

## Christmas 2023 – Immanuel – God in US! Matthew 1:18-23

I love Christmas – great time of the year!  
But Christmas is sometimes Complicated

A) **Shopping thing right?** - What do I get so and so for Christmas ? Shopping u can experience pressure

B) Ever feel the pressure of **surprising people** with the gift that is **exactly what they want?**

C) Listen I know how to surprise people with a gift!

1) **You get that thing that they were not expecting – TOO EXPENSIVE off the Chart – NO WAY –**

D) **YOU FIND IT** - at a great deal - They open that package they are blown away –

1) they were not expecting that - I understand that!

I also understand how to get someone exactly what they want! **You take them SHOPPING W/YOU!**

A) They pick the style and color – they point it out – **THAT IS THE ONE**

B) Ok great you go shop some more - they leave the store and you buy it

1) **Christmas Day** – they open it and say: Awesome it is **EXACTLY WHAT I WANTED** – perfect color!

So I understand how to surprise someone with a gift they were not expecting / **And I know how to get someone exactly what they want.**

A) **I DON'T KNOW HOW TO SURPRISE SOMEONE W/ EXACTLY WHAT THEY WANT!**

B) **So CHRISTMAS IS COMPLICATED – IT CAN BE STRESSFUL**

Maybe for you it is complicated for a different Reason.

A) The Baby in the manger reminds you of your crib that is empty.

B) See people happily getting together with their families and for you that is not so happy of a time

1) because **of Divorce – Separation**

C) It is complicated – Dad has a new girlfriend and Mom is remarried

D) People are showing up at your house that you really don't know – not sure you even like.

Maybe Christmas is hard for you – because **YOUR SPOUSE –**

A) Or Someone you love who was a major part of your life is **NO LONGER HERE.** –

**B) Sadness in your heart that fills the Holiday!**

C) You find yourself looking forward to Dec 26<sup>th</sup> way more than you are looking forward to Dec 25<sup>th</sup>.

If you are battling for any reason this year as Christmas approaches - I have one word for you!  
**A NAME IMMANUEL** – Matthew 1:18-23

**18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly.**

**20 But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, (God is Salvation) for He will save His people from their sins.”**

**22 So all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, saying: **Quotes Isaiah 7:14 v. 23** “Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,” which is translated, “God with us.”**

Immanuel is a special name – a Name that has a lot of theological Significance. **GOD WITH US!**

A) It is always intriguing to me – the names that parents give their children

**B) Sometimes I wonder – if they are really thinking about their kids**

1) and what it is going to be like to go through life with that name.

C) Now there are certain names in every decade that sort of become popular.

1) For instance in the 1950's names like Bob and Charles were popular names for boys.

**But during the 60's many people rebelled against those traditional names**

A) Zappa - Doobie - Rebel and Wolf

B) And then there are the parents who have Unusual last names

1) They think it would be cool to give their kids a clever first name to go with their last name

C) Parents with the last name Bacon - named their kid - Chris B Bacon

**Parents with the last name Dover - named their Daughter - - Eileen Dover (I leaned over)**

A) Parents last name - Pool = Gene Pool - Cutter = Cookie Cutter

B) Those kids their whole life - every time their name gets called - there is the snicker - I have weird parents

**Well in Bible times - when people names their kids there was usually a meaning behind the name:**

A) Rebekah named her first born son Esau - Esau means HAIRY -

Aa) why did she give him that name? because he came out hairy -

B) She named his twin Brother - **Jacob - heel catcher**

C) **Sarah was told to name her son Issac** - means laughter - why -

1) she laughed when God said she would have a child in her old age.

**D) The wife of one of the priest after hearing that the Ark of the Covenant**

1) which represented the Glory of God amongst his people - captured by the philistines

E) She named her son Ichabod - **Glory has departed**

**Can you imagine bringing a friend home with that name**

A) Or worse yet you are a girl bringing Ichabod home to meet your parents

B) Mom dad - I would like to introduce you to **"THE GLORY HAS DEPARTED"**

**Now I say all of that to say this: When Isaiah the Prophet prophesied that this baby would be born - Named Immanuel -**

A) Huge SIGNIFANCE - God with us!

B) It was signaling a NEW and radical reality - **God was joining his Creation.**

1) God was becoming ONE OF US!

C) We are Talking: The Miracle of miracles: God became a Fetus - MIND BLOWING

1) 9 months in the womb

D) On the very First Christmas Morning - God enters the world as a BABY.

**I wonder what Mary said when Jesus kicked in her tummy**

A) Joseph **"God is kicking me again!"**

B) Did she Know?

C) Most of us have heard the contemporary song - Mary did you know:

*"Did you know that your baby boy has walked where angels trod?"*

*When you kiss your little baby you have kissed the face of God?"*

**Did she Know? Did she understand that this was Immanuel - God with us?**

A) What a staggering thought that is - NOT JUST FOR MARY - but for all of us - **God with us!**

B) See God with US is the essence of the Christian experience - HOW SO?

