

THINGS TO COME: Immanuel, the Presence and Power of God Is With Us

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Once there was a man who was invited to a treasure hunt by a teacher. His teacher gave him a map to this treasure as well as a special briefcase he was to keep with him at all times. The treasure hunter was told that the key to the briefcase was buried at the treasure site.

The treasure hunter spent months locating the treasure site. At last, he found it—and the key! He thought he would find within the briefcase special tools to dig up this treasure. But to his amazement, when he put the key into the special briefcase, he didn't find tools to dig up the treasure—he found the treasure itself! The treasure had been with him the entire time, but the valuables had been completely hidden from him.

Something glorious was kept hidden for ages and generations that has now been revealed to us. We find it in Colossians 1:19: "For it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell." What does that mean? Who is "Him"? Jesus! In Jesus all the fullness should dwell. The fullness of what? The fullness of all things. The fullness of God. The fullness of the Father, the Spirit and the Son.

The Advent season reminds us that God is with us, rejoice! Immanuel our Savior is born! The story of the birth of Jesus in Luke 2 is familiar and beloved especially through the

Christmas season. But in Colossians 1:20 we read deeper into why our Father in heaven brought us His Son, "And by Him to reconcile all things to Himself, by Him, whether things on earth or things in heaven, having made peace through the blood of His cross."

The Jesus we serve, the Jesus preached in the gospel, is not just some philosopher or religious teacher. The fullness of all things resides in Jesus. He is higher than all things. He is supreme above everything that was, is and will be. Jesus is the Alpha and Omega—the First and the Last. He's the Beginning and the End. He's the King of kings and Lord of lords. He is our Prince of Peace. He is the way. He is the truth. He is the life. He is the highest being that could ever exist. All things were created by Him and through Him.

Now, what are those things? They are the created things, or things in heaven. The word *heaven* is the created heavens, the expanse. One day they're going to be rolled away like a scroll, but then they will be made new. Paul tells us that the cross of Jesus has already disarmed the principalities and powers. He explains, "And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister" (Col. 1:21–23). Then, in Colossians 1:26 he begins to talk about the secret, or "the mystery which has been hidden from ages and from generations, but now has been revealed to His saints."

We have considered many things here that I hope will be helpful, but there is only one "secret" to a life in God—only one secret that changes everything—and that is the revelation of Christ in you, Immanuel, God with us in Jesus. The mystery that all of creation has longed to see, and that angels and

prophets and patriarchs have all longed to bear witness to, is the Christ who is at work inside you now.

Rejoice in this Christmas season, “‘Do not fear. For I bring you good news of great joy, which will be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign to you: You will find the Baby wrapped in strips of cloth, lying in a manger.’ Suddenly there was with the angel a company of the heavenly host praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will toward men,’” (Luke 2:10-14, MEV). And know that God is with us.

And if you are in Christ, there is nothing “out there” that anyone has to sell or give to you that you need. What if the thing you most desperately need is simply to be jolted awake to recognize the true power that already resides inside you?

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