

From Our Pastor –August 2018

Dear Church Family,

I am deeply moved by the doctrine of the incarnation—that God took on human skin in Jesus Christ. I am deeply moved that God would love us so much that He would become one of us, and I am deeply moved by the implication of what God’s incarnation means to how we are called to follow in the ways of Christ!

That God would become one of us is astounding! S. D. Gordon comments, “Jesus is God spelling Himself out in language that people can understand.” J. Sidlow Baxter adds,

Fundamentally, our Lord’s message was Himself. He did not come merely to preach a Gospel; He Himself is that Gospel. He did not come merely to give bread; He said, “I am the bread.” He did not come merely to shed light; He said, “I am the light.” He did not come merely to name a shepherd; He said, “I am the shepherd.” He did not come merely to point the way; He said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.”

I stand in awe of the great miracle of God becoming one of us!

And I am challenged by the implications of His incarnation. If God loves us enough to become one of us, and if we are called to follow in His ways, then we are called to enter the lives and worlds and joys and struggles of others with the love of Christ.

In his book *Prayer: Does it Make any Difference*, Philip Yancy writes,

As Ronald Rolheiser expresses it, “A theist believes in a God in heaven whereas a Christian believes in a God in heaven who is also physically present on this earth inside of human beings.... God is still present, as physical and as real today as God was in the historical Jesus. God still has skin, human skin, and physically walks on this earth as Jesus did.”

Then Yancy points out,

To pray “God, please help my neighbor cope with her financial problems,” or “God, do something about the homeless downtown” is the approach of a theist, not a Christian. God has chosen to express love and grace in the world through those of us who embody Christ.

Wow! If we take to heart the doctrine of the incarnation (God becoming one of us) and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit (that God now lives in us), then we cannot get away from the fact that we are called to be the love of Christ in this world today!

This is not always easy, but it is the Spirit of Almighty God living in us who enables us to do it. For, as Paul writes in Philippians 4:13, “I can do everything through Him who gives me strength.”

Seeking, with you, to follow Christ,

~Pastor Tom

To learn more about Pastor Tom’s vision of ministry—and for a preview of his next sermon—visit his blog at: <https://tomtrippblog.wordpress.com/>