

2. THE REST OF THE STORY THAT MAKES IT _____

- Immanuel, or His more common name, Jesus, had critics from the very beginning.

- It was _____ who offer some of the strongest validation that He was God.

Mark 6:2-3 (NLT) “... many who heard him were amazed. They asked, “Where did he get all this wisdom and the power to perform such miracles?” Then they scoffed, “He’s just a carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon. And his sisters live right here among us.” They were deeply offended and refused to believe in him.”

- Caiaphas, the chief priest responsible for Jesus’ crucifixion, said:

John 11:50 “It is better for one man to die for the people than for the whole nation to be destroyed.” ... not realizing that was precisely what God had purposed for Jesus.

- The choice of His disciples to sacrifice their lives to carry on His purpose is strong validation for Jesus.

- Do you realize there are more _____ who have died in the last 10 years than in all of history combined?

- Philosophies of life can sound convincing until your life is on the line.

- There is only one way for you and me to be saved, and that is by humbly accepting Christ Jesus’ death on the cross as the _____ for our sin.

John 14:6 “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.”

- What practical difference does this make in how you live your daily life? If this truth has no practical effect on you, something is missing in your spiritual life.

What would happen if we allowed our passion for Christ to be clearly evident in how we respond differently to the financial crisis, to marital stress, to conflicts at work, or how to respond when we suffer loss?

This week ... Discuss with your family this question: “How do we think we could honestly show and tell our pre-Christian friends that our belief that Jesus is God is more than religious rhetoric?” Then write down what you will do to live that out this season and in the days ahead.

Digging Deeper

For personal or small group study

Week of December 14, 2008

“What Child is This?”

The Christmas story has been looked at in recent years through many different eyes with many different opinions. Its value has gradually been lessened to the point where it is considered just one of the holidays. It is even taboo in some social settings to say “Merry Christmas.” This is very sad. What can we do, with the right attitude, to put Christ back in Christmas?

GROUP DISCUSSION

1. As followers of Christ, how have we allowed our own busyness and stress of the season’s activities to take Jesus out of **our** Christmas? (We need to be careful not to look at the world and blame them, but take responsibility upon ourselves to regain the passion for Jesus -- especially at this time of year.)
2. If you became a true follower of Christ after your teen years, how did it change how you looked at and experienced Christmas?
3. Jesus stated that He was in fact God. Why is this significant, and what part does it play in our being true followers of Jesus? Is this a truth (the trinity) that must be believed to be a Christian? If so, how does it affect our daily lives? [Isaiah 7:14; Colossians 1:19, 2:9; Mark 6:2-3; Matthew 28:19]
4. How important is it to believe that Jesus was truly the God-man? (In other words, to see that Jesus was both God and human at the same time.) How does believing or not believing this affect the way a person would try to live out their Christian life? [Galatians 2:20; John 6:35-40; 8:23-29; John 10:30; Hebrews 4:14-15]
5. In John 14:6 Jesus says, “*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*”

Break into groups of two or three and discuss how this truth affects you in your personal daily life. Ask yourself, “What difference does this truth make in my life?”

Welcome to New Life !

We are very pleased you are here. It is an honor to have you as our guest today! This information is provided to help you feel welcome and “at home.”

Worship in Singing & Giving

- We leave how to worship up to you as an individual. During **singing** worship some people remain seated, some stand, others kneel, many clap, and some lift their hands. The outward expression is not the issue - it is what is in your heart that counts. Just relax and enjoy the presence of God.
- If you would like to receive personal **prayer** during worship with singing, you may go to one of the Prayer Teams located at the back of the sanctuary.
- Invitation is given for **tithes and offerings**. If you are our guest, please do not feel obligated to contribute when God's tithes and offerings are received.

Worship in Sharing God's Love

Expressions of greeting and God's love are extended to all, especially to our guests.

Worship in Meditating on God's Word

Teaching from the Bible for about 35 minutes.

We encourage you to use our **staffed Nursery** [which has a private nursing room] and **Children's Churches** during the service. Please ask an usher for assistance in locating the various rooms.

{turn page over}

Pastor Bob Wine

December 14, 2008

WHAT CHILD IS THIS?

“The true Christmas story”

John 1:1, 3, 14

The true Christmas story has been buried beneath the avalanche of our busyness leaving Christ out of it completely.

1. THE _____ BEHIND THE STORY

- Do you realize that before you were born, God knew your name and knew you were headed for eternal disaster?

- Did you realize that God provided a perfect, but very self-sacrificing solution that would change you from the inside out? (1 Peter 1:20)

Genesis 1:26 “God said, ‘Let us make man in our image, in our likeness...’”

- We consist of three parts: a body (biology), a soul (will, mind & emotion – psychology) and a spirit (conscience, intuition, communion – para-psych). Yet, you are only one person.

- The Bible also describes God in _____: God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit—each serving different roles (as our three parts do), yet all one, as we are.

- God, the Son, paid the full sacrifice for your sin and mine, so it would be possible for us to _____ with Him and ultimately go to His home in Heaven.

John 1:1, 3, 14 “In the beginning was **the Word**, and the Word was with God, and **the Word was God** ... **Through him all things were made**; without him nothing was made that has been made ... **The Word became flesh [human] and made his dwelling among us**. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

- Hundreds of years before Jesus literally came to earth, God spoke through the prophet Isaiah saying how this would happen.

Isaiah 7:14 (NLT) “Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son and will call him **Immanuel** (which means ‘God is with us’).”

- This event is what we now refer to as Christmas—when the Creator of the universe came to planet Earth.