

December 2918

WHY WAS

J.E.S.U.S.

BORN?

Justification by Faith in Christ

Eternal Life from Christ

Sanctification through Christ

Unmerited Favor in Christ

Shalom & Sabbath | Peace & Rest

JESUS CHRIST

OUR HIGHEST CALLING

OUR GREATEST PURPOSE

OUR SOUL'S SOURCE AND JOY

AND OUR ALL-CONSUMING PASSION

Justification by Faith in Christ, p8
Declared Righteous

Eternal Life from Christ, p20
Given Life **E**verlasting,

Sanctification through Christ, p32
Designated as His Own

Unmerited Favor in Christ, p44
Underserving Recipients

Shalom & **S**abbath | Peace and Rest, p56
He is Our Peace and Rest

Other Free Downloadable Resources, p.69

ADVENT 2018

INTRODUCTION

Faith, my wife, whose rare, theologically-minded, Christian perspective always benefits the church, came up with the idea and outline for this series. Hopefully, those who read this will benefit from this theological perspective of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ and all that means for all of us who truly believe in Christ.

May we never view Advent the same, again.

J.E.S.U.S.

J=JUSTIFICATION:

“Getting ‘*Right*’ with God”

December 2, 2018

Advent means “appearing”; pertaining to the appearing of the Christ at his birth in Bethlehem. Advent is an event. Christmas is the holiday that commemorates that event of the appearing of the Messiah. Advent is about the birth of Jesus, in order to bring about the ministry of Jesus, which in turn brought about a right, and reconciled relationship, between God and man. So our focus in this series is...

J.E.S.U.S.: Justification, Eternal Life, Sanctification, Unmerited Favor, Shalom & Sabbath (Peace & Rest)

Series Main Idea: Advent is the Appearing of the Lord, according to the prophecies of the Bible; with the purpose of reconciling fallen humanity, into a right relationship with our holy God.

The Theme verse for Advent Season

Isaiah 9:6-7 ⁶For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and *righteousness* from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

This is the description of the character, position and ministry of the coming Messiah; and that his reign would be one of righteousness, which would be ever increasing to spread through the earth and all its inhabitants. This would take place through the proclamation of the gospel message and its reception and life transformation through those who would believe.

Be clear on this. It is not his righteousness that increases or develops, but the spread of his righteousness, filling the lives of His people, and ultimately reigning over the people of the earth.

Sermon Big Idea: God has always dealt with sinful humanity, in the same way. Salvation has always rested fully on God and being totally dependent upon His grace. Some theological perspectives refer to the age we are living in today as the age or the dispensation of Grace; as though God had not dealt graciously with sinful humans before.

OLD TESTAMENT JUSTIFICATION (Gen.15:6

* **Q:** How did people get ***RIGHT*** with God in the Old Testament? Old Testament Justification involves 2 gifts.

GIFT #1: People were Justified by the gift of God's grace through faith

* **Q:** How did people get **RIGHT** with God in the OT? “By *keeping the Law*?” **NO**. Too many people believe that in the OT, somehow people were made **RIGHT** with God by keeping the law. This would imply that people were capable of not sinning and could actually keep all the law of God and perfectly live a sinful life. That is incorrect. The indication then, would be that people in the OT were less sinners or less depraved than people in the NT. But once they did break the law, they would no longer be **RIGHT** with God.

This same misinformation leads people today, to believe that we are **RIGHT** with God by good works. **NO**. Inaccurate. Let’s make sure we understand this today. That, From the beginning of time, human beings have been made right with God the same way, throughout all ages, in all time frames and in all places on the planet.

There was never an age or a *dispensation* when a person was made right by what they did or didn’t do. There was never a time, when God saved people according to their works. There was never a time when God didn’t deal with mankind according to His own, all-sufficient, magnanimous grace.

Deu 9:4 "Do not say in your heart, after the LORD your God has thrust them out before you, 'It is because of my **righteousness** that the LORD has brought me in to possess this land,' whereas it is because of the wickedness of these nations that the LORD is driving them out before you.

Deu 9:5 Not because of your **righteousness** or the uprightness of your heart are you going in to possess their land, but because of the wickedness of these nations the LORD your God is driving them out from before you, and that he may confirm the word that the LORD swore to your fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob.

Deu 9:6 "Know, therefore, that the LORD your God is not giving you this good land to possess because of your **righteousness**, for you are a stubborn people.

Being made right with God, has always come through trusting God's provision for their sins to be forgiven. Never in the history of creation has anyone been saved or made right with God, by keeping the Law perfectly or by performing certain good deeds. Being right with God has always been an issue of trusting God; and most specifically trusting that the means, whereby God has provided for a person's sins to be forgiven, has been effective to make a sinful person right, with a holy and gracious God.

Now, in the OT, God's means of salvation, or the manner in which a person was made right with God, was through faith in the sin sacrifices which God instituted and carefully prescribed. Animals were killed and their blood was applied to the altar, in order for the sins of those who believed God and trusted in His sacrifice for sins, to be forgiven and for individuals to be made right with God.

The law didn't make people righteous, because they couldn't keep from breaking God's law. But the sin sacrifices allowed sinful man to be made right with a holy God. So in the Old Testament, People were Justified by the gift of God's grace through faith in His sin sacrifice, on their behalf.

GIFT #2: People were Justified by the gift of God's own righteousness through faith

NOW we are considering justification or being justified in the Bible. When the blood of the animal sacrifice was pour out, the requirements of God had been met and the justice of God had been satisfied.

The righteousness, was not in keeping the law or the act in sacrificing the animal, but Gods requirement of blood, for the satisfaction of His righteousness or holy justice was met. Therefore the ones trusting in that process of the death-blood sacrifice was counted as righteousness.

Gen 15:5-6 ESV And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward heaven, and number the stars, if you are able to number them." Then he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." (6) And he believed the LORD, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

“Counted as righteousness”; This refers to being credited as righteous. Theologians may refer to this as considering one as righteous, or viewed as righteous. It may also imply a promise of righteousness.

Up until this point, we really know very little about Abram. We know that his family were from Ur, from an area referred to as Babylonia. We know Abraham’s family worshiped false gods.(Josh.24:2)

And in Gen.12, when Jehovah God, initiates contact with Abram, we only read of God telling Abraham to take his family and leave. God promises to bless Abram. Abram obeys God and then he builds an altar and worships the true and Living God.(v.7)

Later in Genesis chapter 15, Abram’s declaration of his faith in Jehovah God, was in the context of God’s covenant with Abram to give him a son, but also included, the animal sacrifice, which is the 2nd sacrifice in Scripture; both of which were executed by God Himself. And the promise to Abram was not just for his own son Isaac, but for the Savior / Messiah that would come through the lineage of his son. Through the lineage of Abram’s son Isaac, all the nations of the world would be blessed.^[Gen.12:2-3]

Justification is to **“Declare Righteous”**. Not a declaration regarding something that wasn’t true, or implying that something had changed, when in reality nothing had changed and you are just as unrighteous as you have ever been. But Abram believed God and it was *credited* to him as righteousness. OR, Abram was spiritually broke, but “God credited His own righteousness into Abram’s empty account”.

God did not merely *call* Abram righteous or *refer* to him as righteous: “OK, you’re righteous!”, yet in reality, nothing really changed. Abram was rightfully viewed as Righteous, because he trusted God; and in his broke, empty, spiritual state, God was pleased to graciously promise His own righteousness to Abram’s account, apart from the law, apart from good deeds, or any personal work or achievement.

The Bible tells us that animal sacrifices did not take away man’s sin, but covered it until a future, permanent sacrifice would be offered. Likewise, the righteousness that was credited to them, much like an I.O.U., would be fully paid, at a future time. So People were Justified by the gift of God’s crediting or promising His own righteousness through faith. The promise was fulfilled and the “IOU” was fully paid and received in Jesus Christ.

NEW TESTAMENT JUSTIFICATION (2Cor.5:17-21)

Q: So how did people get **RIGHT** with God in the New Testament? New Testament Justification focuses on 2 points.

By believing God, and trusting in God’s divine sacrifice of Jesus Christ, once and for all. In the OT, the animal sacrifices had to be repeated week after week, year after year, as long as you lived. ALSO, the blood of the OT sacrifices never fully removed the sin, but covered them. Likewise, the righteousness from God was credited or promised to those who trusted in Him.

POINT #1: Advent celebrates the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, as God’s only son and our only Savior. The death of Jesus Christ on the CROSS was once and for all. It was God’s final sacrifice for the sins of humanity. Never were there to be any more sacrifices for sin.

But also...

POINT #2: Advent celebrates the fact that the blood of Christ’s

sacrifice completely and fully removes and washes away the sins of all who trust in Him.

