

Let me take this opportunity to wish each one of you a very happy Christmas. May the Christ child who was born two thousand years ago truly be born in each one of our hearts today that we may experience his living presence with us. Our theme for this Christmas day is, "The birth of the Savior who is the Word made flesh." Even as we look around the world there are numerous incidences of terrorist attacks, internal turmoil, famine, earthquakes and tragedies which all leads to a sense of desperation. In this chaotic situation how does the birth of Christ over two thousand years ago make any difference?

John began his gospel telling us that 'in the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.' The first three words in the beginning reminds us again of the opening words of the book of Genesis where 'in the beginning God created' our world. The whole creative act was carried out because God spoke and it happened. The spoken word of God was not so much an expression of thought but a powerful action. John reminds us that the Word was with God thereby showing that Jesus was co-equal and co-eternal with the Father. So we see Jesus the creator. The Logos was not only present in the act of the creation but also in its continuity. So Jesus is both the **creator and sustainer** of our universe and he is in sovereign control over the world even though we may think it is too complex for God to understand. So we can be reassured that in the midst of chaos and desperation God is in control.

John continues saying that in him was life and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness but the darkness has not understood it. John clearly shows that Jesus Christ is the **life giver**. John links the life of Christ with the light from who comes all spiritual illumination. The light of the Logos shone in the primal darkness at creation and continues amidst the darkness of fallen mankind. It shone with greater brilliance in the glory of the incarnate one; and it shines on in the era of the resurrection, which is the time of the Holy Spirit. The point that is made is that Christ the light of the world has come into this world to give us spiritual illumination, to release us from the bondage of sin and Satan who keeps us in darkness. However, even though the light shines in the midst of darkness we have failed to receive the light.

Though the world was created through Christ the world did not recognize him. He came to his own and his own people rejected him. However, to those who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave them the right to become children of God. This birth was not through human parents but born of God. God offers us this chance of becoming part of his family by faith in his Son Jesus. The option of accepting or rejecting this offer lies with us entirely.

John then tells us that the Word became flesh and lived among us. The implication of the Word becoming flesh is that God is deeply interested in us as human beings. God chose to send his Son to planet earth and not to any other place and so we are to be grateful for that. This affirms our humanity. We are made in the image and likeness of God and therefore what happens to us matters to God. The Word becoming flesh shows us that God has a special place for human beings.

Jesus came into this world and took our human form. It is because of this he can say "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Jesus has been through all the struggles and temptations that you and I have gone through. He understands the pain, anguish and the desperation we go through at times because he himself has tread this path. **Jesus is Emmanuel** "God with us." He stands with us, walks with us so that we can face every difficult situation. Jesus **transforms our lives** through the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit

God has sent his Son into this world to offer us salvation. We can either receive it or reject it. Whatever we choose to do will have eternal consequences. One leads to eternal life and the other to eternal death. Secondly, God's presence has been promised to us through the Word becoming flesh and therefore we are encouraged to know that though we walk through the darkest valley he will be with us. When we believe and trust in him we become his children and we are called to walk in the light. May God help us this Christmas day to be his children and walk in the light.