

# Sermon Series – Christmas Eve/Day

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*Preached on the Nativity of Our Lord, December 24<sup>th</sup>, 2011*

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## **The Nativity of Our Lord**

The First Lesson:	Genesis 3:8-19
The Second Lesson:	Genesis 22:15-18
The Third Lesson:	Isaiah 9:2-7
The Fourth Lesson:	Isaiah 11:1-9
The Fifth Lesson:	Luke 1:26-38
The Sixth Lesson:	Luke 2:1-7
The Seventh Lesson:	Luke 2:8-16
The Eighth Lesson:	Matthew 2:1-12
The Ninth Lesson:	John 1:1-14

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### **Christ ushered in a new day for the people of God**

*Bells are tolling in the background to ring in the midnight hour.*

These are the sounds we no longer or rarely get to hear anymore. You can hear the bells tolling in the church bell tower to close out one day and usher in a new day. Today, most of us live in towns and small cities. We no longer get to appreciate the tolling of the church bells. These bells tell us that yesterday, Christmas Eve, is gone. I want to wish all of you Merry Christmas. In some ways, this is very similar to what occurred over two-thousand year ago. A previous chapter of history was over and a new day was ushered in with the birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

In the beginning, God's purpose for us was to live with Him in paradise. That was the way He desired His people to live. However, as we have heard in our lessons this evening, Adam and Eve had a different idea. Adam and Even decided, perhaps I am a

little smarter than God. God told me that I can eat from any tree in the garden, except that one tree.<sup>1</sup> Adam and Eve decided that it was that forbidden fruit that they desired more than being obedient to God. Thus, the fall occurred.<sup>2</sup> In response, essentially, God said if that is the way you want it, so be it. Adam and Eve were then put out on their own. They were cast out of the garden and away from God's presence. From that point onward, the woman will bear children in pain and the man had to sweat to get anything to grow in the land.

The text of the Old Testament consists of page after page of mankind's attempt to be right and perfect with God. Unfortunately, the text also consists of page after page of mankind's failure to be successful at that endeavor. Every once in a while, we read of a brief interlude from a prophet would give the world a glimmer of God's plan. God did not give up on mankind, "Unto us a child is born."<sup>3</sup> God was not finished, "The government will be on His shoulder."<sup>4</sup> "He will be called wonderful counselor"<sup>5</sup>, "the Lord of Lords, the King of Kings."<sup>6</sup> And then, on that night in Bethlehem, the dawn of a new day began. When the fullness of time had come, God sent His son, His only son, whom He loved. The son would come and, continuing to be God, He would take on the form of man and walk amongst His people. Some people understood what God was doing. Some of the people knew that the Messiah was coming. Most people, however, were completely caught off guard.

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<sup>1</sup> Genesis 2:16-17

<sup>2</sup> Genesis 3:1-24

<sup>3</sup> Isaiah 9:6

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah 9:6

<sup>5</sup> Isaiah 9:6

<sup>6</sup> Revelation 19:16

He came in the form of a small child, born in a lowly manger. It was the dawn of a new day. Yesterday was gone and it will not ever come back. Mankind proved over and over again that we were not able to obey the rules and be perfect to get into heaven. Christ is the One who will live the perfect life. This child, this perfect gift, is the one who will bring the people from war with God back into a right relationship with Him. The angels announced this revelation to the shepherds. This child was born to reconcile sinners and God. This young infant, this small child will bring you back into a right relationship with God. This is God made flesh. The shepherds knew it. The Magi knew it. Over time, others came to worship Him and follow Him, too.

Tonight we are here to celebrate the birth of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, and the start of a new day. When the angels proclaimed to the shepherds, "Peace on earth"<sup>7</sup>, they were not saying that all wars on earth are going to end. They were saying that the war between man and God would end. They were saying that for those who put their faith in this small child, that separate is gone. This is still true for us today. We continue to walk with God. Maybe not quite as intimately as Adam and Eve did, but He is in our hearts. He was here on earth and He walked with people. He walked with the apostles. He was in that manger with Mary and Joseph and the shepherds. God made flesh dwelt among His people.

This is the celebration of that beginning, the new day that happened over two-thousand years ago. And when our Savior comes again, there will be no more wars and no more tears for this is Christ's Day. I wish each and every one of you Merry Christmas. Put

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<sup>7</sup> Luke 2:14

your faith in Christ and you will have the peace that the angels told the shepherds about. The peace that surpasses all understanding.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Philippians 4:7