 - f. In fact – in a sense, it has already happened!
 - g. Listen!
 2. **Ephesians 1:19–21** (NASB95) —
 - a. 19 ... These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might
 - b. 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

- c. 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.
- 3. **Ephesians 2:4–7** (NASB95) —
 - a. 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,
 - b. 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),
 - c. 6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,
 - d. 7 so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.
- 4. Where are you right now?
 - a. You're here
 - b. No – you're up there – seated in the heavenly realm with Christ Jesus
- 5. “But I don’t feel like I’m up there”
 - a. Don’t you believe the word of God?
 - b. You’re up there no matter how you feel down here
 - c. It’s time to get real
 - d. This stuff down here is just a shadow of reality
 - e. The reality is – you’re up there, seated with Christ in the heavenly realm
 - f. Which is the only true realm
- 6. Jesus became God with us, so that we would be with God in His ascension
- C. **In His triumph**
 - 1. **Philippians 2:9–11** (NASB95) —
 - a. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name,
 - b. 10 so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
 - c. 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.
 - 2. **John 16:33** (NASB95) —
 - a. 33 “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”
 - 3. **Romans 8:31–39** (NASB95) —
 - a. 31 What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?
 - b. 32 He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?
 - c. 33 Who will bring a charge against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies;

- d. 34 who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.
- e. 35 Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?
- f. 36 Just as it is written, “FOR YOUR SAKE WE ARE BEING PUT TO DEATH ALL DAY LONG; WE WERE CONSIDERED AS SHEEP TO BE SLAUGHTERED.”
- g. 37 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.
- h. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers,
- i. 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
- 4. Because Jesus was God with us, we can be with Him in His triumph
 - a. More than conquerors
- D. **In His 2nd Coming**
 - 1. Jesus is coming back
 - a. We just celebrated the first advent; just wait until you see the 2nd advent!
 - 2. **1 Thessalonians 4:16–17** (NASB95) —
 - a. 16 For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first.
 - b. 17 Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord.
 - 3. God with us – so that we could be with Him – forever
 - a. Presence is consummated in the 2nd coming of Christ

V. Summary

- A. Jesus Christ – God the Son
 - 1. God with us – Immanuel
- B. He is with us
 - 1. In our nature
 - a. To accomplish our redemption
 - 2. In our sorrow
 - a. To comfort us in our afflictions
 - 3. In our punishment
 - a. So He could pay the penalty for our sin
 - b. So we would never have to
- C. And He is with us so that we could be with Him
 - 1. In His resurrection
 - a. So death would lose its sting
 - 2. In His ascension

- a. So we could live in the heavenly reality, above our earthly concerns and preoccupations – right now!
- 3. In His triumph
 - a. So we could share in His reign and rule, and become the overcomers, conquerors of all that seeks to oppose His righteousness
- 4. In His 2nd coming
 - a. So we would gloriously consummate His presence with us and ours with Him
 - b. Forever with the Savior
- D. Merry Christmas!