

12.29.21 – A Weekly Word for Covenant Church

Title: “The First Christmas - The Child”

Scripture Reading: [Luke 2:6-7](#); [John 1:6-14](#); [Matthew 5:17](#)

Reflection: Pastor Henry

By the time you read this, I suspect that most of you have already had your Christmas celebrations with family and friends and have opened the Christmas gifts you received this year. What did you get this year? A new shirt? A video game? A new kitchen appliance? A book?

Often the gifts that we give to others and receive from others are meant to improve our lives and make things better and/or easier for the recipient. A shirt to make us look better, a new video game to entertain us better, a kitchen appliance to make our food preparation easier, a book to allow us to go to sleep easier 😊.

However, the trouble with the gifts we give and receive is that they are limited when it comes to the amount of improvement they can provide. Shirts, video games, kitchen appliances, books, and any of the other things that we gave or received this year can only do so much to improve the circumstances of our lives. A new shirt can improve how we look on the outside, but it's limited in its ability to improve how we feel on the inside. A new video game can entertain and satisfy us for a while, but it is unable to do so forever. A new kitchen appliance will make food prep much easier, but it cannot satisfy the deepest hunger and longing of our hearts. A book allows us to enter another reality or story for a while, but it can't change our current reality and life story.

So, we need another gift to completely change, improve, and satisfy our hearts and lives. We need the gift of the first Christmas. We need the Christ child for these things. Only the Christ child can completely change, improve, and satisfy our hearts and lives. Nothing else we give or receive can.

But, for these things to happen in our hearts and lives, we need to receive the gift of the Christ child. In one of our Bible texts for this week, John in his gospel reminds us that we need to receive the gift of the Christ child. That word receive jumped out at me as I read. Did it jump out at you too? John reminds us only those who receive Him will be changed. Only those who receive Him will be satisfied. Only those who receive Him will become children of God.

Have you received Him? Have you received the Christ child this Christmas? Have you received and believed in His name?

Prayer:

God of salvation, in Christ you have done great and powerful things— our hearts are filled with joy. By your power, you lifted us out of the wasteland of sin and brought us with joy and laughter into your kingdom. Salvation is your gift to us. But we confess that often we try to replace your gift with our own efforts or with other things. We try to change, improve, and satisfy with things that are unable to do so. Forgive us for our foolishness. Help us to focus on your gracious gift to us. Help us to receive your gracious gift us. AMEN.

Songs for today:

[Joy to the World](#)