

Sermon Title: The Season of Advent, Part IV 12.21.2025

Themes: The birth of the Messiah and peace on earth. Live-streaming and sermon notes are at trinitycg.org.

Focus Question: You know the Jesus of Bethlehem, but do you know the Jesus of the rest of the Bible?

Sermon Points:

1. His manger. *His* Son was born for *your* eternity. **Luke 2:11–20.**

2. His message. **Matthew 6:19–24.** You celebrate the *birth* of Jesus, but do you *know* Jesus? **Matthew 7:21–23.** The ancient Greek's knew that most men are often led by their appetites and their desire for food, drink, greed, power, fame, lust, fear, etc. However, there are people who can prevail over their appetites, which enables them to lead others. Those who could conquer their appetites could use their reason to think about the ramifications of their actions to lead well.

3. His ministry. Christians are called to overcome our self-destructive desires and to place an infinitely greater value on the gift of an eternity with Christ. We are called to be led not by our *appetites* but by the *Almighty*; not by the *now* but by *eternity*. **Philippians 3:18–20** and **John 4:13–18.** The woman at the well *wanted* what could be *pulled* from the well, but what she *needed* was what was *planned* for eternity. She needed to be saved from herself...from her appetites. She *wanted* water, but what she *needed* was the Way. We *all* need Jesus!

4. Your response. **1 John 4:14–15.** We are saved *from* something *for* something: from Hell for Heaven. Christmas comes *once a year*, and it reminds us of His plan *for all eternity*! It comes on December 25th but we feel the effects every single day. Jesus was born with a purpose...to save you *from yourself* and to save you *for Heaven*! You have to follow *His commands*, not just give and get gifts in *His name*. Build your house on the Rock. **Luke 6:46–49.** God may not deliver you from carrying the burden of what you're going through in any given moment, but as a child of God He will get you safely *through* and *to* eternity. When we know the manger, we've cradled a *baby*. When we know His message, we've surrendered to the *Savior*. The best thing for you and me is dying to self, for by *that* we see more fully the purpose for which Jesus was born. If Jesus is not your Lord and Savior, you're just opening gifts on December 25th and paying the tab on the 26th.

Here are five reasons we must know Christ's message and ministry, not just admire His birth at Christmas:

1. **The manger shows His humility, but the message reveals His authority.** Anyone can be moved by a baby in a manger. Jesus didn't stay there. He preached the kingdom of God and called us to repentance.
2. **The cradle tells us *who* He is; His ministry tells us *why* He came.** Angels announced the *who*; Jesus declared the *why*. Without His ministry, Christmas is merely sentiment without salvation.
3. **The manger inspires wonder; His message demands a response.** Shepherds marvel and wise men worship, but Christ's teachings demand a decision. Don't just admire His words; obey them.
4. **The birth marks His arrival; the ministry reveals His mission.** It's easy to celebrate a baby. It's hard to take up a cross. Jesus shows us that discipleship is costly, transformative, and worth it.
5. **The manger portrays a moment, but the message points us to eternity.** If we stop at Christmas, we miss the Gospel. Christ's ministry marches relentlessly toward Calvary, resurrection, and Heaven. The inn could not stop God's plan, and sin cannot stop His purpose.

Have *you* given your life to the God who created you?

Reflection: What have you been saved *from* and what have you been saved *for*?