

Rediscovering Christmas: Week 1

We're heading into Christmas. Christmas means different things to different people.

- To our culture. To us as Christians.
- It meant different things to the writers of 3 of the gospels. A different perspective that might shape our understanding of who God is and who we are.
- Might equip us in this season to love him more and our neighbour

*Matthew 1 This is the genealogy of **Jesus the Messiah** the son of David, **the son of Abraham**:*

18 This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. 19 Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

*20 But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream 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.** 21 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.**"*

22 All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: 23 "The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel" (which means "God with us").

24 When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. 25 But he did not consummate their marriage until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

Many titles are found in this passage.

- Messiah. Son of David. Jesus.
- Immanuel. God has always wanted to be with people.
 - (I will make my tabernacle with them.)
 - Do we appreciate the power of the incarnation?

There's one title that we kind of gloss over: Son of Abraham.

- I want to look at it in more depth because it shows the heart of God. The nature of God - covenantal faithfulness.

Jesus is the son of Abraham and we see him in a powerful story of Abraham and his son.

- A father and his son climb a hill to offer a sacrifice to their God. **To worship.**
- The father has been asked to give everything in worship: the father has been asked to give his son.

- The son is obedient and carries the very wood that he will be offered up on.
- The son sees there is no animal to slaughter and he asks his dad he responds 'The LORD himself will provide the sacrifice'.

*Genesis 22:15 The angel of the Lord called to Abraham from heaven a second time 16 and said, "I swear by myself, declares the Lord, that because you have done this and have not withheld your son, your only son, 17 I will surely bless you and make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and as the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will take possession of the cities of their enemies, 18 and **through your offspring all nations on earth will be blessed, because you have obeyed me.**"*

A promise made because of relationship. A promise to a friend.

- God saw the faithfulness of Abraham. His confession and his obedience and he made a promise.
- I will bless you but more: through you every nation will be blessed.

A promise kept to strengthen the relationship. A promise to a people

- God the Son became Jesus the human so he could walk with us, laugh and cry with us, feel what we feel and be us!

A promise paid to change the world. A promise to creation.

- We're all made to know God: Father Son and Spirit.
- We can know him because he became us: God with us. As with us as possible.

God has made promises to you.

- Sometimes there's frustration, sometimes there's pain, sometimes doubt rushes in.
- God will keep his promise to you. You're his friend. Your part of his people. He will use you this Christmas to fulfil his promise to the world.
- But never forget God is the greatest promise. The greatest gift.

Conclusion

What can we rediscover about Christmas?

- A father and his son start a journey that will fulfill a promise made
- For Isaac it was a journey up. But for Jesus it was a journey down.
- The son changes forever - to honour his father and to make disciples.
 - What motivated Christmas? Friendship, faithfulness and intimacy.
 - As we get closer to Christmas let that motivate you to.