Joh 1:29 ESV The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, **who takes away the sin** of the world!

So not only was man's sin finally and fully taken away, but God's righteousness was fully and freely given to every true believer.

Rom 3:20-26 ESV (20) For by works of the law no human being will be **justified** in his sight, since through the law comes knowledge of sin. (21) But now (*in our NT faith in Christ*) the **righteousness** of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it-- (22) the **righteousness** of God through **FAITH** in Jesus Christ for all who **BELIEVE**. For there is no distinction: (23) for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, (24) and are **justified** by his **GRACE** as a **GIFT**, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, (25) whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by **FAITH**. This was to show God's **righteousness**, because in his divine forbearance (*in OT times past*) he had passed over former sins. (26) It was to show his **righteousness** at the present time (*for us today*), so that he might be **just** and the **justifier** of the one who has **FAITH** in Jesus.

Righteousness is not perfection, but refers to being approved unto God, or to be right before God.

Righteousness: Abram Kuyper, Prime Minister of the Netherlands 1902 (Works of the Holy Spirit, *Sanctification & Justification*, p.486; p.445)

In its fundamental features this applies to us as men. Even in us righteousness is entirely different from holiness; the former (Right.) has exclusive reference to our relation to and position before God, man, and angel; while holiness refers, not to any relation, but to the quality of our inner being. We speak of righteousness only when it concerns our relation to God or man.

Noah is said to have been a righteous man " in his generation," which indicates not his essential quality, but his relation to others [and to God].

Paul refers to the NT depositing of God's righteousness into the lives of true believers in Jesus.

2Co 5:17-21 ESV Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come. (18) All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself and gave us the ministry of reconciliation; (19) that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting to us the message of reconciliation. (20) Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (21) For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become *the righteousness of God*.

* This in no way implies, that it now makes no difference how we live, since God sees me with the Righteousness of Christ. God is holy. He is just as holy as he ever was. And Our sin is sinful. Sin is just as sinful it ever was and we are just as sinful as we ever were, regardless of who it is that is sinning.

Man has always been made right before God through faith based on God's own grace and His gift of righteousness. This is what Advent is about. This is the background and importance of Christmas. But our relationship through faith in Christ, buffers God's wrath and has intercepted our judgment for our sin. What God has done for us in Christ, must become for us, motivation for holy living on our part.

We Must never disregard the grace of God, nor must we ever diminish the holiness of God. We must not put the Lord to the test. A lack of desire or striving to live holy before God, casts doubt and calls our salvation into question.

(1) In the Old Testament, before Jesus was born, animal sacrifices were offered for man's sins. Sin was covered, but not removed and God was satisfied. In the NT, Jesus was born and died as God's full, final sacrifice for sins. And his sacrifice took away the sins of the world.

(2) In the Old Testament, when people believed in God, God credited them with righteousness, or he viewed them as righteous with the promise of future, full gift of righteousness that every true believer would receive. In the NT, Jesus was born and died, in order to take our sin punishment for us, while giving His own righteousness as completing God's IOU for righteousness promised to Abram and others.

* In the Old Testament and New Testament, men were made right with God, through faith in God and in his sacrifice provision for their sins, and God graciously forgave, and imparted / credited His righteousness to the true believer.

JUSTIFICATION AND MERCY

* Justification is God's justice, *together* with His mercy.

Summarize the story of the 10 lepers.

Luk 17:12-15 ESV And as he entered a village, he was met by ten lepers, who stood at a distance (13) and lifted up their voices, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." (14) When he saw them he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went they were cleansed. (15) Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice;

Our sickness of sin, is like the death sentence of the disease of leprosy. We are terminal. Apart for faith in God's sacrifice of Jesus for our sins, the death sentence of eternal separation from God is upon each of us.

But through faith in Christ, and from no works of our own, we can have forgiveness of our sins, salvation for our soul, and eternal life with Jesus forever in His heavenly home.

Luk 18:10-14 ESV "Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. (11) The Pharisee, standing by himself, prayed this way: 'God, I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. (12) I fast twice a week; I give tithes of all that I get.' (13) But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his breast, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' (14) I tell you, this man went down to his house **JUSTIFIED**, rather than the other. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted."

Prayer didn't save that man or get him declared "righteous". But his humble awareness of his own sinfulness; his prayer of repentance and plea for mercy, demonstrated saving faith, that he would receive the gift of forgiveness and the righteousness of Christ.

Being declared righteous, is an assurance of a change by God, and our standing before God and that, the all-important gift of righteousness has been received.

Advent, is deep. For the believer in Christ, Advent is more than just a spirit of the "holly jollies", off work, out of school, presents, spending, etc. REMEMBER: Christmas is what we make it! The event of Advent, and the holiday of Christmas is all about the birth or appearing of God's own Son, to grow up, and take on the sins of the world. So that, whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.(Jn.3:16)

Out of the 10 lepers healed, only 1 responded appropriately, with praise and thanksgiving to God. 2 men in the temple prayed to

God. Only 1 responded appropriately by admitting his sin and the plea for God to “have mercy” on him.

Christmas can really be such a great celebration. But it can also be an extremely superficial and empty time of the year. Christmas is what we make it! Lets make it about Christ. Let’s remember what the reason and purpose of Christ’s birth meant for all of us today.



J.E.S.U.S.

E=ETERNAL LIFE: HE IS OUR LIFE!

December 9, 2018

Joh 17:1-4 ESV When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, (2) since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. (3) And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (4) I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

QUESTION: When you think of “*eternal life*”, what comes to your mind? Heaven? Streets of Gold? Seeing your loved ones? The New Heaven and New Earth? These are eternity, but not eternal life. Eternal Life is something we as Christians possess or experience, immediately at the point of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and being saved.

Eternal life is not life after death, but that which we receive, in this life, before departing from this life into the next.

Faith in Jesus Christ, brings forgiveness for sins, salvation for our eternal soul and we receive the gift from God, which is Eternal Life, and Jesus is Himself, that life.!

Joh 5:24 ESV Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment, but has **passed from death to life.**

REVIEW:Our series for Advent is: J.E.S.U.S.. The name is an acronym.

J=Justification.

E= Eternal Life

S=Sanctification

U= Unmerited favor

S= Shalom and Sabbath | Peace and Rest

So Last week our lesson was on Justification. Meaning to be declared Righteous. When we trust in Jesus, as Savior, we are trusting in Him as God's final sacrifice payment for our own sins. When we trust in Christ; Our sins are forgiven, our soul is saved and the Bible teaches that we are declared Righteous by God; not because of our works, but because of the finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

INTRODUCTION

In addition to those gifts, we also receive Eternal Life, or Everlasting Life.

Joh 3:16 ESV "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have ***eternal (or eternal) life.***

Now some may be thinking, "I know that is part of what takes place, because of the Crucifixion of Jesus and because we trust in Him. But this is Christmas. Right? **JESUS** is our **Eternal Life**.

For many of you , this is probably nothing new. For some, you may have never really considered the connection between Christmas and the crucifixion of Jesus Christ.

SO, if you want to understand where people really are coming from; the depth of their Bible knowledge, or the level of their faith? Ask this Question this Christmas. “**Why was Jesus Born?**” This is a great conversation starter and will get people thinking.

When we think about Advent and celebrate Christmas, I don’t think we can adequately do so, without considering this Question.

“WHY WAS JESUS BORN?”

* We often view Christmas as being totally separated from other Christian holidays. We often view the birth of Jesus, as separate and disconnected from all the rest of the life of Jesus. From the cradle to the cross, the birth, life, ministry and death of Christ were connected and related to one another. Jesus was born to make people right with God, through His death and resurrection. Lets look at a few Scripture verses on how Jesus answers this question.

“WHY WAS JESUS BORN?”

Jesus “**came**” from heaven to earth, or was born, in order to reconcile a lost humanity to God and provide salvation for all who will believe in him.

Luk 19:10 ESV For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

Luk 5:32 ESV I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

Joh 6:38 ESV For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me.

Joh 10:10 ESV The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.

Joh 12:27 ESV "Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour.

Joh 18:37 ESV Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this **purpose I was born** and for this purpose I have come into the world--to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice."

Mat 20:28 ESV "...the Son of Man did not **come** to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

In simple summary: Jesus was born to be our example and to be our sin sacrifice.

Jesus was Born To be our EXAMPLE

** We all need a target to aim at, and Christ-likeness is our target.*

1Pe 2:21 ESV For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps.

Jesus was born to be our example. God's Commands are Instruction for us, but not visible examples for us to observe. God would be a great example, if we could see Him. But Jesus, God the Son, took on flesh and blood, was born as a baby, and lived as a man with perfect righteousness and holiness. And His life is a perfect example of life and faith for all of us.

He demonstrated an attitude of humility, compassion, servanthood toward others and obedience toward God, our Heavenly the Father.

