

Why We Need Christmas
“We Need God’s Wisdom”
Part 1

Intro: Have you ever heard parents say something like this to their kids while they’re in a store; “Look with your eyes not with your hands.” That mentality just has never worked for me. I want to experience things not just look at them. I’ve never been satisfied simply being an observer. I want to touch, taste, feel and experience life.

- It’s why I love travel and history –I want to experience it. Mexico Mayan ruins – some you just look at while others you can climb on. Which do you think I prefer?
- I love experiencing nature and the outdoors. You are experiencing something. Story of snorkeling in Hawaii years ago and wrestling turtle to the surface so the girls could see.

God created us with the capacity and desire to experience life not simply observe it. The Christmas story is like this. It is not a story that is to be merely observed. The story of Jesus’ birth was meant to be experienced. We need Christmas for the experience. We are invited into an experience with Jesus.

- Notice how Jesus is described 800 years before His birth.

Is. 9:6 “For a child is born to us, a son is given to us... And he will be called: Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” (NLT)

We need Christmas because we need who Jesus is. He came so we could experience Him in our lives. This is why He is called Immanuel which means; “God with us.” Jesus came so we could experience Him. He’s more than a story. He came to be our reality.

- Even our terminology is flawed: We are going to “observe” Christmas. Seriously? (That term is very passive) Jesus did not invade humanity 2000 years ago so we could “observe” anything. He came so we could “experience” Him.
- For the next 4 weeks we are going to explore 4 key experiences that Jesus came to bring to all people from Is. 9:6. Jesus wants every person to experience these 4 truths about Him.
- One of the key experiences Jesus came to bring was His counsel...His wisdom. (Wonderful Counselor) We do not have to trust our limited understanding to navigate this life. Jesus actually allows us to live our lives by His wisdom...His counsel. We can experience His wonderful counsel. Let give you 4 truths about His counsel in our lives.

1. Jesus came so we could experience His wisdom

Notice what Jesus said about Himself?

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Luke 11:31 “The queen of Sheba will stand up against this generation on judgment day and condemn it, for she came from a distant land to hear the wisdom of Solomon. Now someone greater than Solomon is here—but you refuse to listen.” (NLT)

Notice what others said about Him.

*Matt. 13:54 “He returned to Nazareth, his hometown. When he taught there in the synagogue, everyone was amazed and said, “Where does he get this **wisdom** and the power to do miracles?”*

Jesus came to give us heavenly wisdom for our lives. Why do we need His wisdom?

- Our wisdom is limited
 - Even in an age with what seems like unlimited information at our fingertips, our understanding is still extremely limited. There are things you still can't google!
 - How do you navigate your brokenness / your fears / your betrayal / your pain / your loneliness / your guilt / Do you lead yourself through this pain?
 - How do you confidently make decisions today when you can't predict tomorrow / next week / or next year? How many of us had unexpected things happen to us this past year that we didn't see coming? How many of you had your plans changed?
 - How many of us experienced anxiety and stress over decisions we were facing, wondering what was the best course of action?
 - Jesus came so that all the burden of navigating this confusing life is not on us. We can experience Jesus as the wonderful counselor and benefit from His wisdom. His insight is better than ours. WHY?

- God's wisdom is infinite
 - There is no limit to God's wisdom and understanding. If God has enough wisdom to create the complexity of this world, the stars and planets and the universe; He has enough insight to help us navigate our lives.
 - Let me put this in perspective: Share Milky Way Galaxy Facts: Ours is only one of an infinite number of galaxies in our universe that God created.
 - This being the case, it is incredible that Jesus came so we could experience the wisdom of God in our lives. God sees us from the first day to the very last. He sees every event in the context of our entire lives. Why would we not want His input?

James 1:5 “If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you. He will not rebuke you for asking.” (NLT)

- He is the wonderful counselor. He wants us to ask. This is why Jesus came.

2. Jesus came so we would no longer be lost

*Matt. 9:36 “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like **sheep** without a shepherd.” (NLT)* In other words...lost. We need His wisdom because we were all lost. How so?

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- We were lost spiritually

John 3:16-17 "For this is how God loved the world: He gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷ God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him." (NLT)

- Jesus arrived in a cradle so that He could lead people back into relationship with God. We were created for a spiritual relationship with the God who made us. God became a man and came after us.
- Observing how many religions dominate our planet is a testament to man's spiritual design. There are so many variations to spirituality. Which one's are correct?
- For those of you asking this question, Jesus came to clear this up. Christianity is unique to all others. Let me explain: Every other religious system in existence is a "works system". In other words, human beings must work their way to God. (explain)
- It is only the story of Jesus that is unique where God came after us because we were incapable of finding our way. We were hopelessly lost. Therefore Jesus came and showed us the way. He Himself is THE WAY.
- Jesus came to show us it is a Person who is the way not our performance. To connect spiritually is to receive Jesus. The story of Jesus is the wisdom of God.

- We had lost purpose

- With relationship comes purpose. BUT, since relationship was lost our true purpose was lost as well. But, by connecting spiritually with Jesus, we can discover the reason we exist on planet earth.

