

# Christmas Eve 2020 Devotions

## What Child Is This?

**Isaiah 7:14 – The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son,  
and will call him Immanuel.**

### *Emmanuel, God with Us!*

There are certain Gospel illustrations that never cease to grab my heart and create within me an inexpressible awe and wonder. One of them is this: Our God descended to us because he knew that we couldn't ascend to Him. I really want you to think about that, so listen to it again: Our God descended to us because he knew that we couldn't ascend to Him.

You know what it means to try to ascend to God, don't you? You try to make Him happy with your choices. You try to please Him with your deeds. You try to live up to his expectations. You try because he is God. You try because you know He deserves it. He is your Creator. He is holy. But as often as you try, you what? You disappoint Him *again*? You fail Him *again*? You fall short of what He expects and deserves *again*? Yes, and as a result, you live with that sick feeling that what you do is "never enough" – never good enough, never often enough, just never enough. And you helplessly realize that God is out of your reach.

Now do you understand why it never ceases to grab my heart and create within me an inexpressible awe and wonder that our God descended to us because he knew that we couldn't ascend to Him, which is exactly what the name Immanuel, "God with us," expresses to us?

He was born with a dual purpose – to live the life we have failed to live and to die the death for sin we deserve to die. I know many of you have heard this before. But hear it today with this emphasis: Your God, Immanuel, did this for you, in the flesh. Let that sink in! Your God is not some lofty god who waits for you to reach him. He knows it's impossible for you to do so. That's why in love and mercy he reached out to you, in person, in the flesh, on this earth, to live up to every expectation and to die for every sin. Because of what he came to do for you, you are not helpless. Because of Immanuel, you are saved. Because of "God with us," you will be with him in heaven. Hold on to that name. Amen.

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**Matthew 1:20, 21 – An angel of the Lord appeared to him and said,  
"Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife,  
because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.  
She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus,  
because he will save his people from their sins."**

### *Jesus, the Lord Saves!*

Are you familiar with the expression "a household name"? It's a person or thing whose name is very well-known. For example, my father-in-law was a household name among family and friends. Just the mention of his name made everyone who knew him smile. Everyone knew him

as “Big Guy,” even his own wife and children called him “Big Guy.” Sometimes, we’d even affectionately call him “The Big Guy.” He filled the house with his personality. He was strong, blunt, honest, funny, and caring. He loved polka music and wasn’t ashamed or embarrassed by it. He always helped his children. Their success in sports was much because of him. And even though he is in heaven now, we still talk about him to this day.

Does “Jesus” have a similar affect in your house like “Big Guy” had in his house? Is “Jesus” a household name in your house? Does who he is and what he has done for you fill your house? Is he the one you think of most, talk of most, and go to most in your house? Is he the one who keeps your marriage strong and holds your family together? Is he the one who guides your decisions, shapes your perspective, and determines how you treat each other?

Have you ever paused to think why you have the problems and headaches and issues you do within your house? I guarantee it’s because there is too much of you or of someone else hogging the household name and not enough of Jesus. And what’s missing most when there is not enough Jesus in your house? Forgiveness. And why is it missing? Because we forget that the center of our faith is more than a cute little baby in a manger, but God in the flesh, born to hang on a cross, cursed with our sins. We forget that at the heart of all our worship is the forgiveness of sins that Jesus came to bring. We forget that the foundation and joy of our life is Jesus’ holy, saving name – he will save his people from their sins.

Just imagine what your house would be like if the meaning of Jesus’ name filled your house. Can you imagine the peace he’d bring? Can you imagine the light he’d share? Can you imagine the hope he’d give? You don’t have to imagine. Make him a household name. He is Jesus. He came to save his people from their sins. Amen.

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**Luke 2:11 – Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.**

***Christ the Lord!***

There’s a reason we are looking at our Savior’s names this evening. First and foremost, it’s because there is **“no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved”** (Acts 4:12). But it’s also because I fear that familiarity can breed contempt. I wonder that as often as you hear your Savior’s names, it can lead to a loss of respect for those names. I wonder if that has happened with the name “Christ.” How many of you can even tell me what “Christ” means?

But look at the story of the shepherds in the fields, who were keeping watch over their flock at night. Have you ever noticed that when the angel said to the shepherds, **“Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord,”** they didn’t need that explained to them. Do you know why? Because they longed for, looked for, and waited for the One whom God had promised to come and save them from their sin. Christ was not an unfamiliar name to them, nor did it ever lack meaning.

Christ is the One whom all faithful believers – like Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and others – longed for, looked for, and waited for. It’s why Simeon, when he held Jesus in his arms, praised God, saying: **“My eyes have seen your salvation, which you have prepared in the sight of all**

**people, a light for revelation to the Gentiles and for glory to your people Israel” (Luke 2:30-32).** It’s why the Samaritan woman in John 4 said to her people: **“Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ?”** (John 4:29). And it’s why her people said to her, after meeting with Jesus, **“We no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Savior of the world”** (John 4:42).

Dear friends, what all the faithful ones before us believed of Jesus is what we believe of Jesus today. He is the Christ, the Promised One who has come to save us from our sin, the One to free us from our guilt, the One to assure us of eternal life in heaven, the One to give us better than this world has been giving us or ever will give us. Nothing in our life compares in importance. Nothing! That’s why, even to this day and until Christ returns, we rejoice with the shepherds and sing with the chorus of angels and worship with the wise men. Jesus is the Christ. Merry Christmas! Amen.