But probably the most important reason Jesus was born was...

To be our Sin SACRIFICE

** Between the OT and the NT, there was 400yrs of silence, when God has quit speaking to His people the Jews. For centuries, God's people longed for a prophetic Message, a powerful Miracle or better yet, the promised Messiah Himself. Simeon, was a man who personalized these longings of the people of Israel. After the*

birth of Jesus, his parents brought him to the temple for his dedication.

Luk 2:25-35 ESV (25) Now there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon, and this man was righteous and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. (26) And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ. (27) And he came in the Spirit into the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him according to the custom of the Law, (28) he took him up in his arms and blessed God and said, (29) "Lord, now you are letting your servant depart in peace, according to your word; (30) for my eyes have seen your salvation (31) that you have prepared in the presence of all peoples, (32) a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and for glory to your people Israel." (33) And his father and his mother marveled at what was said about him. (34) And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary his mother, "Behold, this child is appointed for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign that is opposed (35) (and a sword will pierce through your own soul also), so that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed."

In the midst of the joy that Jesus birth would bring, this was a reference to the abuse, suffering and sacrifice of Mary's Child, the Son of God, as He would be crucified for the sins of the world. At the birth of Jesus, Simeon was prophesying the death of Jesus. He connects the cradle and the cross and I think we need to be careful to do the same.

Simeon knew that...

**JESUS WAS BORN TO OFFER US A RIGHT
RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD** (Rom.5:10/Jn.1:110-12

** We can be made right with God and Born into God's Eternal Family, but it can only be experienced through faith in Jesus.*

God's desire for us, is as it was in the garden of Eden, with Adam and Eve. God desires relationship with his creation – with humans.

Our sin has separated us from God. Sin is a barrier in our relationship with God. So God made a way, in which we can be made right with God

Jesus was born so...

We Can be Made *RIGHT* with God. We *all* need to be made right with God!

Rom 5:10 ESV For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life.

Apart from Jesus Christ, sin makes us separated from God and even enemies with God. But the birth of Jesus makes it possible for every human being to be forgiven and to be made right with God through faith in Christ.

We must have a *PERSONAL* Relationship with God (Jn.1:10-13)

This is not about religion. Jesus was born so that through Him, we might have a personal relationship with God.

Christmas is about the opportunity to be made right with God and a right relationship with God through faith in Jesus Christ.

Joh 1:10-13 ESV (10) He was in the world, and the world was made through him, yet the world did not know him. (11) He came to his own, and his own people did not receive him. (12) But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, (13) who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Jesus was born, in order that through faith in Jesus Christ, as Gods' only Son and our only Savior, we can have our sins forgiven, our soul saved from eternal punishment for those sins, and could

receive the free gift of everlasting or Eternal Life. This is how we become part of God's eternal family. God wants you to be part of His eternal family!

Christmas is a holiday that celebrates the event of advent, which is focused on the holiness of God, addressing the sinfulness of man, in the hopelessness of our circumstances, for the praise of all peoples. This took place in order for the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, be made known to all the nations of the earth. And Christmas, removed from that focus, is almost idolatrous. Simeon knew why Jesus was born!

JESUS IS OUR ETERNAL REALITY (Jn.17:1-4

** Eternal Life is a present reality!*

Joh 17:1-4 ESV When Jesus had spoken these words, he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify your Son that the Son may glorify you, (2) since you have given him authority over all flesh, to give eternal life to all whom you have given him. (3) And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent. (4) I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.

So again, when you think of “*eternal life*”, what comes to your mind? Heaven? Streets of Gold? Seeing your loved ones? The New Heaven and New Earth? These are eternity, but not eternal life. Eternal Life is something we as Christians possess or experience, immediately at the point of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ and being saved.

It is not something we will one day receive. It is what we possess right now. If you have Jesus as your Savior, then you have eternal life Now. It is a very present reality.

Jesus *PRAYS* for US.

“God the Son, praying to God the Father. Who can fathom it.”
(*M.Luther*)

John chapter 17 is known as the High Priestly Prayer of our Lord Jesus. It is believed to taken place in the garden of Gethsemane, with his disciples. (Lk.22:39ff)

In that High Priestly prayer ...

1) Jesus prays that the Father would glorify Jesus, for the purpose of the Son glorifying the Father. (v.1)

2) Jesus acknowledges that the Father has given all authority, privilege and ability, to share His life with the life of those whom the Father as given him. (v.2a)

3) Those who are believers in Jesus, are considered gifts from God to Jesus (v.2). Have you ever considered that you are a gift from God to his Son, Jesus?

4) Jesus prays for you and for me.

Joh 17:17-21 ESV Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. (18) As you sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. (19) And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth. (20) "I do not ask for these only, but also **for those who will believe in me through their word,** (21) that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

Have you ever considered that in His High Priestly prayer, while in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed for you? He thought of you! He is our only Mediator, between God and man. He intercedes for us. He is not just our *Source* of life; He *IS* our eternal life.

Jesus Christ is our LIFE ! (Jn.17:3)

** We have life through faith in Jesus Christ. (v.3)*

Joh 17:3 ESV (3) And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

Jesus does not merely give us eternal life, He is our eternal Life.

17:3 And this is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.

Christmas is not primarily about who Jesus was. He was Mary's virgin born son, out of wedlock. But He is the Son of the Most High God (Lk.1:32). It was not about this baby which was laid in a feeding trough, but about the Savior that was going to die on a cross to save His people from their sins (Lk.2:11 / Mat.1:21)

Christmas that is focused exclusively on the birth of a darling, cute, baby is almost a fairy tale. The birth of Jesus, removed from the death of Jesus makes for a feel good, but empty holiday celebration. Jesus was born for a purpose; to die for our sins.

People don't engage in heated debates over the cuteness of a baby. Communities don't vulgarly protest a cute baby and nativity displayed in the parks. Merchants don't attempt to change the historic focus of Christmas, because of a cuddly baby boy. Nations don't wage war and impose their genocide upon those who admire a baby during the holidays. Christmas focused only on a baby, even only the baby Jesus, is safe and harmless and meaningless.

People do however, debate heatedly, over the Son of God in human form. Communities do protest the exclusive and only Savior of the World Who intrudes and infringes upon their sinful, and godless lives. Merchants do attempt to divert shopper's attention away from the controversial and offensive person of Jesus Christ. Nations do indeed wage war on, and slaughter and

impose genocide upon those who believe in the one person who is a threat to their own false religious beliefs or fabricated kingdoms.

Satan does not waste his time on cute babies, surrounded by carolers; but he does focus all the resources of his kingdom of darkness to silence the message of His enemy and Conqueror, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The birth of Christ, apart from the death of Christ is almost idolatrous.

Q: WHY WAS JESUS BORN? Jesus was not born to be cute and admired by the world. But he was born to become the death-blood sacrifice payment; for the sins of helpless humanity. He was born so we could be reconciled to a holy God and that we might spend eternity with Him. He was born that we might enter heaven with our sins forgiven, our soul saved from eternal punishment and to provide the gift of eternal life. Christmas and the cross are inseparably connected.

CONCLUSION:

** Christ's purpose must become our personal purpose. (Jn.17:4*

Joh 17:4 ESV (4) I glorified you on earth, having accomplished the work that you gave me to do.
--

Wouldn't it be great, if at the end of your life, you could say with certainty; "Heavenly Father, I glorified you on earth; I have accomplished the work that you gave me to do." Wouldn't you want to be able to say: "I didn't spend all my time doing meaningless things. I didn't waste my life going my own way. But I purposefully sought to follow you, to serve you, to glorify you and to be about the work you gave me to do."

CHRISTIAN: You are a gift from God to Jesus.

QUESTION: Are you doing the work God has given you to do?

If you died tonight, would you be able to confidently say, “I glorified you on earth; I have finished the work that you gave me to do.”?

If you think you would **not** be able to say that, then why not make it your goal, to begin getting on track with what God wants you to do with your life? Don’t wait till the New Year. You may not make it till then. Start now.

Why would you not want to get your life on track with what God wants for you; what He has planned for you; for how He wants to direct you and to use you?

Oh, don’t waste another day, NOT doing what God wants you to be doing?

PRAY. ASK. SEEK. So that when this life is over, you and I can stand before God and say with confidence: “Father, I have finished the work you gave me to do!”

So what will you say about Jesus this Christmas season? “Merry **CHRISTmas**”. “Jesus is the Reason for the Season!” “Jesus is the Joy of the World”

One thing is for sure: God did not send His Son, in order for us to continue living in our sin. This Christmas, be lovingly vocal about the person of Jesus and consider asking this question to others with whom you have conversation. “**WHY WAS JESUS BORN?**” And be prepared to share that Christmas is all about God’s only Son, who is our only Savior; who was born, to die for our sins.



