



Saturday, 12/17/16

JOY IN ALL SITUATIONS

READING: Matthew 1:18-23

What gifts have you given this Christmas? Sometimes the best gifts to give your loved ones & friends are gifts such as the gift of a listening ear or the gift of affection or the gift of laughter, or the gift of a grateful heart. Maybe a little card telling them you love them is all they need, especially if you also show them you love them by the kind things you say and do. Another wonderful gift you and I can give to others, if we are Christians, is to introduce others to the greatest gift of all – the Lord Jesus. Let us be ready to tell others of the God who became a man, the One who came to be our Savior.

This is what God has done in Jesus. God became a man so that we would not be afraid to draw near to Him. The infinite, unlimited God allowed Himself to become a Man as He be limited by time and space. He entered our world to communicate with us. Jesus was called “**Emmanuel, which means 'God with us'**”.

And the name “**Jesus**” speaks of the purpose for which He came. The name “Jesus” means “*the Lord saves*”. Jesus came to earth to save us because we cannot save ourselves. A person who is drowning cannot save themselves. They need to surrender to the person trying to rescue them. Only when they stop struggling and start trusting themselves to the life-saver can they be brought to safety. No matter how good we may think we are, we are not good enough. And no matter how *bad* we think we are – the love and grace of Jesus is greater. He is able to set us free from the penalty and the power of sin. This is the greatest gift of Christmas, God's gift of love, the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ, our Savior.

And if you have not yet opened your heart to receive God's gift of love, why not do so today? Why not humbly confess your need? Tell God you are sorry for your sin and ask Him to forgive you and give you the gift of eternal life. Why not accept the gift God is offering you? Reach out in faith and receive the greatest gift of all, the Lord Jesus!

"Joy is an outward sign of inward faith in God's promises. So, by magnifying the joy God has given you, you exhibit your faith to others and encourage them."

-Fiona Ingram