

CCMC Weekly 56
December 28, 2016

Dear Christ Community,

I hope all is going fine for you in the post-Christmas wind down. I pray that we think of it not so much as over, but as a new beginning. That's why it's nice to have New Years right after Christmas--because if we can connect the two and see that Christmas is only the beginning or a renewal of our journey towards salvation. I have seen so many memes/posts about how people have been worn down by 2016, how they thought it was going to really be their year, and in fact it wasn't. I think we all faced disappointments this year, be they personal or public, but I don't think that we should be so easily discouraged. I don't think we should forget the things we learned this year nor dismiss the richness that let-downs can bring. There have surely been lessons learned this year, and we made it. We made it with God at our side, our faith intact, hope still possible. May you see this new year as a fresh adventure.

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LAST SUNDAY

In Christmas we focused on the shepherds as we re-encountered Luke's version of the birth story from Luke 2:8-20 (read it here: <https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Luke%202:8-20>). Here are a few main ideas from the sermon:

1. God sent the son to know us deeply thus plays role of shepherd and sheep--both teaching and learning from us
2. God wants us to share in God's excitement and exuberance about the divine scheme for salvation; it is for us
3. The contrast between the glory in the field and the quietness of the stable illustrates the spectrum of God, ranging from party to peace

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NEXT SUNDAY

Hebrews 2:10-18

It was fitting that God, for whom and through whom all things exist, in bringing many children to glory, should make the pioneer of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For the one who sanctifies and those who are sanctified all have one Father. For this reason Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers and sisters,

2:12 saying, "I will proclaim your name to my brothers and sisters, in the midst of the congregation I will praise you."

2:13 And again, "I will put my trust in him." And again, "Here am I and the children whom God has given me."

2:14 Since, therefore, the children share flesh and blood, he himself likewise shared the same things, so that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,

2:15 and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by the fear of death.

2:16 For it is clear that he did not come to help angels, but the descendants of Abraham.

2:17 Therefore he had to become like his brothers and sisters in every respect, so that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in the service of God, to make a sacrifice of atonement for the sins of the people.

2:18 Because he himself was tested by what he suffered, he is able to help those who are being tested.

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STUDY QUESTIONS

-What do you think about the idea of suffering making Christ perfect? How does suffering inform his work?

-How does Christ sanctify us?

-According to this passage, what did Christ come to do? How did he accomplish this?

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Have a good weekend, safe New Year's, and I hope to see you Sunday. Remember it's potluck!

Love,
Amy