

- Order of Service -

Call to Worship

Welcoming Prayer

Reading Romans 8:19-23

- 82, *Let all mortal flesh keep silent*
 - Excerpt from Nicene Creed
- 117, *How great our joy!*
 - Excerpt from Nicene Creed
- 90 *O come, all ye faithful*
 - Excerpt from Nicene Creed
- 140 *We three kings*

Announcements and Prayer requests

Greeting

God loves us and sends His Son in human flesh

God's purposes in the incarnate Word – pt 2

Romans 8:19-23

Sending prayer

- Christmas Cantata, Adventist Church, Today, 3 pm & 6pm
- Walk-ins welcome!
- Children's Choir, RVCC, December 16th, 6pm Free!
- We will meet Dec 24th, at the regular time.
- No additional Christmas eve service at GBF

You may notice we don't pass an offering plate

We invite you to participate in the ministry, and the offering box in the foyer is for your gifts and offerings for the Lord's work.

- 2 Corinthians 9:7-8, Galatians 6:6 -

Grace Bible Fellowship

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We are identified with Jesus Christ in his crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and heavenly seating.



- Teaching -

Eric Peterman

God loves us and sends His Son in human flesh

God's purposes in the incarnate Word – pt 2

Romans 8:19-23

- December 10th, 2023 -

God loves us and sends His Son in human flesh

God's purposes in the incarnate Word – pt 2

Romans 8:19-23

Consider the words of the hymn #92, "Joy to the World, the Lord is Come". This is sung at Christmas as a carol, but surely we see that many if not most of the things claimed in that carol are yet to be fulfilled. The carol is truly joyous mostly in its hope of anticipation of its final consummation, when earth does indeed "receive her king", not in the past Christmas manger or in the present world of sin and sickness and strife and sorrow.

What is the birth of little Jesus in Bethlehem all about? Our hearts are struck with the innocence and hope of that moment. For the thinking and spiritually sensitive, our gaze eventually moves from the manger scene across the teachings of Jesus the man, to the cross of Christ over 30 years later, and His eventual death to pay for our sins – to reconcile us sinners to God. "Jesus our savior did come for to die." And this is true and blessed and a gracious favor and it is right. But if we were to limit the work of Christ and Christmas merely to an innocent making atonement for our sins, we'd be cutting out and focusing on just a portion of a much bigger picture.

You see, the Christmas story begins not in a manger, but in a garden. And it also doesn't end at the manger or even the cross. It ends in a kingdom and a new mankind and a gloriously restored earth, ruined by the fall, and in an Israel resting and rejoicing in her fulfilled promises, and in an utterly defeated Devil and all his evil works in mankind and in nature. The god of this age ends up dethroned, a forever imprisoned and tormented creature, a shamed and treasonous rebel against all that is good and right.

You see, Christmas is the hinge point of God's story of redemption. The door of history swings from garden glory thru Adam's ruin and human misery in history and the present, to a greater glory in a better garden and a last Adam. But it surely and securely swings on the hinge of the incarnation of God in the flesh, Emmanuel, Jesus, in Bethlehem. Christmas proves that fallen man in Adam cannot self-rescue, but that a better Adam a perfect man, sent afresh from the Father, can rescue us all, and with us, the whole of creation in Himself.

The Christmas story begins in Genesis 2:19-25 and then 3:17-21

Here we have king Adam and queen Eve at the apex and head of all the glorious creation, to rule over and love and tend it. And then comes the Serpent, which John's Revelation tells us is the Devil, Satan. And in 3:17-21 we have the curse placed on humanity and the creation under his charge. It's crown of legal rulership is now

transferred from king Adam to the Serpent or Satan, who Paul later calls, "the god of this world" and Jesus recognizes as "the ruler of this world". So all creation and mankind goes from glorious perfection, to ruinous subjection to a savage king, in the horrid fall of Adam our original king and head. Take note that our sins are in there, but not only our sins but the whole mass of hurt and ruin and rot and death, are a curse placed on all creation because Adam, like his benighted descendant Esau, sold his birthright to another for bit of food.

Which brings us to our keynote Scripture this morning:

Romans 8:19-23, and consider what Christmas *will* accomplish!

- Consider carefully Colossians 1:15-17, not only *by* Him, but created, *for* Him.
- Now look at the *future*, when the Last Adam rules again as king of creation and we as the sons of God with Him: Isaiah 11:6-9, Hosea 2:18
- Look also at the *progression* of God's design of redemptive history, Ephesians 1:3-12

The purpose of the Incarnation is further revealed in the Epistle to the Hebrews. Three verses, linked together, assert that the coming of Jesus Christ was *to restrain the works of, and then in the end to destroy the Devil*. See Hebrews 2:9, 14-15

- V9 Incarnation
- V14-15, to restrain the power of the Devil, the murderer and liar (John 8:44)

Saints: Rejoice in the truth and destiny of 2 Timothy 1:9-10!