C) All other religions basically lay out things that you must do to somehow reach God or make it to heaven 1) or achieve Nirvana .

D) You must do this and that - and the other thing - and if you do it all perfectly,

1) then maybe just maybe you will gain the approval of God

**Remember the message The Angels declared to the shepherds - Good news of Great joy – to all people - A Savior is born**

A)The essence of Christianity is NOT THAT MAN REACHED UP - But that GOD CAME DOWN! –

B)Jesus **stepped out of heaven** and into the womb

C)and then **He stepped out of the womb** and into our world – and then He stepped onto a Cross –

**Jesus became a man to go to a cross to give His life a Ransom for many**

A)People Separated because of their sin could be made right with God

B)They didn't take HIS LIFE from him, **HE FREELY AND WILLINGLY GAVE it up for us.**

C)In Contrast to all the other religions of the world – Christianity doesn't say Do it says Done! –

1)FINISHED! **He might save us from our sins! – ONLY WAY**

D)When a person places their faith in Jesus and what He did for them by dying on the cross. Pay the price -

1)BELIEVING - Three days later – HE ROSE to give them life

E)They embrace that by faith – Salvation – happens – sinned washed cleansed by Jesus – **RIGHTEOUS**

1)DON'T KNOW JESUS – today that can be you – sins forgiven – guilt removed

**But The essence of the Immanuel is not just NOT just GOD WITH US –**

A)but it is **GOD IN US!**

B)See when a person puts their faith in Jesus something else amazing happens to them

C)Jesus comes to live in their hearts by his HS!

**In Romans ch.8 the apostle Paul makes this beautiful statement about the Christian experience**

**And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. Romans 8:11**

D)Colossians 1:27 **Christ in you is your hope of Glory!**

**JESUS SPOKE THESE WORDS TO church of Laodicea Revelation 3:20**

**<sup>20</sup> Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me.**

A)HE was saying: I want to have an intimate relationship with You.

B)As Savior – As Lord/ but also your friend – your companion.

C)Ephesians 3:17 **“That Christ may Dwell in our hearts through faith.”**

1)Dwell =to be at home in your hearts that is His desire!

**D)A Little Girl – Jesus in your heart mom? – Head to her – chest –**

1)Mom had some Indigestion: Mom it sounds like he is brewing coffee in there

E)HE IS NOT MAKING COFFEE – but HE IS MAKING YOU INTO A NEW PERSON.

**In the book of Ephesians Paul praying for the church the believers in Ephesus**

A)There he gives some great insight into the work that Immanuel is seeking to do in us

**<sup>14</sup> For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,..... <sup>16</sup> that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,**

B)One thing Immanuel is seeking to do in us is to strengthen us with His Power

C)power of Jesus - to live for Jesus

1)Power Stand against the enemy -

**So Jesus says – I am going to come and live inside of you by my spirit and fill you with my Power –**

A)Power to live for me – **POWER OVER SIN –**

B)What Kind of Power does he give

Ephesians 1:19 Paul prayed that we would know \* what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead.

C)The Power that Brought Jesus forth from the grave is living in us

D)Resurrection Power – available for you and me. Available to help us live for God.

1)Amazing to walk in VICTORY over sin over our flesh

E)So Immanuel is living in us in order to:  
#1 Strengthen us with His Power

Immanuel is in us that we might have  
#2 The assurance of God's love. EPHESIANS 3:17

<sup>17</sup> that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, <sup>18</sup> may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—<sup>19</sup> to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

God wants you to know – You are loved – You have His favor

A)He is with you – He is for you – He understands what you are going through

B)Those of you who are feeling lonely this December:

C)Jesus UNDERSTANDS YOUR SORROWS

1)Has it ever crossed your mind that Jesus might have been the loneliest MAN who ever lived?

D)You say – Pastor Rob what are you talking about 1)Jesus had his disciples he had crowds that followed him. – True

E)But the Bible tells us that “even in his own land and among his own pp, the Jews, he was not accepted. Only a few would welcome and receive him. ~ John 1:11 NLT

The old testament Prophet Isaiah speaking of the Jesus' life put it this way Isaiah 53

“We despised him and rejected him—a man of sorrows, acquainted with bitterest grief. We turned our backs on him and looked the other way when he went by. He was despised, and we didn't care.” Isaiah 53:3 TLB

Jesus Knows what that is like TO BE LONELY - But through His spirit living in your heart – He wants you to know that:

A)YOU ARE LOVED IN A GREATER WAY THAN YOU COULD EVER IMAGINE.

B)It is wider – and longer and higher and deeper and than we could ever fathom

C)Sailors on a war ship – casting their anchor – trying to find the bottom

1)Down – down – radar – DEEPER STILL

D)IN OUR LIVES – MEASURE THE LOVE OF JESUS – we think we have hit the bottom – (Can't love me any deeper)

E)The message – He sends to our spirit – DEEPER STILL

1)THERE IS ALWAYS MORE TO FOLLOW!

