

Bring Them Jesus

December 19 & 20, 2009

Intro:

When I first read this script, I thought, *what an interesting scheme - Mary talking with John about what happened and how it all took place.* This John is the one who wrote 5 books of the Bible, including the gospel of **John**, which, in **3:16**, explains the *motive* behind Christmas. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. That's Christmas. This should be on our minds all year long, but we really focus on the gift at this season.

1. Christmas reminds us of what God did.

oHe sent Jesus to people in need. To us. That's what we celebrate. *It was costly, but love motivates sacrifice.* God so loved that he gave... The cost was huge. **John 1:14** He became flesh and came here, but wasn't accepted (**11**). **Is 53:3** - He was despised and rejected by men. Loving us like he did cost Jesus his life. **Rom 5:8** God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. *That is what was needed to meet our needs.*

2. Christmas reminds us of how God works.

He uses people! Of course, using Jesus is the ultimate, but he also uses *ordinary* people, *fallible* people. In **John 20:21**, Jesus told his followers, As the Father has sent me, I am sending you. It seems like a risky method, but this is how God generally works. He calls his people to be his body and do his will on earth. **T** - *For instance, God used a humble young girl in a poor village to bring Jesus into the world.*

oHe used Mary to bring Jesus to people in need. *It was costly, but love motivates sacrifice.* After hearing God's plan from the angel, she could've said, *I've got a lot to lose! Like Joseph and my reputation.* She would be exposed to painful criticism, cruel gossip and ridicule! But instead of saying, *Sorry, I've got my own plans for my life and they don't include a problem pregnancy,* She said, "I am the Lord's servant, may it be to me as you have said" (**Luke 1:38**). She entrusted herself to God despite the cost. *(I'll be talking more about Mary at our Christmas Eve services. We're having three. I hope to see you at 5, 7 or 9. They will be pretty short, feature lots of music and be aimed at the whole family.)*

T - My point here is that God uses people who are willing to be used. I'm going to read you a story about a family God used to bring Jesus to people in need.

Story Time
"If You're Missing Baby Jesus"
by Jean Gietzen

T - *This is a reminder about how God works. He uses people.*

oHe used the family in the story to bring Jesus to people in need. *It was costly, but love motivates sacrifice.* It was cold outside, and they had to part with stuff they valued, but they learned the joy of giving. The story presents this family *not as super-saints who are different from the rest of us, but as ordinary people, just like us.*

oHe can use us to bring Jesus to people in need. *It is costly, but love motivates sacrifice.* We've been doing a lot of giving around here. Examples: the Thanksgiving outreach, gifts for foster children, and helping in various ministries. While programs like these help us get organized, much of this kind of giving is spontaneous, random acts of kindness in the name of Christ. Someone brought by gift cards to the office, saying, *We're not giving each other gifts this year. Find someone in need and let this be a blessing*

to them! That's sacrifice motivated by love. **1 Thess. 2:8** - We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.

T - Let's get specific about our part in all this...

3. Christmas reminds us of what we can do.

What does this look like? There are all kinds of needs!

oWe show love when we meet financial and physical needs. *Do you know of anyone who is broke or sick?*

The Bible speaks much of helping the poor. **1 John 3:16-17** This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? To meet basic needs honors God.

T - *But I don't actually know anyone in need like that. I can give to a few charities, and I do, but I don't really feel like I'm bringing Jesus to anyone.* Well, there are other kinds of needs.

oWe show love when we meet social and emotional needs. *Do you know of anyone who is hurting or lonely?* Bring Jesus to them this Christmas. It might be a young person trying to fit in who needs acceptance. Or it might be an older person who needs comfort.

Eph 4:32 - Be kind and compassionate to one another.

Gal 6:2 - Bear one another's burdens.

It might be an *in-between person* - not really young but not yet old. I've been meeting more people like that and they have needs too. We've got a Sunday evening service called Rooted that is aimed at 20-somethings. We meet at 7:00 in the gym. I've seen that there is a need for friendship and fellowship among young adults. My main role in the group is as the teacher, I'm just too old to be cool, but we are hosting a party at our house right after Rooted tonight.

Let me know if you want to check us out and need directions.

T - There's another kind of need:

oWe show love when we meet spiritual needs. Think of it: *Do you know of anyone who is lost?* Jesus was unique in his miraculous birth and in his substitutionary sacrifice, but his objective isn't unique. We're to share in his mission. **Lk 19:10** - Jesus said he came to seek and save the lost. He commissioned us to bring people to God through him.

In **John 12:21**, we read of some Greeks who came to one of the disciples with a request. *"Sir," they said, "we would like to see Jesus."* Today few people say this out loud. But *that is* the need. It is our responsibility to take Jesus to people who need him. **T** - This leads me to close by saying:

4. Christmas reminds us of our deepest needs.

oDo you need to bring Jesus to someone? Is God speaking to you: *Let's go - I want to use you? Say yes!!!* To have Jesus is to have *extra Jesus* - enough to share with someone. There are people who are missing him. To bring him to those in need can be inconvenient, risky, *costly, but love motivates sacrifice*. That's why we share Jesus. **2 Cor. 5:20** We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. Think of *who is missing out* this year. *Allow God to make his appeal through you.*

T - *I have a last question. For some of you, this is the question!*

oDo you need someone to bring Jesus to you and bring you to Jesus? I told my 12 year old this story from the book and he said, *It would be really sad if someone didn't know about Jesus and got that manger scene not*

even aware of what was missing. Imagine that central spot empty.

There are people like that. They have everything but the *centerpiece*. My boy reads the sports page everyday to follow the NBA. You can't avoid the headlines about Tiger Woods. Wyatt has asked me what it is all about. I told him that Tiger is rich - he can go anywhere and do anything. But some things he's chosen to do have led to him losing *what is most valuable, what money can't buy*. And that's the respect of his family, his wife's trust. The problem with thinking that you can *go anywhere and do anything* is that you might just *go anywhere and do anything*. I don't know, but it seems like Tiger's an example of a guy who has everything else, but the middle thing is missing.

To fill that empty spot *is costly, but love motivates sacrifice*. The sacrifice of placing Jesus in the center where he belongs might be a loss of popularity. It will definitely involve humility. But God's love for us is motivating.

Rom 2:4 - God's kindness leads you toward repentance.

Concl: This is a great time to tell God that he can have that central spot in your life. Let's do that in **prayer** right now.