Eph. 2:10 "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago." (NLT)

- God has a purpose for your existence. God has a reason for your life. Before you were born, God knew you and had purpose set aside just for you. We need His counsel in order to discover this. We experience His wisdom in discovering our purpose.
- How do I hear His counsel about my purpose? It starts by asking the right question. What's the right question? "Jesus, what do you want me to be and do?"
- We are trained from childhood to ask the wrong question. "What do you want to be when you grow up?" As parents, we should be training our kids to be asking what Jesus wants them to be and do.
- If we don't ask the right question, we'll never be listening for the right answer. The reason so many people are unfulfilled as adults is they have spent years chasing the wrong purpose.

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- Some of you feel lost this morning. Life has a way of doing this to us. You feel lost spiritually / relationally / you've lost your joy / lost your hope / lost your direction.
- There is a wonderful counselor who can help with this. Jesus came so you would never have to experience being lost again.

3. Jesus came so we would no longer be deceived

Jesus talked about our spiritual enemy and his deceptive activity.

John 8:44 "For you are the children **of** your **father** the devil, and you love to do the evil things he does. He was a murderer from the beginning. He has always hated the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he **lies**, it is consistent with his character; for he is a liar and the **father of lies**." (NLT) We need His wisdom because we've all been deceived.

- Jesus came to unmask the false narrative

- As a wonderful counselor, Jesus is going to show us when we believe things that aren't true. Since Satan is promoting and driving a false narrative, Jesus wants to expose this to us. Jesus came to expose "fake news".
- What kind of false narrative? Satan lies to us about everything. Satan wants to distort the reality God wants you to see and live.
- He lies to us about who we really are / what we are capable of doing / lies to us about purpose / meaning / relationships / forgiveness / he lies to us so we elevate ourselves and become self-sufficient, prideful people. He causes us to live lives that are independent of God rather than God dependent.
- He lies to us about our future / our eternity / lies to us about our desperate need for Jesus. Some of you have been controlled by many of these lies for years.
- If we believe these lies then we live out what we believe. Our lives follow the direction of our belief's. For example:
 - If I believe I am unworthy of God's love...then why pursue a relationship
 - If I believe I am on my own in this life...why would I ask for God's help
 - If I believe people can't be trusted...why would I build relationships
 - If I believe church is a waste of time...I probably don't attend

- Jesus came to share liberating truth

John 8:32 "And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." (NLT) Free from what? Free from all the lies and the resulting behavior that controls your life.

- Jesus wants you to experience His liberating truth. Have you ever had a truth light bulb moment? It's that moment when you finally realized the way you were thinking was wrong and you had the light of truth shine in your mind and heart?
- I've had this experience with my identity – explain – When I finally realized who I really was it was liberating.

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- I've had this experience with faith – explain – Faith is what God blesses. He doesn't bless knowledge, He blesses obedience in faith. We have a church experience this with generosity – explain
- Jesus came to not just tell us truth but to allow us to experience His truth. His truth is experiential and liberating. As a wonderful counselor, He doesn't tell us truth to control us. He gives us truth to free us to become all that we can become.
- This is why we encourage you to read God's word but also to do it. It is in the doing of truth where we have the "Ah Ha" moments that change our lives. It's in these experiences where the lies are peeled back and we finally see and experience Jesus as the wonderful counselor. This is why the bible is called "the law that sets you free".

4. Jesus came so we would follow His counsel

John 10:27 "My sheep listen to my voice; I know them, and they follow me." (NLT)

There's no point in listening to great counsel if we're not going to follow it. If we want to experience Jesus as the wonderful counselor, then we have to follow His leading.

How can we follow and experience His counsel?

- Ask for His counsel
 - I know this sounds simple but Jesus said that often we do not have because we do not ask. Are you asking every day; "Lord Jesus, what is your counsel to me in this area?" "Would you show me your direction?" He promises to answer.
- Don't treat His counsel as optional
 - God's counsel cannot be treated like one of the many options we consider. This thinking hinders our ability to hear what God is telling us. Please don't cheapen the Creator's input and wisdom into your life by comparing it to some earthly counsel.
 - Treat God's wisdom as absolute. I like to tell people when they are asking for God's will to tell Him "yes" in advance. If you are unwilling to do this, God's counsel is still optional in your thinking.
- Follow even if you don't understand
 - His counsel will not always make sense to you. WHY? Because He is in the process of exposing wrong beliefs you have. The only way for you to see these wrong beliefs is to follow Him into a different reality. If you refuse to follow, you will be stuck in these wrong beliefs that Satan has blinded you in.
 - If you want to experience Him as the Wonderful Counselor then stake your life on His counsel. Follow regardless. Follow despite your fear and confusion.

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- Where are you arguing with God over His counsel to you? Maybe today is the time to stop arguing / resisting and in humility simply follow. Let Him be your wonderful counselor today.

Prayer time: Where do you need to experience Jesus as your wonderful counselor?

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