

The Nativity of Our Lord – 2021  
Christmas Eve: Friday, December 24 at 6:00



Text: Isaiah 7:10-14; 1 John 4:7-16; Matthew 1:18-25 NAS 1995

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: According to a 2017 Pew Research survey in America, **less people** celebrate Christmas as a religious holiday, **less people** say Merry Christmas, **less people** favor religious displays on government property, and **less people** believe Jesus was born of a virgin.<sup>1</sup>

So, **I'M GLAD YOU ARE WITH US TO CELEBRATE THE CHRIST** – the Son of God sent by the Father to **pay our penalty and open the way to heaven!** Tonight, we will focus on the truth about Christmas.

1. **Christian Basics:** **Isaiah 7:10-14**

- a. **Setting:** When Ahaz was the king of Judah (735-715), both Syria and Israel united against Judah. Ahaz and his people were terrified, *so the LORD sent Isaiah to tell Ahaz that the efforts of their enemies would fail.*
- b. **Text:** <sup>10</sup> Then the LORD spoke again to Ahaz, saying, <sup>11</sup> “Ask a sign for yourself from the LORD your God [to prove that your enemies will fail]; *make it deep as Sheol or high as heaven.*” <sup>12</sup> But Ahaz said, “I will not

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/12/18/5-facts-about-christmas-in-america/>

ask, nor will I test the LORD!”<sup>13</sup> Then [Isaiah] said, “Listen now, O house of David! Is it too slight a thing for you to try the patience of men, that you will try the patience of my God as well?”<sup>14</sup> “Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign: Behold, a virgin will be with child and bear a son, and she will call His name Immanuel.

c. Comments:

- i. “my God” – The LORD was Isaiah’s God, *but not the God of Ahaz*. Whenever God is our God, *we believe His word – even when it seems impossible, and we seek to honor Him – even when it’s not popular!* You came tonight, ***I think that is good***, but are some of your family members or friends unhappy? **Let us always put God first**, *even when it is difficult.*
- ii. “a virgin will be with child” – With God *all things are possible!* Whatever is going on in each of our lives, God knows everything, **and God will help us according to what is best!**
- iii. “Immanuel” – That means, **God with us!** God the Father sent His Son to ✦put on flesh, ✦live in our place, ✦receive our sins and eternal punishment, ✦be raised, ✦reign now, and ✦return as planned! It is vital to be ready, *thus repentant (S-H-H-S-F)!*

**HYMN:** *Let the Earth Now Praise the Lord*

2. **Love – God to Us and Us to Others: 1 John 4:7-16**

- a. Love – What is it? ✦Seeing a need **and** ✦caring about the person in need **and** ✦acting to supply that need.
- b. Text: <sup>7</sup> Beloved [*that is, recipients of God’s love in the Christ*], **let us love one another, for love is from God; and**

everyone who loves is born of God and knows God.

<sup>8</sup> The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love. // When we receive God's love, *it shows!*

<sup>9</sup> By this the love of God was manifested [*revealed*] in us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live [spiritually and eternally] through Him. <sup>10</sup> In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son *to be* the propitiation [*sin offering*] for our sins. // Our sins have earned a penalty!

<sup>11</sup> Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup> No one has seen God at any time; if we love one another, God abides [*continues*] in us, and His love is perfected in us [*that is, God's love flows through us to others*]. <sup>13</sup> By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. // Godly sorrow > faith in J for eternal life > HS > love for others!

<sup>14</sup> [By His Spirit] We have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son *to be* the Savior of the world.

<sup>15</sup> Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. <sup>16</sup> We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us [*that is, we know ♣our sin, ♣God sent His Son, and ♣we have God's forgiveness through Jesus*]. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

By grace through faith in Jesus, *we are saved*; now, *let us abide in Jesus to the end – Bible, prayer, living!*

**HYMN:** *God Loves Me Dearly*

### 3. **Unfolding God's Great Plan:** **Matthew 1:18-25**

- a. **Joseph's Decision:** <sup>18</sup> Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed [*engaged*] to Joseph, before they came together [*sexually*]

she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. <sup>19</sup> And Joseph her husband [since engagement then, was more than it is today], being a righteous man [a believer in the coming Messiah] and not wanting to disgrace her [that is, expose her pregnancy], planned to send her away secretly. // Joseph planned to do the right thing. Think about it...

- b. **Angel Intervention:** <sup>20</sup> But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> **She** [Mary] will bear a Son; and **you** [Joseph] shall call His name Jesus, for **He** [Jesus] will save His people from their sins.”
- c. **Prophecy Fulfilled:** <sup>22</sup> Now all this took place to fulfill what was spoken by the Lord through the prophet [Isaiah]: <sup>23</sup> “BEHOLD, THE VIRGIN SHALL BE WITH CHILD AND SHALL BEAR A SON, AND THEY SHALL CALL HIS NAME IMMANUEL,” which translated means, “GOD WITH US.”
- d. **The Birth of Jesus:** <sup>24</sup> And Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took *Mary* as his wife, <sup>25</sup> but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus. // Our problem – *sin*; God’s gift – *forgiveness thru Jesus!*

**Let Us Pray:** Father in heaven, as we ponder our sin and the horrible eternity we deserve, *let us remain in awe of Your love and forgiveness through Jesus!*

**Website:** [www.blc7500.com](http://www.blc7500.com) (our short URL); **YouTube-watch:** Benefit from the Bible  
**Facebook:** Bethlehem Lutheran Church Parma; **Podcast-listen:** Benefit from the Bible  
**Address:** 7500 State Road, Parma, Ohio 44134; **Phone:** 440-845-2230