



Sermon, Sunday December 4, 2022

“Two Names of Christ”

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 1:18-23 ¹⁸ Now the birth of Jesus the Messiah took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been engaged to Joseph, but before they lived together, she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Her husband Joseph, being a righteous man and unwilling to expose her to public disgrace, planned to dismiss her quietly. ²⁰ But just when he had resolved to do this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife, for the child conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” ²² All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet: ²³ “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.”

Introduction: The Power of Faith that Lives and Works

Today is the second week of Advent. Christmas is three weeks from today. As Christians, we believe that Jesus came to earth to save us from sin, death, poverty, disease, and curses. But did Jesus come to this world only to deliver us from sin, death, poverty, and curses? If we only believe in Jesus in these terms, we cannot fully enjoy the blessings of being God's children that Jesus gave us, for we would not enjoy the blessing of walking together with the Lord who is with us, and we would only think of Jesus as coming to save us from our sins.

A narrow understanding of Jesus is shared by many people who misunderstand about God as described in the Old Testament. If you interpret the Old Testament, you may think of the God as One who does not forgive and only punishes those who do not love God, who as a narrow-minded God does not love Gentiles and only loves Jews. So although God hates sin and therefore judges us, He is also full of mercy and forgiveness toward us. Also, God loved the Jews and made them His children first, but He also opened wide the door of salvation for Gentiles.

Today, through the two names of Christ, I want to consider the great blessings we can enjoy as children of the Lord. Please do not forget that the Christian faith does not remain in knowledge and doctrine but is alive and has the power to work. I hope you enjoy the working power of such faith.

Body: The Two Names of Christ – ‘Jesus’ and ‘Immanuel’

There are two names of the Messiah revealed in today's text. One is the name 'Jesus'. **Today's text 1:21 says; “She will bear a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”**

However, the name Messiah was made long before the name 'Jesus' was mentioned in this verse. **Let's look at Matthew 1:23. “Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel,” which means, “God is with us.”**

According to the description of today's text, the name 'Jesus' means to save His people from their sins. And **‘Immanuel’** means God is with us. During the season of Advent, we must deeply ponder the meaning of “Immanuel,” another name for Jesus, the Christ who saved us from our sins. Then, what does **“Immanuel,”** another name for Christ (Messiah) mean?

1. God's love with us



First, Immanuel means God's love with us. In other words, the baby Jesus who came to this earth on Christmas Day is an event in which God, who is with us, became incarnated. It is an amazing grace that God is with us in this world full of sin. So, why is it a blessing that God is with us?

It is because Almighty God is always with us in our lives. No matter how painful and difficult situations come to us, if God is with us, we can gain courage and stand up again. Fragile human beings do not tolerate living alone and loneliness well.

This human fragile and essential look is described in the Old Testament Book of Job. Job was a blessed man with a wife, children, and riches, but he lost them all in an instant. Then, the family and friends around Job leave Job's side. Job even loses his health. Job is completely alone. However, Job does not deny God who is with him. God saw Job's attitude as precious. So, God restored everything that Job lost.

However, our appearance is very different from Job. For us ordinary people who live day by day, it is difficult to endure losing loved ones, wealth, and health. However, the Bible says that all despair can be restored to hope through God who is with us. **The Lord is with us now and has said, "You are my son; today I have become your father." (Psalm 2:7) and God has said, "Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." (Hebrews 13:5).**

Therefore, even if we face difficulties, we can overcome all difficulties if we live with the faith of Immanuel that God is with us. Then, what is another meaning of the word 'Immanuel'?

2. It is the love of God who seeks us

Second, Immanuel means the love of God who visits us. We cannot come before the Lord in our own strength. This is because the relationship between us and God was broken from the moment humans sinned by disobeying God. However, God, who had pity on us, humbled Himself and descended from the highest place to the lowest place. It is God incarnated in a human body.

In this way, the word Immanuel contains the image of Jesus Christ coming to the place of suffering. God came and visited us in our tears and despair. And He comforts us and gives us courage. Dear brothers and sisters!

Please do not forget Jesus who visited those who lived with a heart of desperation because they had no hope for life. Those whom Jesus visited and met had diseases of the mind and body, deep guilt, and darkness, but the Lord healed them.

If we are living a dark and frustrating life, the Lord will come to our lives. And when the Lord comes to us, we will meet the Lord of comfort and hope.

In fact, we experience the invisible love of God through the love and service of other neighbors. However, please do not forget that there is always a limit to the love that humans can show. If we want to experience the Lord's love only through being seen and touched, we will have difficulties until we move on to experience the invisible love of the Lord. So, in our life of faith, we need training to rely on the Lord rather than relying on people. Therefore, rather than relying on people in your daily life, I hope you will be able to confess a single prayer, **"Lord, have mercy on us."** Then, what is another meaning of the word 'Immanuel'?

3. It is the love of God that fulfills the promises made with us

Third, the word Emmanuel contains the meaning that the Lord will surely fulfill the promise He made with us. **Today's text Matthew 1:22 says; "All this took place to fulfill what had been spoken by the Lord through the prophet."**

Then what did God say to the prophet? It is the word of this promise, **"Look, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall name him Emmanuel."** These words were given by God to the prophet Isaiah 700 years before Jesus was born. During the 700 years after the prophet Isaiah proclaimed these words and before the birth of Jesus, there were changes in the world where many nations collapsed and new ones were born, but there was no change in the Word of God. In this way, God's promises are always fulfilled and completed.

Dear brothers and sisters! Rather than relying on worldly money, fame, power, or our ability, we hope that we believe in and rely on the unchanging word of God's revelation, the Bible. The Lord's word of promise will comfort our lives and give us



courage. Then, what is the greatest promise God has given us? It is a promise of salvation. The fulfillment of that promise is Jesus Christ. Jesus came to this earth as the one who will save us from our sins. This is the good news that Christmas gives us, and the most important meaning of Christmas. The Lord's promises are unchanging. So don't doubt and trust the promise.

Conclusion: Emmanuel Jesus

Now let's summarize today's sermon. Beloved Brothers and Sisters! Do you believe that God is with us? The saints who believe that God is with us are happy people. Emmanuel, one of the Messiah's two names! The meaning of the name is the God who is with us, the God who personally visits those in despair, and the God of salvation who fulfills all promises. May the grace of Immanuel Jesus come abundantly to all of us who are waiting for Christmas.