J.E.S.U.S.

S=SANCTIFICATION: MADE HOLY

December 16, 2018

J.E.S.U.S.

J= Justification

E=Eternal Life

S=SANCTIFICATION: to purify; set apart or make holy

U=Unmerited Favor

S= Shalom, Sabbath / Peace, Rest

INTRODUCTION

As children in school, we enjoyed recess; or playground time. And during that time we would play a variety of playground games. 2 team captains were designated and they would take turns choosing players on their team. As kids were chosen, they would separate themselves from the crowd and take their place behind their team captain. Each player was set apart, with the team of the “captain’s” choosing. When we trust in Christ, God sets us apart as His own. We are then part of His team or His family.

Sanctification is an ongoing reminder that we are all imperfect and God is continually purifying us from our sin nature.

1Cor. 1:1-2 ESV Paul, called by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and our brother Sosthenes, (2) To the church of God that is in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours:

How many “saints” do we have here today? (show of hands) Not many? Well did you know that if you are a believer in Jesus Christ, the Bible says you are a “saint”?

Heb 2:10-11 ESV For it was fitting that he, for whom and by whom all things exist, in bringing many sons to glory, should make the founder of their salvation perfect through suffering. (11) For he who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Source. That is why he is not ashamed to call them brothers,

Being sanctified, or becoming a saint is not something we do for ourselves, but is that which God does to us at the point of salvation and is that which God continues to do for us, throughout the remainder of our lives on earth.

BIBLICAL SANCTIFICATION

When we speak of Biblical Sanctification, we are thinking of 2 theological components and we are dealing with a profound change that takes place at our salvation.

Immediately being sanctified at the point of salvation, we are designated by God, as His own. The second portion is the Long-term, life-long process of the Sanctification of believers, indicating that we are not perfected in this life. It reminds us that we all have imperfections; we all have fatal flaws in our spiritual lives that we must allow God to purify us from, or else resign ourselves to be held captive by those sins.

This is the process of being sanctified or God’s work of causing us to grow in personal holiness and Christ-like character. This is the

often, painful and frustration process of putting to death our old sinful nature and nurturing to life, our new-life nature in Christ.

We are made Holy – Event; Set apart

* Scripture also refers to those who are believers in Jesus Christ as having been made holy.

1Cor. 6:9-11 ⁹Or do you not know that wrongdoers will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor men who have sex with men ¹⁰nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹And that is what some of you were. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.

To be a “saint” or to be “sanctified” is to be identified, designated and set apart as part of God’s team, the church. IT does not imply perfection, but that we are saved, warts and all and God begins the sanctifying work in each of us; the long-term, life-long process of sanctification, or of being purified from the effects of our sinful desires and tendencies.

In vs.9-10, Paul describes the behavior and lifestyle of the Christians before they trusted in Christ. Then in v.11, he states: “This is what some of you *were*”. “*Were*” (v11a) refers to the past tense. So what happened? Why the change? Because they *were* “*Washed*”(v11b) = past tense. They *were* “*Sanctified*”(v11c)= past tense. They *were* “*Justified*” = past tense.

I believe Paul is addressing issues of salvation here and not levels of maturity in the faith. The tendency may be to look at others in the church, and see people manifesting certain traits we might attribute to the sinful nature, and to see those people and think, “they are lesser Christians than I am.” We might even think, “How can a person be saved, and evidence that kind of sinful behavior?”

We may even be tempted to critically judge others and think, “They are obviously hypocrites, therefore they have no place in this church.” We may even pray in our hearts, “Lord, I thank you that I am not like these people.”

I don’t know how you view it, but I believe church is exactly where sinful Christians, who are in process of being purified by God, ought to be. Christians who have been Washed in the blood of Jesus, sanctified by the word of God, and justified by the grace of our Lord – still struggle with sin and church should be where we encourage one another, support one another, offer strength to one another as, together we are growing and grappling with our faith. I would say, the only Christians who don’t struggle with sin, are those who think they have no besetting sin. Some think “I’m OK, its everyone else who has the sin problem.”

Those don’t struggle with their sin, because they don’t perceive that they have a sin problem. They think that because they are saved, or part of a particular religious group perhaps, that they don’t sin or that their sin is so insignificant or that it is of no concern to God. And that is a gross misunderstanding of Scripture. Pride doesn’t want to admit that I still struggle with sin. Pride doesn’t want to lose my salvation and then have to get saved all over again, in from of all the people who thought me to be saved, and holy. Do you see how deceptive this can become and how destructive it can become for the entire church.

To be sanctified, is an event, where God sets you apart for His purpose and designates you as His own. But there is a second component to sanctification that we have already touched on.

Making Holy – Process; Being Perfected

* God takes us where we were and as we are, and in so doing, He demonstrates his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, the Father sent the Son, to die for us.(Rom. 5:8)

This is why the church is full of imperfect people. Saved, forgiven, justified, people with eternal life, yet still imperfect. It is important to remember that good works don't get us saved and neither do good works *keep* us saved.

Sanctification is a long-term, Life-long process of being purified from our old sinful nature, and strengthened in our new nature, after the likeness of Our Lord Jesus.

Justification is like the event of being born. The Bible refers to it as being "born again". Sanctification is like our growing up process; maturing, gaining wisdom; it's a life-long process. Birth is the event; growing to maturity is the process.

Justification is the event; Sanctification is the long-term, life-long process of being purified and nurtured in the faith, until we step into eternity. Jesus was born to die and be raised again, for our own spiritual sanctification.

Jesus was also born for our...

RELATIONSHIP PURITY AND PREPARATION FOR HEAVEN

* We are all a work in progress. Sanctification is the process of God performing His ongoing work in us, and the Christian doing their part in submitting to God's work, in order for it to be effective in us.

Relational Purity with God

* Christians have a level of responsibility to surrender, repent, obey and live in a manner pleasing to God. Sanctification is both the work of God in us, and the Christian bring purified to live differently.

"Come out from among them" –

2Cor. 6:14-18 MKJV Do not be unequally yoked together with

unbelievers; for what fellowship does righteousness have with lawlessness? And what partnership does light have with darkness? (15) And what agreement does Christ have with Belial? Or what part does a believer have with an unbeliever? (16) And what agreement does a temple of God have with idols? For you are the temple of the living God, as God has said, "I will dwell in them and walk among them; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people." (17) Therefore ***come out from among them and be separated***, says the Lord, and do not touch the unclean thing. And I will receive you (18) and I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.

In Scripture, God instructs us of his expectations for us as His own. "Come out", implies that the Christian sees himself as different and as a result, behaves differently. It means to be separate and distinct from the world and influences we were submitted to prior to our new birth. Come Out is a call to be and live holy.

Eph 1:4 ESV even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, *that we should be **holy*** and blameless before him.

Clearly, being "sanctified" by God, requires us to be choosing to live a sanctified or holy life. Sanctification is then, something God does to us, and something we begin to submit to.

To "*repent*" means to turn away from sin.

Rev 2:16 MKJV Repent! But if not I will come to you quickly, and will fight with them by the sword of My mouth.

Repentance is the Christians response to the initial work of the sanctification process in our lives. Personal sanctification is how we are to live, because of what God has done or because of the change he has made in our lives, as saving us and designating us as his own.

"Draw Near" is a command to believers.

Jas 4:8-10 MKJV Draw near to God, and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, sinners; and purify your hearts, double-minded ones. (9) Be afflicted, and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to heaviness. (10) Be humbled before the Lord, and He will lift you up.

Some believe that when we trust Christ, we as Christians, can never grow closer to God than at that moment. And yet, Scripture speaks over and over again to the Christian, to turn away from sin and turn back to God and even to take steps to draw near to God.

In the book of Revelation, Jesus urged the church of Ephesus to come back to Him as their first love.

Rev 2:4-5 ESV But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. (5) Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

Preparation for our home in heaven

* We don't work our way to heaven, but God does work on us all the way to heaven. This is the long-term, life-long process of personal purification or progressive or practical sanctification.

In this life, the sanctification process affects our relationship with God and with others. This process is one which is intended to bring us to say, not by coercion or force, but to change our heart and restrain our human nature, so that we begin to desire God's ways above our own and we begin to submit and say "yes" to God's ways rather than to our own; "Yes" to God's Spirit of Holiness working on us and saying "no" to our own fallen, sinful, human desires and tendencies.

JESUS' BIRTH AND CONTINUAL CLEANSING

* At the point of saving faith, we are cleansed and forgiven of all sin. As a result, we will not experience God's judgment or wrath for our sin. But what if the sinner sins again?

