

- Jesus received our sins and punishment; then gave up His life – *Good Friday!*
- Jesus rose from the dead – *Easter Sunday!*
- Jesus returned to the Father – *Ascension Day!*
- Jesus is coming again – *Judgment Day!*

²² All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet: ²³ “The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel”--which means, “God with us.”

In Jesus, God was with us in the flesh! Now, since the Day of Pentecost (50 days after Easter), the Holy Spirit ✦ works through the Bible to call people to faith in Jesus and ✦ lives within those who trust in Jesus!

God wants *all people* to have His forgiveness through Jesus and be with Him forevermore!

- If you have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ (John 17:3; 2 Corinthians 13:5) – ✦ *REJOICE*, ✦ *honor Him in all your ways*, and ✦ *tell others what He has done!*
- If you are not sure, PLEASE LET ME KNOW – talk to me today, call me (440-845-2230), text me (440-292-5915), or send me an e-mail (Pastor@blc7500.com). Don't put it off; *someday it will be too late!*

²⁴ When Joseph woke up, he did what the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took Mary home as his wife. ²⁵ But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus.

R: The Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

“Trusting, Living & Understanding”

Based on Isaiah 9:2-7; Titus 2:11-14; Matthew 1:18-25



Commentary: Pastor Green **Scripture Readings:** Walter Kutolowski
The Nativity of our Lord – Christmas Eve – 2009
 Thursday, December 24 → 6:00

OLD TESTAMENT: Isaiah 9:2-7 – *Let Us Always Trust In Jesus As Our Savior!*

All people are sinners, were living in sin, were blind to the truth, and were facing the worst → *death and eternal punishment*; then GOD came to the rescue through His Son! *That is Christmas!*

^{NIV} Isaiah 9:2 The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of the shadow of death a light has dawned.

These words try to describe the *magnitude* of God's work through Christ and our *exceedingly joyful response*:

³ You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as men rejoice when dividing the plunder.

⁴ For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.

⁵ Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.

Let's share Jesus and the true meaning of Christmas with others!

Nothing is more important than KNOWING Jesus Christ!

If you are sure you KNOW HIM, praise God!
 If you are not sure, please let us help you!

This and other sermons are available on Bethlehem's website: www.blc7500.com
 Please share them with your family, friends, neighbors, and coworkers!
 Bethlehem Lutheran Church, 7500 State Rd., Parma, Ohio 44134, 440-845-2230

Even though Jesus is God's only begotten Son, HE was given TO US – to ✦take our punishment, ✦remove our sin, and ✦win the victory over death and the devil!

⁶ For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

HYMN: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

LSB 357, vv. 1, 4, 5, 6

EPISTLE: Titus 2:11-14 – *Those Who Know Jesus As Savior, Desire To Honor Him As Lord!*

Salvation – *rescue from our sins* – is never earned; instead, it is always BY GRACE – by God loving us and taking extraordinary action for us, even though none of us will ever deserve it!

^{NIV} Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.

For all whom GOD has brought to repentance – *enabling them to see their sin, be sorry, and trust in Jesus as Savior* – they are ✦new people, ✦Christians, ✦the forgiven children of God, ✦heaven-bound, ✦attitude-

(Congregation: **↑**arise) **HYMN:** "Jesus, Name Above All Names"

⁷ Of the increase of his government and peace there will be no end. He will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness from that time on and forever. The zeal of the LORD Almighty will accomplish this.

R: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

changed, and ✦eager to do what is good!

¹² It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, ¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope--the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

R: The Word of the Lord.

C: Thanks be to God.

(Congregation: **↓**sit – **AFTER the hymn**)

HOLY GOSPEL: Matthew 1:18-25 – *Mary and Joseph were Important; Jesus is God – Our Savior!*

Try to imagine the situation: *Mary, a young woman, was engaged. Back then, in that culture, engagement was equivalent to marriage – except the woman had to remain a virgin for a full year after the engagement. However, Mary is pregnant AND, to make matters worse, Joseph is not the father!*

^{NIV} Matthew 1:18 This is how the birth of Jesus Christ came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. ¹⁹ Because Joseph her husband was a righteous man and did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.

Joseph was a righteous man – an Old Testament Christian. Though Mary could have been put to death – for being pregnant without marriage, Joseph decided to "divorce her quietly."

²⁰ But after he had considered 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 home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. ²¹ She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the

name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."

For Joseph to go through with the marriage he needed some strong convincing; therefore, *God provided it through an angel in a dream!* Through the angel, God explained the role, *the responsibility* of each person:

- *Mary – will give birth to a Son.*
- *Joseph – will give Him the name Jesus.*
- *Jesus – will save His people from their sins.*

We remember and give thanks for Mary and Joseph – *very faithful believers who were used by God in wonderful ways:*

- *God used Mary to conceive, birth, love, nourish, and raise our Savior!*
- *God used Joseph to be Mary's husband and Jesus' earthly father – to protect Him, love Him, teach Him, and raise Him!*

But Jesus is **FAR GREATER** than His *earthly* father and His *human* mother:

- *Jesus is God in the flesh – **Christmas!***
- *Jesus lived without sin in our place – **Wow!***