

Introduction:

- An older couple had an ongoing row; About which one of them was losing their hearing. One morning the husband decided he would settle the issue once and for all. While his wife was enjoying a book in the living room he said in a loud voice, "Dear, would you like a cup of tea?" Upon hearing no response he progressed to the next room and said again in a firm voice, "Dear, would you like a cup of tea?" Still there was no reply from his wife. Lastly he went into the living room and stood directly behind the chair; In which his wife was sitting. In an even louder voice he repeated, "Dear, would you like a cup of tea?" She turned to him with a slightly annoyed expression on her face and replied, "For the third time ... yes!
- I believe God wants us to hear from Him this morning...so turn on your listeners!
- We have been focused this Christmas on the topic of "God with us." from Matthew 1:23. **"Look! The virgin will conceive a child! She will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel, which means 'God is with us.'"** (Matthew 1:23, NLT)
 - This is one of those scriptures that causes me to ponder, to think about. IE. When little children wonder is causes them to ponder/to think. Wonder causes children to arrive at a destination through thinking. IE. I love watching it in my grandkids. The wonder ties the object of the mystery to its revelation. Wonder keeps us looking! God's creation is filled with wonder. His Word is filled with wonder. And the phrase 'God with us' is one that causes me to stand in wonder of it and to ponder it.
- **"So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son."** (John 1:14, NLT)

I. What Does 'God With Us' Mean?

- A. The name, Immanuel, literally means "God with us." It is a name of hope. (In Isaiah 7:14 God wanted to give a wicked king hope.) I know the end of the story that He will pay the ransom that only the God-man can pay.
 1. God, not a representative is here. That is very big! God himself is here! He is doing business himself. What man was never able to do himself, God has now come to take care of.
 2. God left heaven and became flesh/a human. Think of the implications! IE. "Elvis has left the building." Angel talk: "God has left heaven." God went out of His way to be with us.
 3. God is acting personally! He is on a mission! His mission was to save, redeem, and rescue us. All words that we find in the Christmas Story.
 4. 'God with us' screams the fact of God's desire to be in relationship with us personally.
- B. What does 'with us' mean?
 1. It means first and foremost I am not alone. God is a participant in the action! In our lives.
 2. With us means to be close to. This is not something being done from a distance.
 3. It means to be present. In other words, God's presence is with us. Jn 1:14 dwelt among us.
 4. It means to be accompanied by. God himself is on our path too.
 5. It means to indicate the object of attention. We are the object of His attention!

- C. 'God with us' means
1. The eternal, everlasting King of Heaven and earth is with us. We were and are the object of His attention. His focus was and is on us.
 2. No problem we face will ever be bigger than the God who is with us. *Greater is He that is with and in you than he that is in the world* (1 Jn 4:4)
 3. For the believer who lives by faith, we are never alone. We always have God with us. This promise of His presence has never, nor will it never, end. He is participating in life with us.

II. What Was He Thinking?

- A. He was thinking about us! We were the ones who were in trouble! God's intention was for salvation and not for maintenance of humanity.
1. He shall be called JESUS - which translated literally means "The Lord Saves". The people (Jews) were looking for someone to save them from their enemies and from their oppression. God was looking to save them from their sins.
 2. Jesus came to deal with the root issue, not the circumstances. The people were looking for help with the effects, Jesus came to bring salvation from the cause. He did it up close and personal not from a distance.
- B. He was thinking about us! We were The Object Of His Mission 4 priorities
1. His mission was to save, redeem, rescue and destroy.
 - a) His mission was our salvation, hence the name Jesus, Yeshua = The Lord Saves. But save us from what? 1) Sin, 2) Sentence of death which meant eternal separation from God and eternal punishment to pay for our sin.
 - b) His mission was our redemption. Luke 1:68,69. To redeem means to purchase, to pay a ransom. This was not paid to the devil. The ransom was to satisfy the Justice of God.
 - c) His mission was to rescue us. Luke 1:74 (from our enemies) To rescue us from the tormentor, death and destruction. IE. Drowning, burning building, etc. All end in death if one is not rescued. God was acting to rescue you!
 - d) His mission was to destroy the power of sin and to bring to end the reign of sin and death over His people. This is why in the NT we language like bondage to sin, slavery to sin, death and destruction. Jesus came to destroy that entire realm.
 - (1) *"Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he **break the power** of the devil, who had the power of death."* (Hebrews 2:14, NLT)
 - (2) καταργεσε - katargese - to break, to render inoperative, to destroy, to take out of the realm of activity.

- (3) κρατος - kratos - power, strength, rule. To be strong, to conquer. All who sin fall short of the presence of God. They are in bondage to sin.
- (4) He became flesh to break the power or reign of death, hell and grave.
2. Is 7:14 The name Immanuel was a prophetic word given to the king of Judah. It was symbolic of the fact that God would demonstrate his presence through the deliverance of his people. We were the object of the mission because God wants to have a relationship with us!
- C. What was He thinking about? He was thinking about us...on the cross. "Father forgive them. They do not know what they are doing."

III. How Did He Do It? Jn 1:1-14

- A. The OT picture:
1. In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. With God and With Us. All about relationship!
 2. He was there before the beginning began.
 3. He created all things. And nothing was created except through Him. vs 3
 4. God lived with His people in the Wilderness in the tabernacle. To tabernacle means to take up residence. What was hinted at in the OT is all fulfilled in Christ.
 5. He was *hesed* - Hebrew word for unfailing, covenantal love and mercy!
- B. *"So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son."* (John 1:14, NLT)
1. The Word became flesh/human.
 2. The Word tabernacled/made His home among us.
 3. The Word was perfect picture of God. Jesus said, later in John, *"If you have seen me you have seen the Father."* He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. Better translation is 'full of grace and truth!' The law was through Moses grace and truth through Jesus.
 - a) "Grace" is one of the great Christian words, and it is a minor mystery that John uses it three times in his Prologue and not again throughout his Gospel. The word basically means "that which causes joy," and so means "winsomeness." It comes to signify "goodwill," "kindness," and the like, often with the notion that the favor shown is undeserved. Morris, L. (1995). NICNT John (p. 94). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
 - b) Truth - everything that is right and just.
 4. He stepped out of that realm and into our realm.
 - a) *"Christ, in coming to earth incarnate, came under the influence of the powers of the old age: sin (Ro 6:10), the law (cf. Gal. 4:4), and death."* Moo, D. J. (1996). Romans NICNT (p. 378). Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

- b) He was a man now under the 'old realm'. He was subject to the that power, in that it killed Him, it just never caused Him to actually sin. He was subject to it but never submitted to its rule.
 - c) "The law of Moses was unable to save us because of the weakness of our sinful nature. So God did what the law could not do. He sent his own Son in a body like the bodies we sinners have. And in that body God declared an end to sin's control over us by giving his Son as a sacrifice for our sins." (Romans 8:3, NLT)
5. John said, We have seen His glory the glory of the Father's one and only son.
- a) Have seen the man Jesus. Glory!
 - b) Have seen His glory on the cross. Jesus spoke multiple time about bringing the Father glory in His death.
- C. This is what Matthew and John were so amazed about. That God would dwell with us. All because He wants relationship!

Conclusion:

- "*But to all who believed him and accepted him, he gave the right to become children of God.*" (John 1:12, NLT)