The blood of Jesus Christ (1Jn..1:5-10)

* God's cleansing begins at salvation and continues the cleansing process throughout our earthly journey. Sometimes its uncomfortable and discouraging. Sometimes it is a certain realization that the pain in this life, indicates a particular reminder of the work of God in our lives and that little-by-little, yet more-and-more, we are being changed, from the inside out, by the Spirit of God. At times we may become overly frustrated, but God never does. He remains constant, stable and long-suffering towards us, whom He has designated "sanctified" and has set apart as His very own. God does not turn away from His own.

1Jn 1:5-10 MKJV And this is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all. (6) If we say that we have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. (7) But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. (8) If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (9) If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. (10) If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.

v.7) "cleansing" = indicates a present, ongoing process. Whenever we read this, it is in the present tense. In 10 years we may read this, and personally realize that it is as much a present reality in my life at this very moment, as it was 10 years earlier. It never stops in this

life. God never gives up on us. Remembering that, can save us much mental anguish.

vs.8-9) Speaks of the continual sanctifying process; the daily purifying; the ongoing maturing process. It offers hope that when the Christian sins, we need not get saved again, or baptized all over again; but that we need to humble ourselves and confess our sins afresh, and trust His promise to cleanse us afresh and sanctify us a little deeper each time. And while we would say that this is a partnership with God, yet at the very basis of it, is that the weight of responsibility is upon God Himself; the All-mighty and Perfectly sovereign Ruler of all.

The Word of God

(Jn.15:3)

* As we learn more of the Word of God, we open ourselves up more to the working of God. God uses His Holy Word. Getting more of the Holy Word of God into our lives, gives the Holy Spirit of God something to get ahold of, to work with in the spirit and heart of a true believer.

Joh 15:1-3 MKJV I am the True Vine, and My Father is the Vinedresser. (2) Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away. And every one that bears fruit, He prunes it so that it may bring forth more fruit. (3) Now you are clean through the Word which I have spoken to you.

Fruit is the maturity and sanctifying work that is manifested in the life of the believer, due to the change God has made in him/her through the sanctifying process.

When our Lord prayed to His Father in Heaven, He prayed:
“Sanctify them by your Truth. Thy Word is Truth.”^[Jn.17:17]

The Conviction of the Holy Spirit *(Jn.16:7-11)*

* The sanctifying process involves Gods work in sensitizing our inner man or our conscious awareness to sin. That is the convicting

ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Joh 16:7-11 ESV Nevertheless, I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you. (8) And when he comes, he will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment: (9) concerning sin, because they do not believe in me; (10) concerning righteousness, because I go to the Father, and you will see me no longer; (11) concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

Apart from the Holy Spirit working and changing a person's personal view of themselves, or His sensitizing their awareness of our imperfections, flaws, weakness and spiritual handicap, we cannot change on our own. WE cannot change ourselves.

Perseverance of the Saints / The Power of Personal Obedience
(1Pet.1:22-23)

** To say that the sanctifying process is all of God and nothing we can contribute cannot be reconciled with scripture.*

1Pe 1:22-23 MKJV Purifying your souls in the obedience of the truth through the Spirit to unfeigned love of the brothers, love one another fervently out of a pure heart, (23) having been born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the living Word of God, and abiding forever.

Again, we would place the weight of power and purpose upon God, who altogether, is the one who initiates and perpetrates this work in us. And we may not contribute anything to accomplishing this work in ourselves, as though God's work was insufficient. Nevertheless, we would hold that we are definitely responsible to participate in the process. A work of God that mandates that we appropriate the work of God and evidence His work in our attitude, behavior and choices.

SIN = Awareness of personal imperfections and offense to God's Holiness.

CONFESSION = acknowledgement of our sin to God; 1st active step to cleansing and victory.

REPENTANCE = turning away from known sin or sinful direction; change of mind and behavior; grief over sin.

OBEDIENCE – Actively fighting against known sin; taking steps to obey what we know to be Truth and Gods' desire for us.

Sin >> Confession >> Repentance >> Obedience >> REPEAT

CONCLUSION:

* Romans 8:28-29 | Sanctification is the process of God molding each of us into the image of God's Son, and our Lord, Jesus.

Question: How is God presently working to change you into the likeness of our Lord Jesus?

Question: What area of your life is God presently working on, in order to more fully sanctify you, purify you and bring you to a deeper level of maturity and a higher quality of Christ-likeness?

PRAYER: "Lord, would you continue that "good work" in me? Holy Father, sanctify me, mold me more into the glorious likeness of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I invite you into my life to accomplish this.



J.E.S.U.S.

U=UNMERITED FAVOR

DECEMBER 23, 2018

J.E.S.U.S.

J= Jesus provided Justification for our sins

E= Jesus is our Eternal Life.

S= Jesus is our Sanctification

U= Jesus made God's Unmerited Favor available to us

S= Jesus is our Peace and Rest / Shalom & Sabbath (Christmas eve)

UNMERITED FAVOR = undeserving recipients of God's unmerited favor

Mercy: not getting what we deserve; God withholding judgment or punishment;

Grace; Getting what we do NOT deserve; blessings; God's favor; benevolence; gifts;

INTRODUCTION

Culturally, Christmas is a time of giving and receiving gifts. As I understand it, we give gifts to others, in order to represent and remember God giving the Great Gift of His Son. So we give gifts, in remembrance of that.

Can you imagine if God historically asked His people; "So what do you want me to give you today?" And what if He gave His people,

what they wanted, rather than what they needed? Can you imagine where humanity would be, if it happened like that?

Most often at Christmas, we ask, or we are asked: “What would you like for Christmas this year?” And then we attempt to give gifts to others, according to what they want. And that brings joy to the recipient as well as to the giver.

Imagine if we gave gifts, based solely on what people deserve or have earned? It won't be gifts then, would it? It would be wages?

*Aren't you glad God doesn't give to us,
according to what we deserve?*

But what if we totally changed that? What if we gave people what they needed, rather than what they wanted? I think there is no greater joy to see another person express, than when they have been in need, and someone has given them gifts that meet those genuine needs. Talk about genuine joy and genuine heart felt appreciation!

Thank God, Christmas is about God giving us what we needed, not what we wanted, nor what we deserved. Hallelujah!

Why was Jesus Born? Jesus was born to display to the undeserving world, the unimaginable grace and unmerited favor of our Holy Father, God Almighty!

This morning we look at...

PROMISED GRACE IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

(Nu.6:24; Ps.67)

God's promise of grace is given to us in the Old Testament. His blessings are not given for the main purpose of benefitting us. God's blessings are given in order that through His blessings, dispensed to and through us, that the world is to be benefited and

that God would be praised, by all peoples in every part of the world.

The Word for “*blessed*” is not properly defined as “happy”. But rather, “to be blessed” is to be an undeserving recipient of God’s unmerited favor. Bless, reflects who God is and how He interacts with His creation, not how we feel or view our life circumstances or experiences. So a Blessing is more of a demonstration of “God’s unmerited favor”. Therefore, to be “*blessed*” is to realize either by faith or by personal experience, that we are undeserving recipients of God’s unmerited favor”.

I’d like us to see...

God’s Blessing to Israel through Moses / Aaron

God’s desire is for His own people to praise Him. Therefore in the OT, God is a gracious God, who chooses to extend his unmerited favor to the likes of sinful humanity, like you and I and like God’s people, the Jews.

Num 6:22-27 ESV The LORD spoke to Moses, saying, (23) "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, (24) The LORD bless you and keep you; (25) the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be ***gracious*** to you; (26) the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace. (27) "So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them."

The word “Bless” has two perspectives to it. It literally refers to one stooping or bowing and bending the knee. When Scripture speaks of us as God’s people, blessing God: “I will ***bless*** the Lord at all times, His praise will continually be in my mouth.”(Ps.34:1) Bless represents Praise. And it carries the idea that we are humbly bending our knees and bowing in reverent worship and adoration to God. “I will bless the Lord.. or I will praise the Lord”.

But when “Bless” is used to describe what God does toward us, it is in reference to God being gracious to us, or God displaying His eternal attribute of divine goodness, and dispensing His resources for His own Kingdom purposes. And this use of the word Bless, to kneel, is the picture of God not bowing to us, but kneeling or stooping down to our level in approaching humanity, in order to bestow some divine, undeserved gift to us.

The prayer of blessing is “the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;”.

God’s Blessing is a demonstration of the character and of His grace, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament. God is gracious. His had given grace, both in the Old Testament, as well as in the New Testament.

Have you personally experienced God’s grace in your life? How?

I’d also like us to see...

God’s purpose in dispensing His blessing

* God’s desire is for all the nations of the world to praise Him.

God’s purpose in blessing His people, is not to show the world how rich and privileged they or we are; but to demonstrate to the ends of the earth, what a Holy, gracious, Righteous, Powerful and Merciful Just and Loving god, Jehovah really is.

