**Truth Currents** **12-18-20**

John Grisham authored a delightful little book one time called, “*Skipping Christmas*.” It’s the story of a couple that didn’t have family coming home for Christmas so they decided to ditch the whole holiday and take a cruise only to re-discover the deepest meanings of Christmas.

That’s kind of what the Apostle John does for us because we know that the Christmas story is given to us in the gospels of Matthew and Luke. John also gives us the Christmas story but not in the way that you expect. In fact, John starts his gospel with a theological affirmation of Christmas that tells us some things that we need to know about this holiday.

Let me read to you the first four verses of the first chapter of the Gospel of John. This is where the author writes:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were created through Him, and apart from Him not one thing was created that has been created. In Him was Life, and that life was the light of men.

I want to talk to you about Christmas from a theological standpoint. When we come to the first chapter of John, he starts with magnificent language that evokes the idea that we see in the first chapter of Genesis. “*In the beginning was God*.” That majestic affirmation of eternity past. Only, rather than taking us as Genesis does into the creation story, he talks to us about the Son. “*In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.*”

You don’t need the details, but the Greek tells us that the Word, Jesus Christ, the final word to us as human beings, that Word has always been existent. Jesus didn’t have a beginning point. He is with God and He was God. But there came a time, a specific moment in time and space when He became flesh. That this theological affirmation tells some things about Christmas that we need to remind ourselves of during this season.

First of all, Christmas shows us what God is like. All the way through the Old Testament, the greatest prophets dreamed of a day when God would make Himself known, when he would step into human history in such a way that He could let us understand who He is. And He could invite us back into relationship with Him.

You see, when Jesus became flesh what He did was He put God on display in an understandable way. For many people God is an abstraction. He is some idea of a supernatural being that is out there. But Jesus puts flesh on God. If you want to know what God thinks about things, look at Jesus. If you want to know how God reacts to things, look at Jesus. Jesus is the visible demonstration of the invisible God. So, Christmas tells us what God is like. God is so sure of Himself that He was willing to take the risk to come to earth as a helpless baby.

Not only does Christmas tells us what God is like, but Christmas shows us what we’re meant to be like. It’s fascinating when you think through this but Jesus Christ was not only a revelation of who God is, but He’s a demonstration of who we’re supposed to be. We know that our lives are damaged by sin. We know that there are imperfections in us. But Jesus sets an example that not only points out where we fall short, but He sets in our minds the image of what we were meant to be. And He calls us to become something that we could never be apart from Him. He brings God to us but He raises us up so that we become more completely who we were created and designed to be.

Christmas is a time when we live out our potential. People are nicer to other people. They are more giving. They are more loving. They have a generosity in their spirit that is not often displayed in the rest of the year. There’s something about this season that elevates us to be better versions of ourself. Jesus sets that model before us and puts on display who we can be in Christ.

Not only does Christmas tell us what God is like, not only does Christmas show us what we can be like, but Christmas also shows us what society could look like. If there’s one thing we can say about 2020 it’s that we have never lived through such a divisive and angry year as this one. Our culture is divided between multiple viewpoints. We can take this lots of different angles. There’s the reds and the blues. There’s the progressives and the conservatives. There’s any two categories that you can think of and those groups are moving further and further apart. We are increasingly separated in our culture. And yet Christmas is a reminder that we have the power to come back together in a remarkable way.

Society puts its best foot forward at Christmas. At Christmas we have more concern for the poor and needy. We give more attention to our friends and our neighbors. We’re more family oriented. We have more generosity in our giving. We’re more unselfish in our behavior. You see, if the Christmas season could capture us in a year-round kind of way, human society would see radical changes.

The theological miracle of Christmas is that God became flesh so that we could know who God was. The theological miracle of Christmas is that in becoming flesh God put perfect humanity before our eyes so that we could see what we meant to be. The miracle of Christmas is the transforming power that this season has in our culture, in our society.

There’s one other thing here that I want to share with you. Particularly in verse four that I just read. I want to read it again. It says, “*In Him was Life, and that life was the light of men*.” Christmas shows us the sacred beauty of life. That’s one of the great messages of Christmas. Christmas is a call to life in a world of death. Christmas is a call to creation in a world of destruction. Christmas is a call to life as a holy gift not an inconvenient bother.

My office received a call last week. A lady from Connecticut called and she was clearly perturbed. She was put out about something that I said. She didn’t tell me what it was. She talked to my secretary actually. With kind of a snarky attitude she said, “*I just want you to know that I’m making a one-hundred-dollar donation to Planned Parenthood in the name of Dr. Michael Gabbert*.”

Well first of all, you do know that Planned Parenthood gets like $500 million annually of tax-payer money. So, there’s literally not an organization on the planet that needs your money less than Planned Parenthood. That’s without considering the whole murdering babies thing. But I had to think about this. She called and said that she made a donation in my name to Planned Parenthood and then she hung up. And I had to think about how to respond to that and what I should do. And feel like the Lord made it clear to me. And so that evening I got on my computer and I went online to the Hope Crisis Pregnancy Center here in Tulsa, Oklahoma. And I made a donation in an equal amount. You see, Christmas is about life. Christmas is about the gift of life that comes to us by divine creation.

And so, here’s what I want to suggest to you. As a part of the miracle of Christmas, the theological miracle that is Christmas, I know that you can celebrate Christmas and celebrate life. But let me encourage you celebrate life in practical ways this Christmas. Find a Crisis Pregnancy Center close to you and make a donation. Let’s celebrate the life of Christmas in practical ways this year. Because Christmas is about life. And it is a miracle.

This is Truth Currents.