

Incarnation

One of the things about Following Jesus is about knowing and understanding the incarnation. Hey it's a weird word and an even weirder concept.

What this incarnation about? Lets look at a couple of definitions:

(Naves)

INCARNATION (*taking on flesh*). The doctrine that the eternal son of God became human, and that he did so without in any manner or degree diminishing his divine nature.

And another (NBD)

INCARNATION "Incarnation" is from the Latin meaning "becoming flesh," that is, "becoming human." The doctrine of the Incarnation teaches that the eternal Son of God became human without in any manner or degree diminishing his divine nature.

Lets look at a few verses here.

Romans 8:3

³ For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, ⁴ in order that the righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit.

1 John 4:2-3

² This is how you can recognize the Spirit of God: Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God, ³ but every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist, which you have heard is coming and even now is already in the world.

A passage we looked at in the evening service a few weeks ago.

Phil 2:5-11

PHP 2:5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:

PHP 2:6 Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be grasped,

PHP 2:7 but made himself nothing,
taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.

PHP 2:8 And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
and became obedient to death—
even death on a cross!

PHP 2:9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,

PHP 2:10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,

PHP 2:11 and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

And the last one is probably the most famous about this subject.

JN 1:14 The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his
glory, the glory of the the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and
truth.

Now, if Jesus became flesh and we are to Walk like Jesus as we mentioned last week,
then We need to take on this incarnation idea as a part of our life. Hang on I am already a
bit fleshy!!!!

Now that isn't the principal that I am looking at.

The principal is this:

As Jesus made Himself accessible to us in human form, we should make ourselves
available to others
by incarnating ourselves
into an accessible lifestyle **and** incarnating the message of Jesus
into a form that will be understandable to others.

Got that.

This is not just talking about evangelism, although it has application there also. This has implications for all aspects of ministry.

To be able to preach, you need to be understood,
To be able to disciple someone, you need to be understood,
To be able to pastorally care, you need to be understood.

If we are to minister, we need to be accessible,
If we are to evangelize, we need to be accessible,
If we are to do prayer ministry, we need to be accessible.

When we are ministering to someone we need to be available
When we are visiting someone we need to be available,
When we are teaching someone we need to be available.

It is about being there for someone,
It is about being there when we are needed,
It is about being there so we can be part of their lives.

Do you see what I am saying here?
Be incarnational about how we live is about being understood, being accessible, being available, being there.

It is just what Jesus did –

Jesus made Himself available,
Jesus made Himself understandable, made himself accessible
and
Jesus was right there with the people.

So Christmas is Jesus example to us for ministry life.

But let's unpack how we can use Christmas.

1. **Jesus became part of humanity.** He identified with humanity by being born normal.
This Christmas we need to identify with the people we need to minister to.
How does this work??
Be part of their lives, go to parties, Christmas functions, have a BBQ, see family.
Be part of their Christmas activities.
2. **Jesus accepted praise.** Yep, let people tell you how much they appreciate you AND tell them you appreciate them. It is a natural expression of the love concepts of the bible.
3. **Jesus came with a mission** – that was to tell the message. Find ways to have the message explained to people. Talk about what Christmas means to you, bring them to church, give them Christian Christmas music – find anyway to get the message across.

4. **Jesus prayed for them.** Jesus ministry was bathed in prayer. Sit down before you go to a party and pray for the people who will be there, and that you get an opportunity to talk Christmas.

You see, using Christmas as a ministry tool is just following Jesus example. After all Jesus uses Christmas each year for just that purpose.