Scripture explains that the goodness of God is intended to bring people to repentance and to trust and obey Jehovah God and praise Him. (Rom.2:4)

Psa 67:1-7 ESV (1) May God be **GRACIOUS** to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, Selah.^[Nu.6:24-26]

That is a repeat of the prayer for Gods’ blessing in Num.6:24-26, but in the following verses, the psalmist shares the heart felt purpose for God’s gracious blessings to his people.

Psa 67:1-7 (1) May God be GRACIOUS to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, Selah. (2) THAT your way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations. (3) Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you! (4) Let the nations be glad and sing for joy, for you judge the peoples with equity and guide the nations upon earth. Selah. (5) Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you! (6) The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, shall bless us. (7) God shall bless us; let all the ends of the earth revere him!

God's blessings or the unmerited distribution of His gifts to us as undeserving recipients, is intended to cause us to (1) acknowledge just how undeserving we really are, and (2) just how unimaginably and indescribably gracious our God really is, both in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, as well as in our lives today in 2018, and what we can expect in 2019.

God's blessings are not intended to make us rich or even happy, predominantly, but to demonstrate His eternal unchanging character and that He is worthy to be trusted for all our needs. He is worthy to be worshiped for all He is, and He is worthy to be obeyed in all that He asks of us.

Then we see that...

God Promises His ultimate blessing of Messiah, through the blessing of Abraham

* God's greatest blessing to the world, was to be through His only Son, as Savior of the World. And that gracious promise was given way back in Genesis, chapter 12.

Gen 12:1-3 ESV Now the LORD said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. (2) And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. (3) I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and *in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*"

Through Abram, all the peoples on planet earth were to become underserving recipients of His unmerited favor – which would be through God’s sending His only begotten Son, from heaven’s glory, to take on human form, being born in a stable in Bethlehem, for the purpose of becoming the punishment and payment for all the sins of humanity. In this, all who will trust in Him, repent from their sins, would be reconciled to God.

The promise of God’s blessing of Christmas is given to Abraham in Genesis 12 and throughout the Old Testament.

Jesus was born To display to the undeserving world, the unimaginable grace and unmerited favor of Almighty God, the Father. Christmas is about God’s promise of Grace in the OT, but also Christmas is all about...

PROVISION OF GRACE IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Christmas is The celebration that God’s greatest Blessing has come to all the inhabitants of the world. It is my position that we give gifts at Christmas, in memory of God giving His gift to us, in His Son, Jesus. So perhaps, this Christmas before someone opens the gift you gave them, you might say something like: “This is just a token to help us remember God’s greatest gift to us, in His Son, Jesus.” We do this in remembrance of Him. Lets Remember that God has been gracious to us and has blessed us.

Jesus is Lord & Savior of the World

As God’s provision of Grace, Jesus is the greatest gift.

Luk 2:4-11 ESV And Joseph also went up from Galilee, from the town of Nazareth, to Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and lineage of David, (5) to be registered with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. (6) And while they were there, the time came for her to give birth. (7) And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in swaddling cloths and laid him in a manger, because there was no

place for them in the inn. (8) And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. (9) And an angel of the **LORD** appeared to them, and the glory of the **LORD** shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. (10) And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you ***good news of great joy*** that will be for all the people. (11) For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the **LORD**.

“LORD” – Jehovah / Yahweh; who was perceived to be the God of Israel and of all creation. The **angel of Jehovah**; the **glory of Jehovah** and this child was to be **Christ Jehovah** in the flesh; the God of all creation.

Jesus is the eternally existent God; God the Son. He is eternally existent, un-created. He is the Creator of all that has been created, who would pay the penalty for our sins, so we could be reconciled to God.

As provision for God’s grace, Jesus sacrificed so much, so we could have so much. God Gave His Son. Jesus Obeyed His Father. We received what we could never deserve. Jesus – God the Son, sacrificed so much.

Php 2:6-8 ESV who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Paul connects the birth of Jesus with his death. To celebrate the birth of Christ at Christmas, to the exclusion of the death of Christ, borders on idolatry.

Almighty God the Son, stepped out of heaven, came to earth, humbled himself, by taking on flesh and blood to be born of a man and to become a servant. He was obedient even unto death; in order that God the Son, would become the very promised Messiah

and blessing to all the nations of the earth, which was promised to Abraham.

This week Ford reminded of this verse.

John 1:16 ESV For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

Grace upon grace. Gift upon Gift. Out of the inexhaustible fullness of God the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ; we are all undeserving recipients of His inexhaustible, unimaginable, unmerited, gracious resources.

This is what Christmas is about; the blessing of the gift of God's grace, available to the whole world. Good News of Great Joy, for Jews, Christians, Muslims, Catholics and all people of all nations of the world.

Jesus was born To display to the undeserving world, the unimaginable grace and unmerited favor of Almighty God, the Father. Christmas is about God's Promise of Grace in the OT. And it's about God's Provision of Grace in the NT.

And its also about...

JESUS IS THE PRESENT DAY, JOY OF THE WHOLE WORLD

* So much of The world doesn't have joy, because so much of the world, doesn't have Jesus. So much of the Church doesn't have the Joy of the Lord, because we still look for that joy in other places, rather than solely and fully in the person of our Lord Jesus.

Joy to the world, not because God has given us what we wanted. Joy to the world, because of all that the Lord has done. He has given to each of us; not what we deserved, nor perhaps what we wanted, but He has given us exactly what we needed. *Salvation!*

He is our Greatest Purpose; our Highest Calling, our Soul's Source and Joy and our All-Consuming Passion.

Regarding Christmas joy...

The world doesn't possess the joy of the Lord Jesus as Savior.

* The world doesn't have the joy of Christ; maybe because the Church of our Lord Jesus, doesn't fully possess the joy of Christ ourselves, as we should. People don't have joy at Christmas, I think, because they don't know or fully grasp why Jesus was born.

The message of Christmas was intended to be to a sinful world, *Good News of Great Joy*. Because of Jesus, we are recipients of God's unmerited Favor and the blessing of Joy.

John Piper writes this in His Advent Devotional, *Good News of Great Joy*: "Christmas is for Freedom. Jesus became man, because what was needed was the death of a man, who was more than *just* a man. The incarnation was God locking Himself into death row. Jesus did not risk death. He embraced death."

This was not a message for the Christian Church. IT was good news of great joy for all people who needed to be forgiven and reconciled to God and freed from sin and death.

CONCLUSION:

Christmas is about God displaying to an undeserving world, the unimaginable grace and unmerited favor of God the Father, through Christ His Son. Some theologians view the God of the OT as a harsh, judgmental, all-consuming being. But when we get to the NT, God has advanced and learned from the past, and is now more loving and gracious and much more understanding.

But God is not a god that changes. Some believe that God is progressively developing into a greater level of divine being. Some

believe He is growing in his character and/ or attributes. Many believe the God of the NT is a more highly evolved version of the God of the OT.

But God does not change. HE has not *become* gracious over the centuries, of *learning* how to deal with His children. He has not evolved or mellowed. HE is, as he has always been; holy and gracious.

He deals with His people graciously. He has always dealt with His people graciously. IF at any point in history, God had not been gracious toward His people, they would have in an instant ceased to exist. And there are times in Scripture when it looks like they are heading in that direction, yet good was gracious.

Every aspect of their lives – every aspect of our lives, are so fully dependent upon the Grace of God, that if God ever dealt with us as we deserve - that we, like the Jews, would in an instant - cease to exist. The fact that humans are still on the planet, is a testimony to the gracious nature of God. HE is, He always has been, and He always will be Holy, Just, Righteous and Gracious!

Christmas is about the grace of God on display to all humanity.

In doing so, Jesus was born, in order to die for our sins. This is the message of Christmas. For the birth of Christ, separated from the death and resurrection of Christ, is nothing short of idolatry. It amounts to little more than adoration of a cute little baby, and the admiration of those who played their part in the Nativity.

Christmas is all about Jesus being born, in order to display to the undeserving world, the unimaginable grace and unmerited favor of Almighty God, the Father. Christmas is all saved sinners, receiving grace heaped on top of grace through the person of God's only Son and our only Savior.

Can we say "Hallelujah" to that?

“Mary’s Boy Child”, Harry Belafonte

A Long time ago in Bethlehem, So the holy Bible say
Mary's boy child Jesus Christ, Was born on Christmas Day
Hark now hear the angels sing, A new king born today
And man will live forevermore, Because of Christmas Day
Trumpets sound and angels sing, Listen what they say
That man will live forevermore, Because of Christmas Day

Can you imagine getting only gifts at Christmas time that you deserve? Can you imagine God only giving us what we deserve?