<sup>5</sup> And this hope will not lead to disappointment. For we know how dearly God loves us, because he has given us the Holy Spirit to fill our hearts with his love. - Romans 5:5

God has poured his love into our hearts by the Holy spirit – so that we would know how deeply we are loved by God

A)But also – so that the Love of God could be poured out of us.

B)You and I are like pitchers – God pours HIS LOVE into us – So we can then be poured out – 1)His love is poured out of us

C)The World experiences His love – when Christians are loving

D)The Essence of the Christmas story is not just Immanuel God with us - he entered into our world

- Or Immanuel living in us to empower us to live for Jesus

E) He wants to take it one step further: God – THROUGH US

God revealing Himself to the world – through His people.

A) “The incarnation of Jesus continues through to this day.” ~Ray Stedman –

B) Jesus living in us – Jesus living through us

C) Let's think about Mary again for a moment!

She is impregnated by the Holy Spirit. – God is literally growing inside of her.

A) Many of you ladies – moms – know what that is like – You had a baby growing inside of you  
{ **FEEL LIKE I AM GOING TO POP** }

B) Many ladies have described it this way: there came a day – when that Baby just had to come out

C) Mary experienced that – Jesus growing in her – to the point where He just has to come out of her.

1) On that first Christmas morning – JESUS CAME OUT - God entered our world

What would it be like to have God growing inside of so much that at some point **HE JUST HAD TO COME OUT!**

A) What would it be like to **DELIVER JESUS INTO THE WORLD!**

B) **The answer might be closer than you even imagine**

C) You see one of the Christmas gifts that God has given to you

1) is the **supernatural deposit of HIS PRESENCE** in your heart!

D) Jesus is in your heart – He is seeking **to grow inside of you**

1) to the point where **He is coming out of you and me** to impact our world

E) **The More at home Jesus is in your heart – the more** we are surrendered to Him the more He grows

1) He comes out – **He is seen** – His love is on display in our lives

Imagine for a moment – how your life would change if every day – you woke up – God is with me –

A) God is in Me – **God wants to live through me today.**

B) Imagine – the impact our lives would make if we realized more consistently that:

C) The **Love of God** has been poured into us – That same great Love that gave us Life

1) Has been poured into us - so that **He** can now be Poured out of us – thirsty world

D) **Jesus is seeking to manifest himself to the world around us - by living through us**

Now before you say: **Unrealistic - I am just a simple person – I am just glad I am saved –**

A) Or I mess up all the time – just happy God still loves me.

B) But to think that God could do anything special with my life – I don't think so Pastor Rob

1) **IMPOSSIBILITY**

C) **Think with me for a minute about Mary**

1) Mary was a simple girl – godly yes – but simple girl living in a simple place – **Nazareth was Hicksville**

Luke's Gospel records that when Gabriel came to Mary with the news that she was going to give birth to God's son

A) Her response – was – **how can this be – I have not been with a man. - A VIRGIN**

B) Gabriel – said to her: **Nothing is impossible with God –**

1) Literal definition of that is this: **With God no word – is without power**

C) MEANING - When God declares something – there is power behind it

1) God's commandments – are God's enablements

D) **So this was Mary's response: Didn't fully understand it – but she said**

1) Ok – **let it be according to your word.**

**Imagine with me for a moment - what would happen if we took every command that God has for us.**

A)We said - Lord let it be according to your Word

B)Work that out of me - I believe your commandments are my enablements.

C)How would our lives change? How would our communities be impacted?

**What if Husbands and wives responded like Mary:**

A)Husbands – Ok Lord you tell me to love my wife as Christ loved the Church – **serve her – Cherish her**

B)I believe – Your love has been poured into my heart

1)And the same great power that brought Jesus out of the Grave is LIVING IN ME

C)So **let it be according to your word** –

D)I am going to Love my wife – through your power – your love living in Me!

**What would happen if Wives – said Ok Lord you tell me to love my Husband – **respect and honor him****

A)I believe your great love has been poured into my life –

B)The same **great power** that brought Jesus out of the Grave is living in me!

1)**So let it be according to your Word**

C)Your Commandments are Your Enablements – Ok Lord let it be according to your word in my life.

**What would happen to the marriages in this church if we started living every day like we believed that!**

A)God is **with** us – God is **in us** and God is wanting to live **through us**.

B)His great love – His great power – Available to us **every single day!**

**C)How would this **community be transformed** if all of us who are a part of the family of Calvary Vista –**

1)Lived like we believed that ? AMAZING

D)Lord you want me to be your witness? - You want me to impact my sphere of influence in 2024?

1)Let it be according to Your word.

**Unbeliever?**

A)What would happen – You believed Jesus left heaven for you...womb... world... Cross

**B)Forgiveness – Freedom – Life – love – power**