The theme of Christmas is not getting things we want or what we deserve. The theme of Christmas is God graciously giving us what we need, a Savior. God extending his unmerited favor, to the underserving recipients of earth.

Christmas - focused solely on Jesus as a baby, separated from His death and Resurrection - borders on Idolatry. Jesus was not born to be admired as a cute little baby, but to die for our sins and to be believed in by the world.

Are you trusting fully and firmly in God’s only Son Jesus, as your only Savior? His grace is available to all who will trust in Him and be saved.

If you have trusted in Jesus, are you living your life to honor and Please Him, who has been so very gracious to you?

... he died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.
(2Cor 5:15)

This Christmas, lets remember; The greatest gifts are not those we ask for, but those we need, and receive, but did not deserve.



J.E.S.U.S.

S=SHALOM & SABBATH

GOD'S PEACE & REST

December 24, 2018 (Christmas Eve Service)

Call to Worship (solo) Wexford Carol

WELCOME, give candle instructions here, how to light them, will be at end of service, etc....

OPENING PRAYER:

Opening Prayer:

Jesus, my feet are dirty. Come even as a slave to me, pour water into your bowl, come and wash my feet. In asking such a thing I know I am overbold, but I dread what was threatened when you said to me, "If I do not wash your feet I have no fellowship with you." Wash my feet then, because I long for your companionship.

—Origen

(185–254 AD)

So Lord, we invite you tonight, to minister to us, individually as we need it most. Amen.

We gather together tonight, before God; to worship and adore Jesus Christ our King.

SONG: O come all ye faithful

Opening Thoughts and summary of J.E.S.U.S.

Christmas focused on the birth of Jesus, apart from the death and resurrection of Jesus, borders on idolatry. Jesus was born to provide purification from our sins and to reconcile us to God.

So this is the end of our Advent Series JESUS.

J = Justification; Jesus was born to provide our justification, so that through faith, He was made sin for us, so we might become the righteousness of God. In Christ God declares us Righteous.

E = through faith in Jesus, we are forgiven, and saved and receive the gift of Christ, who is Himself, our **Eternal Life**. (Jn.17:3)

S = Because of the birth and finished work of Christ on Calvary, we are declared Justified and are also designated as **Sanctified**; holy and set apart as His own. Then the sanctifying process, purifies us more and more as we grow in our faith.

U = Christ is the vessel of God's **unmerited favor** to us, who are undeserving recipients of such grace.

Tonight, we see Christ as our...

S = Shalom and Sabbath / our peace and our rest.

Christmas is about the message of all Christ came to be and do, going out to all the world, bringing eternal salvation and heavenly joy to all who hear and believe. After 400 years of God's silence, this message was intended to be good news of Great Joy for all people.

SONG: His Name shall be (Redman) / Joy to the World

1) SCRIPTURE & THOUGHT | S=SHALOM: God's Peace

* **Shalom** - a Hebrew greeting and salutation, and was much like

the Hawaiian word “Aloha”. Hello, goodbye, good luck, best wishes. Shalom was used to greet people, as well as a parting wish for God’s peace to go with them. It refers to God’s benevolent Favor; Completion; prosperity in all areas of living;

The NT word for peace is “Eirene” which is where we get the name Irene.

Luk 2:8-14 ESV And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. (9) And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. (10) And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. (11) For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. (12) And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." (13) And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying, (14) "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!"

SONG: Hark the Herald Angels Sing (verses 1,2)

-- *Scripture & Thought*--

Jdg 6:23-24 ESV But the LORD said to him, "Peace be to you. Do not fear; you shall not die." (24) Then Gideon built an altar there to the LORD and called it, Jehovah Shalom [or LORD *Is Peace*]. ...

Shalom –In Judges 6, Gideon met the Angel of the Lord, and feared he would surely be consumed. He experienced God’s grace and peace and built an altar commemorating that peace and named the altar; “JehovahShalom – God *is* Peace or Our peace.

i.) As believers In Christ, We have peace with God

In God’s Holy Word, we are promised that we have peace with God, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom.5:1)

OT Scriptures speak of the Messiah being the Prince of Peace. Christians believe that Jesus, was God's only Son and the Promised Messiah for the world. (Is.9:6)

When we trust in Jesus Messiah, a lot changes.

Eph 2:13-15 ESV But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. (14) **For he himself is our peace,** who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh, the dividing wall of hostility ,

Jesus is our Righteousness. Christ is our Everlasting Life. He is our Sanctification. HE is the demonstration of God's unmerited favor to us as undeserving recipients. And Jesus is our **Peace**.

Through faith in Jesus, we have peace with God, because our sins are forgiven, which removes God's wrath and judgment upon us, due to our sin. And because we have peace with God, then we have peace in our hearts as we look forward to an eternity with God, in His presence, in His home, forever.

Luk 2:14 ESV "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth **peace** good will toward men!"

ii.) In Christ, We have peace within our own spirit

While we have peace with God, Christ's birth, life and sacrifice also provides peace within the inner person.

Heb 10:19-22 ESV Therefore, brothers, since we have **confidence** to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, (20) by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, (21) and since we have a great priest over the house of God, (22) let us draw near with a true **heart** in full **assurance** of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an **evil conscience** and our bodies washed with pure water.

I take this to mean, that Through faith in Christ, we are made secure in God's family. And because of that security, we have assurance of His promises for us as His children. Salvation.

Reconciliation. Sharing His home in Eternity. But also the blood of Christ, provides for peace within each believer; freedom or deliverance from inner turmoil. Death has been defeated. Fear has been overcome. Guilt has been removed. The inner angst of hopelessness has been gloriously transformed into a living hope.

Joh 14:27 ESV Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid.

Jesus is our Peace. “Peace on Earth, Good will toward men..”

In nasty Politics; violent persecution; hate-filled hostilities; or strife ridden racism; there is need for Peace on earth, between men.

SONG: I Heard the Bells on Christmas Day

2) SCRIPTURE & THOUGHT S= SABBATH: God’s Rest

* Not only is Jesus our Shalom / Peace, but He is also our provision for Sabbath Rest. Jesus has achieved eternal rest for us, as His brethren.

Exo 20:8-11 ESV (8) "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. (9) Six days you shall labor, and do all your work, (10) but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the LORD your God. On it you shall **not do any work**, you, or your son, or your daughter, your male servant, or your female servant, or your livestock, or the sojourner who is within your gates. (11) For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and **rested** on the seventh day. Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy.

The Sabbath Day was not referred to as Saturday; or Sunday but is referred to as the Sabbath and the 7th **day**. After you have worked 6 days, the purpose was to rest from work on the 7th. The Sabbath literally referred to God resting or ceasing from His labors on the 7th day of Creation.

It was intended to cause us to look forward, and be reminded of our eternal rest in heaven. The Bible says in our eternal rest, we cease from our physical labor or work.

Heb 4:1-11 ESV (1) Therefore, while the promise of entering his **rest** still stands, let us fear lest any of you should seem to have failed to reach it. (2) For **good news** came to us just as to them, but the message they heard did not benefit them, because they were not united by faith with those who listened. (3) For we who have believed enter that **rest**, as he has said... "Today, if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts." (9) So then, there remains a **Sabbath rest** for the people of God, (10) for whoever has entered God's **rest** has also **rested** from his works as God did from his. (11) Let us therefore strive to enter that **rest**, so that no one may fall by the same sort of disobedience.

Many view that also, TODAY, or any day; when we believe in Jesus, we cease from our own physical, human efforts to deal with our sin and make ourselves right with God. Christ is the perfect sin payment for our sins. We need not work or strive to save ourselves, nor can we.

Heb.4:11, urges us today: "Let us **strive** to enter into that rest...".

Many of the OT Jews did not Trust God, nor did they obey him and the Bible says, "their carcasses fell in the wilderness." But we must not be like them. For today, NOW; there is eternal rest available to each and every person, no matter how young, no matter how old. There is salvation available for everyone, no matter how bad or how good.

Therefore let us **strive** or be earnest in our faith, believing fully in Jesus as God's sin payment for our sins. The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I believe Scripture teaches that keeping the Sabbath is not only intended to give our physical bodies a time of rest and recuperation, but it is also intended to cause us to remember, think

about and anticipate Heaven. A time and place where we cease from our earthly labors.

But NOW, we have a rest. We have rested from offering animal sacrifices. We who believe in Jesus, have rested or ceased from our own efforts to enter heaven.

We rest from our labors to attempt to save ourselves through works of righteousness. And if you are a believer in Jesus, you have already entered into that “rest”. It is not future when you step into eternity.

“For we who have believed, have enter that rest,”(Heb.4:3) That is past tense. It has already been accomplished. It is a present reality. God’s rest is what we have. It is something you have already gained *now*. It is something you *presently* possess. We have entered into God’s rest now. From Heaven’s perspective, it is as though we are already in heaven. That is our assurance in Christ.

But the final aspect of this is that of.

3) SCRIPTURE & THOUGHT | Christs’ sacrifice

The Sacrifice of Jesus Christ was once and for all.

Heb 7:27 He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first **for** his own sins **and** then **for** those of the people, since he did this **once for all** when he offered up himself.

Heb 9:12 he entered **once for all** into the holy places, not by means of the blood of goats **and** calves but by means of his own blood, thus securing an eternal redemption.

This indicates that we are secure in Christ, though which we can be fully assured of His promises. Are we fully and firmly trusting in Christ alone for forgiveness of our sins? It is available for everyone. It is available NOW. That is the message of Christmas proclaimed by the angels 2,000 years ago.

SONG: Hark the Herald Angels verse 3

COMMUNION THOUGHTS

Remember we have ceased from our labors. We are *striving* to enter into our eternal rest; meaning we are earnestly trusting in the full, final and finished work for us on Calvary on our behalf; God's unmerited favor, bestowed to us undeserving recipients.

This should not cause us to live flippantly, as though God doesn't care. But this should cause us to fall on our knees, before our Unimaginably benevolent Lord and Savior.

READ – *God's grace promised in the OT*

Isa 53:3-5 ESV He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. (4) Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. (5) But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed.

READ - – *God's grace Remembered in the NT*

Luk 22:19-20 ESV And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." (20) And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood.

READ - – *God's grace Shared in the NT*

Act 2:41-42 ESV So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (42) And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

BREAD: SONG: O Holy Night verse 1 with bread,

CUP : **SONG:** **O Holy Night verse 2** with cup

SONG: **O Holy Night** after cup “Christ is the Lord...O Praise His Name Forever)

CANDLE LIGHTING SONG: ...

”Jesus the Light of the world”, Lanny Wolfe

Just one little flame in the darkness (*Pastor lights his candle*)

Just one little flicker of light, just one small glimmer
of brightness

Dispelling the darkness of night, But Oh what God did to
the darkness

With one little flicker of light. Oh what God did with
the brightness

When it touched just one other life (*Pastor lights Elder's candle*)

Then two lights reached out with new brightness

(Elder & Pastor share light with congregation)

And soon there were four and then more,

So quickly His light conquered darkness

As new lights flared up by the score

No longer just one light in the darkness

No longer just one tiny flame

Now the world's aglow with His brightness

Since the Light of the world Jesus came

Jesus Jesus, Jesus the Light of the world

Jesus Jesus, Jesus the Light of the world

(Worship Him/Praise Him.....)

SONG: **Silent Night**

CLOSING PRAYER:



Don't close this booklet yet

without considering this all important question.

Is Jesus Christ the Savior of *your* soul and the Lord of *your* life?

Every person is born guilty of sin and in need of forgiveness.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
--Rom 3:23

Our sin is against God, therefore our forgiveness can only come from God.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. --John 3:16

God has appointed His Son as the payment for sins and sent Him to die in our place.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
-- Romans 6:23

God's love is demonstrated through the sacrificial payment of Jesus Christ in our place for our sins.

...but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ---Romans 5:8

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." -- Rom 10:13

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,
- John 1:12

Before you close this book, why not be absolutely certain that you are truly a citizen of God's eternal kingdom and loving family?

*Trust in Jesus Christ today and receive forgiveness for your sins
and citizenship into God's family and His Kingdom.*

The ABCs

A - Admit you have sinned and are in need of a Savior.

B - Believe Jesus died in your place, and you can no way help yourself.

C - Confess your sins to God. He already knows. Also Confess Jesus as you LORD. He desires and deserves to be your Lord.

Prayer: Take time to talk to God right now and open your heart and life to His instruction and leadership.

Connect with a local Bible believing, Christ centered church.

Commit yourself to meeting regularly with other Christians who are growing in their faith.

Heb 10:24-25 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Act 2:41-42 So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (42) And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

For more information or for spiritual help, please contact us at:
Christ E. Free Church, PO Box 619, 19682 Hill Rd,
Saegertown, Pa, 16433, Ph: 814-763-2934, www.christefca.org

*It is our prayer that you find **Jesus Christ** to be...*
your highest calling,
your greatest purpose,
your soul's source and joy,
and your all-consuming passion.

Other Free Booklets downloadable at www.ChristEFCA.org

1 PETER, (5Vols): *Suffering in Sojourning / The Church God Always Wanted*
A NEW CREATION: *Beginning Your New Life In Christ*
ADVENT: *The Submission of Christ*
ADVENT 2019: *Why Was Jesus Born? J.E.S.U.S.*
AMERICA ADRIFT: *A Culture in Crisis and the Challenges Before the Church*
BALANCING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: (2VOL) *Growing together in the Basics*
CHALLENGES OF FAITH *From Characters in the Bible*
CHRIST'S COMING KINGDOM: *What Will Be Will Be*
CHRISTMAS STORY BOOK: *Children's Story and coloring book*
CPR Evangelism: *Helping others Step from Death to Life*
DRAWING NEARER: *Purposeful Steps Toward The Next Level of Spiritual Growth*
ETERNITY: *What Will It Really Be Like?*
EVIDENCE OF GOD IN COUNTRY: *Proof through our documents, monuments and edifices*
FACING THE FLAWS OF OUR INNER WORLD: (2Vol) *Starving the Old, Nurturing the New*
GIFTS AND FRUIT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: *A Match Made in Heaven*
GOD'S BLUEPRINT FOR THE FAMILY: *The Intelligent Divine Design*
GROWING THROUGH GRIEF: *When Pain Won't End and Hope Seems Lost*
HOLY WEEK 2011: *Questions About Christ and His Resurrection?*
HOLY WEEK 2012: *Questions about Life and Death? How Dead Will we Really Be?*
HOLY WEEK 2016: *Events Surrounding the Passion Week*
HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD! *Knowing and Growing in Experiencing God*
IN THE PRESENCE OF THE ALMIGHTY: *Life Transforming Prayer & Communion*
IN THE SHADOW OF THE SHEPHERD: *Sheep Becoming Like the Servant Shepherd*
INTERESTS AND INQUIRIES: *Curious Cultural Concerns for The Future*
JAMES (4Vol): *Faith That Makes A Difference*
JUDE: (2Vol) *STANDING FIRM, When the Rest of the World is Falling Away.*
KINGDOM VISION: *Seeing the World and God's Kingdom as God does*
LIFEGROUP INFO: *Christian recovery or re-entry format & Bible discussion*
LIFE MATTERS: *What It Means for Others To See Jesus In You*
MAKING LIFE WORK (2Vol): *Discovering Your God Focused Purpose in Living*
MALACHI: *God's Book of Secrets*
MISSIONS INTRO: *DIRTY DISCIPLESHIP: Preparing the Soil / Heart, for the Seed / Word.*
MISSIONS 2016: *THE MINISTRY OF JONAH and God's Heart for the Nations.*
MISSIONS 2017: *In Your GOING - Some Supernatural Elements in the Early Church*
MISSIONS AT HOME: *"YOUR LIFE IS LIKE..." The Challenge to Disciple A Community*
MISSIONS: *100 Years, So Where Are We Now?*
MORE THAN CONQUERORS: *Shaking Off the Shackles of Defeated Christianity*
PHILIPPIANS: (4VOL) *The Proper Joy-Filled Christian Perspective*
PRAYERS OF DESPERATION: *Prayer God Answers But No One Wants To Pray*
RUTH: *Our Unmerited Blessedness in the LORD.*
SECRETS AND SHADOWS: *Finding Your Source in the Most High*
SURVIVING THE STORMS OF THE SOUL: *The Presence of God in Times of Trouble*
THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL (2VOL): *...Good News, of Great Joy, for All Peoples*
THE HOLY SPIRIT: *The Friend You Need To Get To Know*
THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN: *Seeing and Living the Kingdom of Heaven*
THE 12 DISCIPLES: (2VOL) *Our Spiritual Ancestors – Their Faith and Failures*
THE WONDER OF IT ALL: *The End Times of Trials, from Mark 13*
TRAGEDIES OF LIFE: *Things God Allows & Blessings from Heaven's Perspective*
WATER BAPTISM (& INFANT DEDICATION): *The First Step of Believer's Obedience*
WHAT GOD HAS JOINED TOGETHER (2VOL): *A Handbook for Pre-Marriage Considerations*



May each lesson bring a growing submission, a deeper obedience and an increase of the righteous reign of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the fullness of His Spirit, in His Church and throughout our mission field.

--- Downloadable free resources at: www.ChristEFCA.org --

Christ E Free Church, 19682 Hill Rd., PO Box 619 Saegertown Pa 16433

814-763-2934 ChristEFree@gmail.com